Smooth connectivity across the high seas.

GE Shipping required an e-mail solution that offered zero downtime and higher mailbox capacity. IBM Domino® Server 8.5 and Lotus® Notes have ensured the company's employees remain connected 24/7, by way of exchanging emails with ships.

Client profile

The Great Eastern Shipping Company Ltd. (GE Shipping) is a leading shipping company in India with two main businesses: shipping, and offshore exploration and production. GE Shipping operates a wide fleet of vessels that transport crude oil, petroleum products and gas and dry bulk commodities. The offshore business, run by the GE Shipping wholly-owned subsidiary Greatship (India) Ltd., services oil companies in exploration and production activities. GE Shipping was looking for an e-mail solution with zero downtime that provided its offshore teams connectivity at all times.

Task

GE Shipping was using Amos Mail, a commonly used e-mail solution in the shipping industry. Around nine years ago, the company decided to move to IBM Lotus Notes® 5.0 as Amos Mail had limited features and suffered frequent downtime. Zero downtime is critical for the shipping industry as the main channel of communication between the onshore and offshore teams is e-mail. Telephonic communication is highly expensive and e-mail remains the sole link even during emergencies. Some of the other e-mail requirements for users onshore are larger inbox capacity as they need to transmit heavy attachments, and a group mailbox facility so that multiple users can use the same inbox.

Solution

GE Shipping has stayed with IBM e-mail solutions ever since it moved from Amos Mail nine years ago. In July 2009, the company upgraded from IBM Lotus Notes 6.5 to 8.5 and from Domino 6.5 to 8.5. The upgraded versions have higher flexibility in storage and come with additional features, like RSS feeds and widgets. The solution also offers the IT team higher administrative capabilities. The IBM team implemented the solution on a trial basis for the IT group. After two months, GE Shipping decided to upgrade it for the entire organization.

Benefits

- Zero downtime ensures uninterrupted communication between onshore and offshore teams.

- Higher capacity inbox enables transmission of heavy files.

- Group mailbox allows multiple users to access a single inbox.

- RSS feeds and widgets keep offshore users updated on industry developments.

- Better look and feel helps users in easy acclimatization.

- Better server manageability makes the job easy for the IT department.

- Automatic alerts and reporting helps in troubleshooting.

- Server provides back-up of e-mails.

- Automatic sorting of e-mails by subject helps handle online sales enquiries.

"We have derived significant benefits with the new features in Lotus Notes 8.5. We have for example, incorporated online RSS feeds for real-time news of the shipping industry, widgets for live crude oil prices, an attention indicator and recent contacts list. The overall look and feel is considerably richer and more user-friendly. The implementation team did a great job and the transition was smooth."

Anjan Deb
Head, IT, GE Shipping