



## 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](http://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 **March 15, 2006** 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 Windows 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.com).

- ☒ Must guarantee 99.9% uptime.
- ☒ Must ensure that MSE will meet all regulatory and data retention requirements as described 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](mailto: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 Contivity 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.

### ***B. Platform & Protocol Support***

1. Which operating systems are supported?

☒ Windows 2000  
☒ Windows XP  
☒ Mac OS X  
☒ Linux  
☒ Solaris  
☒ Windows CE  
☒ Blackberry  
☒ Palm OS

2. Which Web browsers are supported?

☒ Internet Explorer 5.5, Windows  
☒ Internet Explorer 6, Windows  
☒ Internet Explorer, Mac OS X  
☒ Safari, Mac OS X  
☒ Firefox, Windows  
☒ Firefox, Mac OS X  
☒ Firefox, Linux  
☒ Konquerer, Linux  
☒ Mozilla, Linux  
☐ Lynx  
☒ Opera

3. Which e-mail clients do you support?

- ☒ Outlook
- ☐ Eudora
- ☐ Notes
- ☐ Apple Mail
- ☐ Thunderbird
- ☐ 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.

- ☒ English
- ☒ French
- ☒ Italian
- ☒ German
- ☒ Spanish
- ☒ Portuguese
- ☒ Russian
- ☒ Chinese
- ☒ Japanese
- ☒ Korean
- ☒ Vietnamese
- ☒ Arabic
- ☒ Hindi
- ☒ Hebrew

4. Is the online help fully translated into any or all of these support languages?

Yes for Outlook 2003 and OWA. Also supports dictionary:

Accurate spelling improves perceptions of personal and corporate trustworthiness. Use the spelling checker built into Outlook Web Access to confirm your spelling by using language-specific dictionaries in any of the following languages:

- Arabic\*
- Danish\*
- Dutch\*
- English (Australia, Canada, United Kingdom, and United States)
- Finnish\*
- French
- German (post-reform and pre-reform)
- Hebrew\*
- Italian
- Korean
- Norwegian (Bokmål)\*
- Norwegian (Nynorsk)\*
- Spanish
- Swedish\*

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)

No.

6. Do you support any other configurations?

OS: (list)

Browsers: (list)

Email client: (list)

Languages: (list)

See <http://www.microsoft.com/exchange/evaluation/features/OWAandIE.msp> for OWA

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

☐ HTTP

☐ HTTPS (Encrypted)

☐ POP3

☐ POP3S (Encrypted)

☐ IMAP

☐ IMAPS (Encrypted)

☐ X\_MAPI

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)

We provide your organization aggregated storage space allowing all users to share the total space. This allows for an equal distribution of storage over your entire organization rather than by the mailbox.

Using Limits"

. Issue warning at: Warn the user that their mailbox has exceeded its limit. However, normal functioning of the mailbox continues.

. Prohibit send at: Send a warning message that states that the user will not be able to send any more messages until they delete or archive their old mail. However, users can still receive messages.

NOTE: Type a value (in kilobytes [KB]) for the size of the mailbox, for example, 100,000 KB for normal users or 200,000 KB for the power users.

. Prohibit send and receive at: Send a warning message that states that the user has exceeded mailbox limits. If the user receives this message, the user cannot receive any messages.

## C. Attachments

1. Can users attach any file to an e-mail message? Y/N

*Outlook and OWA contain attachment blocking security for known high-risk attachments.*

<http://office.microsoft.com/en-us/assistance/HP030850041033.aspx>

2. If no, what type of files are permitted or restricted?

<http://office.microsoft.com/en-us/assistance/HA011894211033.aspx>

- Outlook does not block documents such as .xls, .doc, .ppt, and .txt files. These are the files most people use to get work done. However, keep in mind that these files can contain macros that have the potential to spread viruses. So whenever these come to your Inbox, be sure to save and scan them first with a [third-party antivirus program](#). And be sure to follow the recommended directions to [protect your PC](#).

3. Can the administrator disallow specific files? Y/N

Yes

4. Is there a limit to the size of a particular attachment? Y/N

If so, what is the limit?

25 MB limit – customizable.

5. Can the administrator specify an attachment size limit? Y/N

Yes.

6. How is attachment policy enforced? (limit answer to 200 words)

Yes.

7. How does the service handle non-permitted files that are located inside compressed or password-protected compressed files? (limit answer to 200 words)

They are not processed – they are scanned for viruses.

7. How does your product protect against viruses and exploits in e-mail messages? (limit answer to 250 words)

7+ virus engines updated every 5 minutes. Scanned with top statistical engine.

