



Students, Faculty Give University's New Email System An "A+" After Addition of MessageWare SessionGuard and Plus Pack



St. Cloud State University

Minnesota, USA
<http://www.stcloudstate.edu/>

Industry:

Post Secondary Education

Challenge:

Increase user acceptance of campus-wide email system

MessageWare Products:

Plus Pack
SessionGuard

Key Benefits:

- Enhanced email toolset
- Automatic end of session logoff

■ CHALLENGE

With an enrollment of 16,000 - the highest of any public undergraduate university in Minnesota - St. Cloud State University (SCSU) prides itself on maintaining an advanced learning environment that attracts tech-savvy students. So it was a natural step, several years ago, when the university upgraded its campus-wide email system to an easily accessible Internet-based platform.

The new platform was built on Outlook Web Access (OWA), Microsoft's highly popular application that web enables enterprise email networks. Available to both professional and student populations, OWA instantly made email communication possible from virtually anywhere, including 2,200 dorm rooms, 500 lab stations, and other computer workstations placed conveniently around the St. Cloud, Minnesota campus.

People were quick to avail themselves of SCSU's new OWA capability, and feedback, in general, was strongly positive. As good as the solution was, however, the school's Information Technology (IT) department realized there was still room for improvement.

"One of the most frequent comments we received was that there was a potential privacy issue, especially for those who accessed their email at public terminals," said Phil Thorson, Director of IT Services. "If the person walked away without closing their web browser, the next person to use the computer could get into the previous email account simply by clicking on the 'back' button. It left us with a potential security problem," he noted.

"One of our other goals was to give our users certain convenience features like spell check, contact list support, and signature capability," added Jeff Hennen, IT Specialist. "Our faculty also have Microsoft Outlook available to them, and many of our students are used to Hotmail or Yahoo Email. These various email applications offer spell check and other features. If we were going to make our users comfortable with the new system, we needed to provide some parity."

■ SOLUTION

After "scouring the Internet," as Hennen puts it, for suitable OWA enhancement software, only one company emerged with the necessary products - MessageWare Incorporated.

In Plus Pack, Thorson and Hennen found a way to seamlessly add all the desired user conveniences, all in one easy package. "The software has an entire menu of productivity tools, from a Spell Checker to Outlook-style address management," commented Thorson. "It also integrates with the OWA user interface, making the tools very easy to use."



“Simply put, Plus Pack and SessionGuard have given our faculty and students the complete email environment they deserve. As our system usage proves, it’s the result everyone was seeking.”

Phil Thorson
Director of IT Services

■ SOLUTION CONT'D

Providing the necessary logoff protection was SessionGuard, a solution designed to integrate with virtually any browser configuration. “SessionGuard offers support for Internet Explorer as well as all Microsoft ‘reach’ clients, including Netscape,” said Hennen. “Not only does it force new user authentication after the prior user logs off, but it also ends a session automatically after a certain period of inactivity. That’s especially useful in kiosk deployments,” he added.

Both managers said installation was smooth for the MessageWare products. Our customer contact team from MessageWare was on the phone with us on a weekly basis, asking us “What haven’t we done for you?,” recalled Thorson. “We were very impressed with the level of support.”

■ RESULTS

It didn’t take long for the positive comments to start coming in once SessionGuard and Plus Pack were in place. “We got especially good feedback from our faculty members, who liked the new spell check and signature capabilities. The global address list management tools got high marks too. People appreciated having the same features in OWA they get in Outlook,” said Hennen “without having to sacrifice OWA performance.”

Perhaps best of all was the new user confidence provided by SessionGuard. According to Hennen, “All potential for individuals to tamper with other people’s email was removed. SessionGuard gives users a new level of trust in their school-based email.”

■ ABOUT MESSAGEWARE

MessageWare is the world’s leading provider of enhancement and security solutions for Microsoft Office Outlook Web Access (OWA). Our award-winning solutions include ActiveSend, AttachView, NavGuard, Plus Pack, SessionGuard, TimeGuard and CalendarShare. These products are also available bundled together in the OWA Suite.

Founded in 1993, MessageWare is a Microsoft Gold Certified Partner and a Global Exchange ISV. Thousands of the world’s most successful organizations use MessageWare’s OWA solutions to enhance and secure their production email environment

For more information
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