

# Request for Information (RFI) On Outsourced E-mail Providers

RSVP Deadline: E-mailed or postmarked by March 1st, 2006 5 p.m. (EST)

RFI Deadline: E-mailed or postmarked by March 15th, 2006 5 p.m. (EST)

Publication Date: May 25, 2006

#### I. Introduction

Network Computing's **May 25th, 2006** cover package will be devoted to outsourced e-mail provider that support office, home, mobile and international workers.

If you would like to participate, please RSVP to the author, Mike DeMaria (mdemaria@nwc.com) by March 1, 2006 and return the completed RFI by March 15, 2006.

## A. Purpose

This Request for Information is proprietary to Network Computing and CMP Media, LLC. It is drafted and disseminated for the sole purpose of generating information on **outsourced e-mail** products for publication in Network Computing on **May 25, 2006**. Participating vendors must meet the minimum requirements for participation described in Section B and agree that any information returned to Network Computing in response to this RFI **will be published** in print and electronic form on our Web site, www.networkcomputing.com.

Please note that we reserve the right to examine a test unit of any product submitted for review in our Lab or at a customer site.

## B. Instructions

The following minimum product requirements are necessary to participate in this review of hosted e-mail applications. Please check all that apply.

	Product is available to customers on or after <b>March 15, 2006</b> and is not in beta form Supports Windows XP Pro with Internet Explorer Has a Web-based e-mail client that does not require plug-ins beyond the default included
with \	Nindows or a Java runtime engine.
	Supports POP or IMAP clients as well as Microsoft Outlook
	Supports at least the following languages: English, French, Italian and German.
	Support MSE's existing domain name and e-mail address format (first initial last name @
mse.	• • • • • • • • • • • • • • • • • • • •

	Must guarantee 99.9% uptime.
	Must ensure that MSE will meet all regulatory and data retention requirements as
describe	ed below.

If you do not meet all of these criteria, your product does not meet the minimum qualifications for this review. Please notify Mike DeMaria (mdemaria@nwc.com or 315-443-5798) by March 1, 2006 that you do not meet the criteria for participation. Thank you for your consideration.

If you respond to the RFI, please note the dates in Section C to complete the RFI on time for inclusion in our **May 25**, **2006** issue. We suggest you read through the entire RFI before answering questions. You can reference answers to other questions in the RFI using the section and question number. Please do not reference materials outside the RFI; incorporate them into your answers. This RFI will be the **only** source used to review your product.

Some questions provide for Yes/No checkbox answers, while some require more detail using an essay format. Essay-type questions may include word-count limits. Any responses submitted beyond the limit may be disqualified.

Please answer all questions--this information is the foundation on which we determine the winning bid and our Editor's Choice Award. If you do not have an answer for a question or it does not apply, please indicate that in the space allotted. If you leave a question blank, we can only assume that your product does not support the proposition.

## C. Effective Dates

RFI Issue Date: February 17, 2006

**RSVP Deadline:** March 1, 2006 by e-mail to Mike DeMaria by 5 p.m. (EST), **RFI Deadline:** March 15, 2006 postmarked or e-mailed by 5 p.m. (EST)

Publication Date: May 25, 2006

#### II. Business Overview

To assist with your responses we have developed the following scenario. In your responses to the specific items listed below, please reference the needs outlined below. Also, please read the entire RFI before completing the first response and avoid redundancy wherever possible.

McDonald and Seifert Engineering (MSE) is a vertically integrated engineering services firm, offering consulting, engineering and scientific investigations, laboratory analysis, construction management, and contract operations and maintenance services in such areas as water resources, wastewater management and environmental services. MSE recently became a publicly traded company incorporated in Delaware. MSE's clients include an international roster of several hundred customers in both the public and private sectors.

MSE has more than 800 employees working out of offices in 25 states and 5 foreign countries. The company has major offices in the U.S., Canada, France, England, Italy and Germany. There are plans to expand into Asia and the Pacific Rim by next year, although this is still in the evaluation phase. Headquarters and data center are located in Pepper Pike, Ohio, a suburb of Cleveland. MSE employs a distributed direct sales force of approximately 75 people managed from the headquarters location. In addition, more than 300 MSE employees are field employees working on the many engineering projects being managed by the company, often working out of temporary facilities in fairly remote locations.

