LOADBALANCER

Giacom delivers high availability hosted Exchange services for 130,000 users

A leading provider of cloud services for IT resellers is using Loadbalancer.org's Enterprise Ultra appliance to ensure the high availability of its hosted Microsoft Exchange services, which are used by 130,000 users. By replacing four multi-vendor load balancers with a single load balancer platform, the company has also reduced complexity in its IT environment and saved up to five hours per month on load balancer.

GIACOM™

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If our Signature Hosted Exchange platform were to go down, it would not only damage our business, but damage the businesses of our customers. So keeping Microsoft Exchange up and running is crucial. Loadbalancer.org helps us deliver the fast application speed and high availability that our customers - and their customers - expect."

John Burton
Lead Hosted Services Engineer, GiacomSystems Team Leader, Nottinghamshire Healthcare

Challenges

- Ensure high availability for hosted Microsoft Exchange services

- Reduce complexity in an IT environment with three Microsoft Exchange deployments

Solution

- Loadbalancer.org Enterprise Ultra

Benefits

- A stable, high performance load balancer for maximizing the availability of Exchange servers

- Time savings from reduced load balancer maintenance

- Consistently good support, via telephone and on site

- Ample capacity to accommodate future business growth

Challenges

Ensuring the high availability of Microsoft Exchange Servers is a top priority for Giacom, Europe's largest provider of cloud services specifically for IT resellers. One of the company's core offerings is a Signature Hosted Exchange service that allows IT resellers to deliver email services for users all around the world. This hosted email platform is currently used by over 130,000 individuals, and Giacom has to deliver a superior user experience for them all, to meet the expectations of its resellers.

Giacom had developed and expanded its Signature Hosted Exchange platform over a number of years, resulting in an environment that comprised of Microsoft Exchange 2010, Exchange 2013 and Exchange 2016. Each of these Exchange deployments had different load balancers from different vendors, and there was a mixture of virtualized and physical load balancing solutions. "Having so many separate load balancers was making our Hosted Exchange environment difficult to manage," says John Burton, Lead Hosted Services Engineer at Giacom. "It was difficult to keep all the products up to date and performance wasn't optimal."

Solution

In a test environment, Giacom evaluated several different load balancers with the capacity to handle the complexity of its Exchange services. Alongside solutions from vendors including F5, Kemp and Cisco, the company tested Loadbalancer.org's Enterprise Ultra appliance, a top-of-the-range load balancer with fully redundant parts. "Loadbalancer.org offered the best value," Burton recalls. "Other products had additional functionality, but we felt we were unlikely to use any of these extras. Loadbalancer.org delivered exactly what we needed at a good price."

The company installed a pair of Loadbalancer.org Enterprise Ultra appliances at each of its two datacenters. Then, with a little initial help from Loadbalancer.org, it migrated its Exchange 2010, 2013 and 2016 users across to the Loadbalancer.org Enterprise Ultras in three stages, over three months. In addition, the company also migrated users of Giacom's Anti-Spam Email Security solution to the Enterprise Ultra load balancer, replacing an aging Kemp device and maximizing the return from its investment in Loadbalancer.org.

Results

Now, Giacom has a single load balancing solution that it uses to balance traffic for all of its 130,000+ users, cross three different Exchange deployments, as well as its Anti-Spam Security solution. The company has therefore significantly simplified its IT environment and made it easier to maintain, as employees don't need to have knowledge of multi-vendor systems. "As we have far fewer load balancers, there is a lot less for us to do in terms of checking log files and maintaining devices," Burton says. "We probably save four or five hours a month from having a single load balancer platform."

> **"**
> *Loadbalancer.org helps us deliver the fast application speed and high availability that our customers expect.***"**

Giacom is confident that the Loadbalancer.org Enterprise Ultra will enable it to deliver the high availability that is so important for its business. "If our Signature Hosted Exchange platform were to go down, it would not only damage our business, but damage the businesses of our customers, so keeping Microsoft Exchange up and running is crucial," Burton explains. "Loadbalancer.org helps us deliver the fast application speed and high availability that our customers - and their customers - expect."

The quality of Loadbalancer.org's support services is another key benefit for Giacom. According to Burton, "Support from Loadbalancer.org has always been top notch; we have never been able to fault it. It gives us great peace of mind to know that, if there is ever a problem that Loadbalancer.org cannot fix over the telephone, the company will send engineers to our site."

Giacom also appreciates the scalability offered by the Loadbalancer.org appliances. "Our Loadbalancer.org Enterprise Ultras support 130,000 users and they are not breaking a sweat," Burton says. "They are operating at nowhere near maximum capacity, so there is plenty of room to grow, which is exactly what we wanted."

About Loadbalancer.org

Loadbalancer.org's mission is to ensure that its clients' businesses are never interrupted. The load balancer experts ask the right questions to get to the heart of what matters, bringing a depth of understanding to each deployment. Experience enables Loadbalancer.org engineers to design less complex, unbreakable solutions - and to provide exceptional personalised support.