

Lyttlelton Port of Christchurch Virtualises, Consolidates Fax with MESSAGEmanager Solutions and Gen-i



Client

New Zealand-based Lyttlelton Port of Christchurch (LPC) was established in the late 1980s to manage 150-year-old Lyttlelton Port. Today, the listed company handles over 250,000 containers and 1,200 ships each year, and is open all day everyday for a variety of shipping services including marine, container and port services.

LPC employs approx 400 staff and has the largest coal facility in New Zealand, exporting over two million tonnes of coal each year. Their vision is to be the South Island port of choice; with strong environmental and profit-based goals also in place.

Challenge

LPC staff rely on fax for critical procurement and purchase orders, stock purchases, and daily shipping forecasts.

“Fax is a communication mechanism that hasn’t been completely replaced by e-mail,” said Peter Brook, IT Operations Manager at LPC, “It gives us a way to communicate with people in addition to phone or e-mail services.”

LPC’s fax system had become dated, and no longer fitted with the overall IT strategy. The organisation made a move to virtualisation, but fax lagged behind.

“Four years ago we worked alongside our longstanding ICT partner, Gen-i, to virtualise most of our server environment, so the vast majority of our servers are virtual. But our fax server was still a physical server with fax card meaning it increased the amount of cable clutter in our server racks. A hardware failure would’ve meant a significant outage so this was a good step for us to virtualise our fax server,” he said.

Lyttlelton staff fax into and out of ERP solution Lawson M3, as well as Exchange and Outlook, so any fax solution had to provide seamless integration with the two, as well as with their Nortel CS 1000 Telephony PBX.

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The install has led to a reduction in ongoing costs and reduced TCO and technical support time.

Solution

LPC was already familiar with MESSAGEmanager Fax Server, having installed a previous version. "MESSAGEmanager has been very reliable, and we've been happy with it over the years, it's performed well," Brook said.

The latest MESSAGEmanager IP Fax Server also met all the Lyttlelton criteria. Application connectors provide seamless integration with ERP Lawson M3, allowing staff to fax directly from the solution with the click of a mouse, and all relevant incoming faxes to be routed into the application for processing.

The Exchange Gateway provides users with the ability to fax to and from Outlook as simply as sending an e-mail – with no desktop software.

Most importantly, the server is 100% software, allowing installation in a virtual environment – so Lyttlelton would finally be able to decommission the physical hardware and neatly tie up the last UC loose end.

Lyttlelton turned to Gen-i, its trusted ICT partner of 18 years, to ensure the new IP Fax software was effectively tested and installed.

"Over the years we have built a strong relationship with Gen-i, who manage our virtual infrastructure and Nortel CS 1000 PABX. They have consistently delivered results for us and continue to provide local support," said Brook.

IP Fax software had not been tested on Nortel CS1000, so MESSAGEmanager Solutions performed extensive interoperability testing before clearing it for install.

Outcome

"Things went very smoothly from our end. Gen-i did a great job. We had no problems at all," said Brook. "They made it a very easy project."

Brook said installing MESSAGEmanager IP Fax Server has allowed LPC to, "decommission old fax hardware, roll up fax into our virtual environment and eliminated the need to maintain a separate physical fax server."

This has led to a reduction in ongoing costs and reduced TCO and technical support time.



More information

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