Maintaining effective communications with the sales and field support staff is an ongoing challenge for MSE. The firm is heavily dependent on both cellular voice and e-mail

communications to accomplish those goals. The staff currently relies exclusively on Microsoft Exchange for e-mail services.

Recent IT staff reductions and a geographically expanding coverage area has fostered the idea of outsourced e-mail services. Internal and external e-mail usage has grown significantly over the years with little effort or capital spent to optimize performance, and MSE's system is nearing the breaking point. Instead of overhauling and upgrading the existing network, MSE believes it can save money by outsourcing. The goal is to find a company that can support the 375 remote employees, domestic office workers and international offices. As an international company, MSE has some employees who are not bilingual. These workers require a user interface in their native language. Other employees are multilingual, and should be able to choose in which language they wish to manage their e-mail.

Currently MSE has a robust VPN system in place. All domestic and international branch-office locations are connected over the public Internet by Nortel Contitivity VPN appliances in a hub-and-spoke model to the central office in Ohio. Field employees and telecommuters connect using a remote-access IPSec client on company-provided laptops. Although this solution is working well for the company, the VPN is also near full utilization. MSE believes offloading e-mail will help delay the need for more powerful VPN hardware. MSE would like to offer remote, SSL-encrypted, Web-based e-mail access so employees can get to their e-mail from any location. Another concern is mobile-device e-mail. Currently, users cannot send or receive e-mail from smart phones or wireless hotspots. MSE would like to offer this capability for mobile users.

MSE does not have a VoIP implementation in place, nor is it considering one in the near future. It also does not have an internal IM system installed, but it is very interested in integrated e-mail/IM. MSE's calendaring is via Exchange, but most employees haven't taken advantage of it yet. MSE is in the process of training users about the benefits and usage of online calendaring.

#### III. Business Essentials

- A. Employees: 827, growing by 100 employees per year
- B. Employees requiring e-mail access: 800
- C. Offices: 5 foreign countries and physical presence in 25 U.S. states
- D. Remote workers: 375 staff members are exclusively mobile
- E. International workers: 25 in each country.
- F. Users average about 300MB of online mail storage. MSE would like to do a better job managing mail storage by implementing variable quotas to specify how much storage is available to any one user or group

Existing network infrastructure: A Microsoft Exchange server sits in the central data center in Ohio. All branch and remote users connect into this central location. Branch offices are connected via corporate cable/DSL broadband connection (5Mbps downstream, 1Mbps up). The central office has a 45 Mbps T-3 line to the Internet. Users currently rely on Microsoft Outlook. A few non-Windows users are using Eudora for e-mail access, although this configuration is not officially supported by IT. E-mail is backed up to tape on a weekly basis. Old archives used to be erased every three months, however, messages in the user's inbox or saved folders are not automatically deleted.

MSE recognizes that, as a publicly traded company, it needs to be in compliance with regulations and retention policies; IT is looking for help defining policies and procedures that will ensure they meet all applicable requirements for retention of business records, provides automated procedures for discovery and provides automated procedures for purging old records.

# IV. Technology Goals

A. Offer improved e-mail performance and stability

- B. Implement a calendaring or IM solution that ties into the e-mail system
- C. Allow remote workers to check their e-mail from mobile devices
- D. Eliminate the need for staff personnel to perform e-mail backups.

## V. Business Objectives

- A. Invest in a low-maintenance, low-cost e-mail system.
- B. Allow users to access e-mail via the Internet without relying on VPN.
- C. Ensure data backup and retention policies are followed.
- D. Ensure privacy of communications.
- E. Take advantage of new collaboration technologies.
- F. Allow for more workers to work remotely without needing company supplied hardware.
- G. Implement business record retention policies and procedures that comply with applicable regulations.

#### VI. Review Criteria

The proposed offerings will be graded on the following criteria:

#### A. General Architecture

- 1. Provide a diagram of major hardware and software components and how they are interrelated and interconnected.
- 2. Provide the business case for your proposal based on MSE's goals, objectives, and business environment. You are free to include a competitive analysis. Please limit your answer to 500 words or fewer.

Why Outsource with EnterGroup? By outsourcing with EnterGroup, your email becomes 'Hands-Free' - This means you do not need to purchase, maintain or upgrade any hardware or software. Hence, you eliminate additional IT staff, bandwidth fees, and all other costs involved in running your own system.