### *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 100% confidence spam.

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)

Elephant Outlook uses the term *messaging hygiene* to refer collectively to all of its defensive mechanisms to combat electronic threats. The current messaging hygiene solution that Microsoft IT has implemented provides the following benefits:

- Reduces total cost of ownership (TCO) by eliminating messaging hygiene servers (nearly 50 percent server reduction)
- Reduces TCO by avoiding the need for additional messaging infrastructure
- Provides multilayered service-level and user-level filtering options
- Increases employee productivity by reducing total incoming Internet e-mail volume by up to 85 percent

## *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)

Our system is independent for additional level of security.

2. How can you enable or disable specific accounts from having mail capabilities? (limit response to 150 words)

We provide an automated web console administration tool.

3. What online address book capabilities exist? Can the administrator create corporate address books? (limit response to 250 words)

Yes.

4. Please describe the message filtering, sorting and management capabilities of your system. (limit response to 500 words)

Sender Filtering (Exchange)

Blank Sender Filtering (Exchange)

Recipient Filtering (Exchange)

Recipient Lookup (Exchange)

Intelligent Message Filter (Exchange)

Antivirus Solutions (Third-Party Server and Client)

Attachment Stripping (Exchange and Outlook)

Restricted Distribution Groups (Exchange)

Junk E-Mail Filter (Outlook & OWA)

Suppression of Sender Display Name Resolution (Exchange)

Connection Filtering (Exchange and Third-Party Server)

Disabling of Security Notifications (Exchange)

5. How will users migrate off the old system and on to your implementation? How will existing e-mail and data be transferred to the new accounts? (limit response to 500 words)

We provide migration tools and customizable importing tools. We also provide an intuitive self-guided Setup Wizard at the end-user level to export and import existing data.

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-online.example.com, mike@mse.example.net, mike@us.mse.example.com) all go to the same person)? (limit response to 150 words)

Yes.

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

Yes.

## *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)

Outlook and Exchange.



2. Can you integrate with third-party calendaring? Which ones?  
Standard iCal.

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)

Microsoft IM.

4. Do you integrate with third-party IM? Which ones?

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) up to 4 hour snapshots daily backups and rotations.

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)

Industries regulated by the SEC (Securities and Exchange Commission) include brokerages/securities, financial services, banking and insurance. SEC Regulation 17a-4 requires archival of all customer communications for a period of three years. This regulation includes e-mail.

In addition to SEC rulings, there are different regulations for each market, such as:

- **HIPPA - Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act**
- **State Regulations**
- **the Sarbanes-Oxley Act of 2002**
- **Gramm-Leach-Bliley Act of 1999**
- **(FDA) Federal Drug Administration, CFR 21**
- **U.S. Department of Defense DoD 5015.2**
- **Government Paperwork Elimination Act (GPEA)**
- **Internal Revenue Service**
- **Occupational Health and Safety Administration**
- **Intellectual Property**

3. Do you back up users' inboxes, online e-mail folders, or both?  
Yes both. Entire mail store.

4. Are messages marked as spam archived? Y/N  
Yes.

5. Are messages flagged as viral archived? Y/N  
Messages are cleaned – virus are replaced.

6. Are instant messages or calendaring archived as well? Please describe your backup policy with regards to these features. (limit response to 250 words)

Calendaring, Tasks, Notes, entire Outlook mailbox data.

### *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).

2. Is e-mail stored in an encrypted format on your servers? Y/N  
Can be stored thru use of S/MIME encryption.

3. What uptime performance can you guarantee?

- ☐ Less than 90%
- ☐ 90%
- ☐ 99%
- ☐ 99.9%
- ☐ 99.99%
- ☐ 99.999%
- ☐ 99.9999%
- ☐ 99.99999%
- ☒ 99.999999%
- ☐ Availability not guaranteed

4. How is uptime measured or gauged? (limit response to 250 words)  
Measurement is performed thru periodic report cards by measuring 10,000+ facets thru Microsoft Operational Manager.

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

### *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.**

### *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.**

**Elephant Outlooks's Exchange Hosting** is designed to address the unique email messaging needs of **any businesses** of **every size** and scope, from **small start-ups** to **Fortune 1000** companies.

2. How long of a contract do you require? Do you offer month to month, or on a yearly basis?  
No term commitments necessary, monthly invoicing. Term discounts available.

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.

Pricing based on 800 users, 1 year term.  
\$7252/monthly – no setup.

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).

Included.

5. Do you provide on site training?

☒ No  
☐ 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?