Outsourcing almost any service will cut your costs dramatically and provide you with professional results. Email is no exception. EnterGroup can cut your email costs by over 50% today and provide you with the reliable, comprehensive solution you demand.

In addition, our research shows that your current email may actually not be fit for you: free mail providers are not for business use and do not guarantee service, in-house email servers are costly and unreliable, and email from your ISP is also costly and lacks the crucial features required for your business.

We save you a lot of money if you currently run your own email servers like MS Exchange or receive email service from your local ISP/hosting company. Published research from CNI states that exchange costs over \$225 per year per employee in a medium sized business and can add an additional \$197 per year for downtime. EnterGroup costs only ~\$2 to ~\$12 per year per user. As stated above, we also eliminate the costs of hardware, software, licenses, infrastructure, maintenance, upgrades and downtime for you.

We provide you with a complete, professionally managed package at an

affordable price which you otherwise would not be able to obtain from a self managed system, your ISP/hosting company or off the shelf software. Some of these best of breed services include advanced anti-virus, spam block and multiple email access points like Web mail and wireless email. Not to mention, finding an email infrastructure as fit as ours is hard to come across anywhere!

B. Platform & Protocol Support
1. Which operating systems are supported?  Yes Windows XP  Yes Mac OS X  Yes Linux  Yes Solaris  Yes Windows CE  Yes Blackberry  Yes Palm OS
2. Which Web browsers are supported?  Yes Internet Explorer 5.5, Windows Yes Internet Explorer, Mac OS X Yes Safari, Mac OS X Yes Firefox, Windows Yes Firefox, Mac OS X Yes Firefox, Linux Yes Konquerer, Linux Yes Mozilla, Linux Yes Opera
3. Which e-mail clients do you support?  Yes Outlook Yes Eudora Yes Notes Yes Apple Mail Yes Thunderbird Yes Any standards based IMAP/POP client
3. Languages supported? Note: You must be able to display the entire character set of a particular language, and the GUI needs to be fully translated as well.  Yes English Yes French Yes Italian Yes German Yes Spanish Yes Portuguese No Russian No Chinese No Japanese No Korean No Vietnamese No Arabic No Hindi Pending for 2006 Hebrew

- 4. Is the online help fully translated into any or all of these support languages? Yes
- 5. Do you offer an integrated method of translating e-mail messages from one language to another? Describe how translation services work. (limit response to 200 words) This is not currently offered.
- 6. Do you support any other configurations?

OS: (list) Browsers: (list) Email client: (list)

Languages: (list) Celtic (Gaeilge)

7. Which of the following protocols do you support for e-mail access?

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Yes HTTP
Yes (Extra cost involved) HTTPS (Encrypted)
Yes POP3
No POP3S (Encrypted)
No IMAP
No IMAPS (Encrypted)
No MAPI
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- 8. Do you support e-mail storage quotas? Y/N Yes
- 9. Describe your storage space management. If storage space is limited or charged by the byte, how can an organization keep storage under control? (limit response to 250 words)

Each user (email account) is given a pre-set amount of storage space which of course can be increased/decreased by the administrator. The user is automatically notified by the system before the storage limit is reached, and again once it does. The notice keeps on repeating it self until the storage problem is solved.

#### C. Attachments

- 1. Can users attach any file to an e-mail message? Y/N Yes
- 2. If no, what type of files are permitted or restricted?
- 3. Can the administrator disallow specific files? Y/N No
- 4. Is there a limit to the size of a particular attachment? Y/N

If so, what is the limit? By default the size limit per message is of 2MB. This limit can be increased for all the accounts across the board in sets of 3MB. The upgrade cost is of \$1 per set per account.

- 5. Can the administrator specify an attachment size limit? Y/N Yes
- 6. How is attachment policy enforced? (limit answer to 200 words) EnterGroup's Mail servers will automatically scan all incoming email messages for limit sizes, and issue errors for any messages received over the limit specified by the organization.
- 7. How does the service handle non-permitted files that are located inside compressed or password-protected compressed files? (limit answer to 200 words) We are able to measure the complete size of the message regardless of it's status (compressed, protected, etc) to achieve the organization's attachment limits.

7. How does your product protect against viruses and exploits in e-mail messages? (limit answer to 250 words) As malicious viruses break out and mutate, updates to the virus recognition software with the latest virus definitions are made, allowing us to identify them and render them harmless. EnterGroup's service will protect you from virtually all incoming email-borne viruses.

## D. Spam control

- 1. Can the administrator create white and blacklists? Y/N Yes
- 2. Can users create white and blacklists? Y/N Yes
- 3. Do you support automatic deletion of probable spam? Y/N Yes
- 4. Do you support quarantining of probable spam to a separate folder? Y/N Yes
- 5. How does your product solve the spam problem? (limit response to 500 words)

The Spam Filters increase the sensitivity of your junk email filters to meet your personal tolerance levels. The filters intelligently recognize characteristics that are typical to junk email of these category types:

Sexually Explicit - Email that advertises X-rated websites, sexual activity, and other adult themes generally not appropriate for individuals under the age of 18.

Get Rich Quick - Schemes, unsolicited job offers, and other opportunities that request financial participation. Although this content may be acceptable to minors, it may be confusing or misleading.

Racially Insensitive - Offensive messages based on gender, nationality, race, creed, and religion. This type of email may be emotionally sensitive as well.

Special Offers - Messages which aren't necessarily financially-oriented, but does promote a call to action, such as pyramid scheme and similar unsolicited offers

If users find that not enough junk email is being directed to their quarantine areas they can increase the filters toward aggressive. The more stringently they set the sensitivity, the greater the opportunity for a "legitimate" message might be mistakenly quarantined. Users will be able to set the filter levels to meet their personal needs and to adjust them as they deem necessary.

A Lenient setting will allow more junk email into an inbox, however, there is less chance that "legitimate" email will be unnecessarily directed to the quarantine folder as junk email.

#### E. User accounts

1. How is user management handled? Can the product integrate with MSE's existing Active Directory or LDAP system for user/password management? (limit response to 250 words)

EnterGroup clients have access to a Web based master admin panel with the following features:

Manager Administration: add, edit and delete administrators for their email service where users can set different permissions for each manager, designating to which areas of the admin site each manager will have access.

Mailbox administration: add, edit, search, delete, alias, and forward mailboxes.

System status and updates area, plus other additional tools

Export snapshot of user database Update billing info area Update account info area Add additional domains

Automatic provisioning is also available to interact with any of a client's user's management system.

- 2. How can you enable or disable specific accounts from having mail capabilities? (limit response to 150 words) Administrators can automatically lock and unlock mailboxes for email usage. This operation is performed in real time via the administration panel.
- 3. What online address book capabilities exist? Can the administrator create corporate address books? (limit response to 250 words) No. At this time EnterGroup does not offer an online address book.
- 4. Please describe the message filtering, sorting and management capabilities of your system. (limit response to 500 words)

EnterGroup's architecture with regards to message handling utilizes NDS as a client-server system, with an unlimited number of servers and clients. Each server takes responsibility for a specific segment of mailboxes (Root Folders) and the client is able to access these Root Folders, and their content, for all possible purposes.

There is a unique algorithm that allows the client to calculate the exact storage server on which this or other Root Folder resides, and thus connects to the correct location. There is no need for a dispatch server or a general index of all Root Folders.

NDS Server consists of the raw server engine that manages connections, disk-space allocations and other generic matters. A set of plugins (Server Modules) is loaded to manage different Folders. Folders are always children of a specific Root Folder, and they may contain different types of information. Each Server Module is responsible for one or more Folder Types and manages the operations that are specific to its type of data.

NDS Server includes a disk-space paging mechanism that allows fast data storage and retrieval without complex index or search operations.

As a basis, NDS Server implements such features as:

- \* Quota management
- \* Data sorting
- \* Standard transmission archive (Rowset)
- \* Data and input integrity checking
- \* Data copy
- \* Data paging
- 5. How will users migrate off the old system and on to your implementation? How will existing email and data be transferred to the new accounts? (limit response to 500 words)

Administrators can automatically upload a list of current users onto the system, so that all current users will automatically have their email account replicated on our system. The process of moving the actual email messages a client might have stored on his machine will depend on the current format on which that data is being stored.

This migration process involves both a manual and automatic set of tools which vary depending on the source data format.

6. Do you support multiple domain names? Can a user receive e-mail with multiple domain names? For example, can mike@mse.example.com, mike@mse.example.com, mike@mse.example.net, mike@us.mse.example.com) all go to the same person)? (limit response to 150 words)

Yes, we call this "Domain Manipulation" in where messages sent to user@domain1.com will receive emails from user@hostname.domain1.com and/or user@domain2.com

7. Do vou support e-mail aliases? Y/N

Yes. Clients can create an unlimited number of aliases; there is absolutely no charge for them

#### F. Collaboration

1. Describe your product's integrated calendaring program. If you don't have one, please offer a reason to choose your product over a competitor that has integrated calendaring. (limit response to 500 words) Most companies that migrate to EnterGroup today are looking a vast, stable and reliable email hosting service, where they can get rid of spam, viruses and in a nutshell, headaches. This means that clients do not need to purchase, maintain or upgrade any hardware and software. Hence, they eliminate additional IT staff, bandwidth fees, and all other costs involved in running their own system.

Today we offer this great service and one of the reasons why is our focus. We handle email services, and this is our only business.

- 2. Can you integrate with third-party calendaring? Which ones? Our email system is fully compatible with all MS collaboration products.
- 3. Describe your product's integrated instant messaging program. If you don't have one, please offer a reason to choose your product over a competitor that has integrated IM. (limit response to 500 words) EnterGroup does not offer an Instant Messaging solution at this time.
- 4. Do you integrate with third-party IM? Which ones? All IM products are supported.
- 5. What other collaboration and messaging features does your product offer? (limit response to 500 words)

# G. Archiving

1. What is your backup policy? How often do you back up the system? Do you destroy old backups on the customer's schedule? (limit response to 500 words)

EnterGroup runs a fully redundant system, meaning that data for a client is backed-up on realtime, along with all of our services. So for example if 1 database server fails, there is always another one to cover for it so service is never interrupted for our clients.

Emails kept on our servers will be kept until deleted directly by the client.

2. MSE is concerned about regulatory compliance in the U.S. and abroad. Describe how you will help MSE adhere to and meet the minimum message retention laws and regulations. (limit response to 500 words)

EnterGroup already meets ALL regulatory anti-spam, privacy and data storage requirements as set by the European Union, as they regulations are stronger that those in the US. As a percentage of our current clientele is based in Europe we have found that meeting the EU standards we cover all the necessary outsourcing standards for the local US market as well.

- 3. Do you back up users' inboxes, online e-mail folders, or both? No See response 1 from Archiving
- 4. Are messages marked as spam archived? Y/N Yes, for up to 14 days
- 5. Are messages flagged as viral archived? Y/N Yes, for up to 14 days
- 6. Are instant messages or calendaring archived as well? Please describe your backup policy with regards to these features. (limit response to 250 words) EnterGroup does not offer an Instant Messaging or Calendaring solution at this time.

## H. Security and reliability

1. MSE is concerned about third parties reading their sensitive documents. Of particular concern is the possibility that an employee of your company could read and copy MSE's e-mails, or that an attacker could break into your systems. Areas of concern include corporate espionage, leakage of trade secrets, stolen customer information or employee information (social security numbers, human resources correspondences, salary, etc). What security measures are in place to ensure the safety and secrecy of MSE's corporate e-mail? (limit response to 750 words).

To prevent unauthorized access, maintain data accuracy, and ensure the appropriate use of information, we have put in place appropriate physical, electronic, and managerial procedures reasonably designed to safeguard and secure the information we collect online.

Personnel who have access to our database are trained to maintain and secure all information.

	2.	Is e-mail	stored in a	an encrypted	format on	vour servers?	Y/N - Yes
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3. What uptime performance can you guarantee?	
Less than 90%	
90%	
99%	
99.9%	
X 99.99% - We guarantee that our client's email will be down less than 1 hour a year	ear!
99.999%	
99.9999%	
99.99999%	
99.99999%	
Availability not guaranteed	
4. How is uptime measured or gauged? (limit response to 250 words)  Apart from our own statistics we use third party companies both for our internal use, and for our	ur
clients reference. One of the sources used is for example InternetSeer	

5. What remedy is made to the customer for not honoring the uptime guarantee? (limit response to 250 words)

The entire monthly fees will be waived for any client experiencing downtime not covered under our SLA.

# I. Business Summary (Optional)

You may use this section to summarize the business value that you are providing that you were not able to cover in any of the above sections. You may also use it to make additional recommendations or comments on the RFI. **Limit your answer to 500 words.** 

Why outsource your email? Here are a few main reasons:

We save you a lot of money if you currently run your own email servers like MS Exchange or receive email service from your local ISP/hosting company. Published research from CNI in states that exchange costs over \$225 per year per employee in a medium sized business and can add an additional \$197 per year for downtime. EnterGroup costs only ~\$20 to ~\$40 per year per employee.

We eliminate the costs of hardware, software, licenses, infrastructure, maintenance, upgrades and downtime for you.

We provide you with a complete, professionally managed package at an affordable price which you otherwise would not be able to obtain from a self managed system, your ISP/hosting company or off the shelf software. Some of these best of breed services include advanced antivirus, spam block and multiple email access points like Web mail and wireless email. Not to mention, finding an email infrastructure as fit as ours is hard to come across anywhere!

Whether you are a business, family or Webmaster, free email providers are probably not fit for you! Free email providers do not provide you with service guaranatees, sufficient support, email @yourdomain, master administration capabilities, customized and branded Web mail interfaces, and the list goes on and on...

Why outsource your email to EnterGroup?

Outsourcing your email and messaging needs to EnterGroup is to your advantage! Take a look at some of our benefits:

Cutting-edge technology, reliability and comprehensive premium support Most rapid deployment in the market Proprietary software with UNIX based reliability Advanced branding and customization abilities "On The Fly" scalability architecture Most competitive pricing Comprehensive Web-based administration and management tools Highest quality front-end on the market Multilingual

# J. Pricing Summary and Totals

1. Describe the business model used to market and sell the e-mail service? **Limit your answer to 50 words or less.** 

EnterGroup is currently based on the ASP business model, providing email services to its customers for specified pre-set fees based on the volume, access points and auxiliary services provision.

EnterGroup's customers can be divided into three groups:

- Small and medium sized businesses that use EnterGroup's email to conduct their day-to-day business.
- Corporations and organizations that employ EnterGroup's services to provide email to their customers, associates and colleagues.
- Web portals that offer free and fee based email to their visitors.

- 2. How long of a contract do you require? Do you offer month to month, or on a yearly basis? We offer both month-2-month agreements and yearly agreements with 10 to 12% discounts over our listed prices.
- 3. **NWC GRADES INCLUDE PRICE SCORES.** In order that we can compare apples-to-apples quote the list cost of the system for MSE based on the information in section III (800 to 850 users) for one year. All features (such as spam control, AV, etc) and service levels (performance guarantees, storage space, etc) mentioned in this RFI must be included in the price quote. Feel free to itemize the expenses, but also give a bottom line. Failure to disclose a price will result in disqualification from this review.

In a nutshell, the price for 800 FULLY-loaded mailboxes with 100MB's of storage will be of \$0.91 cents per mailbox/month. With the yearly contract a 12% discount will apply meaning that the total yearly cost per mailbox will be of \$9.61.

The total yearly cost for 800 mailboxes will be of \$7688 if outsourced with EnterGroup.

- 4. Estimate the cost for the first year of maintenance and support (if this is included in the price quote above, please let us know). All support fees are of course included already.
- 5. Do you provide on site training?

	No			
X	Yes	(answer	question	6)

6. If you provide on site training, what would be the cost to train approximately 30 IT and help desk staff members? A complete training of the system admins and help desk members will last 2 hours. The price per hour is of \$100.

#### VII. Vendor Information

- 1. How long have you been in business? Since February 2000
- 2. What is the size of your organization by number of employees? 23 employees
- 3. How long has the product been shipping? Since August 2000
- 4. Are you a public or private company? What is your stock symbol? Private Company
- 5. Describe your profitability and financial situation. How can you guarantee to MSE that you'll be in business for the next 5 years. Please remember that this information will be made available to Network Computing readers.

EnterGroup's only business is to host email. Since we started marking our products we have been a profitable company with continued and sustained client & revenue growth.

List three similar-size enterprises that are currently using the proposed solution.
 Pluczenik Diamond Company
 Acass Canada
 Baptist General Conference