



Oxford University Finds CalendarShare 2007, Plus Pack 2007 Uniquely Qualified To Solve OWA Access Disparities



Oxford University

Industry:

Education

Challenge:

Equalize access to OWA personal calendars and global address lists across Firefox, Safari, Chrome and Internet Explorer

MessageWare

Products:

MessageWare
CalendarShare 2007
and Plus Pack 2007

Key Features:

- Ability to see daily, weekly and monthly calendar views
- Delegate rights to manage calendars
- Personal spell check dictionaries
- Find email addresses easily using the global address list

SITUATION

Before there was Harvard, Yale, the University of Vienna, or even Kyoto University...there was Oxford. The oldest university in the English-speaking world, Oxford University has held an honored place at the pinnacle of academia since the 11th Century.

The 44,000 students and staff of Oxford University are spread among 44 autonomous colleges and over 200 departments. As the late 20th Century arrived and the digital era came into being, these richly diverse communities produced a patchwork of Web-based communications systems that, while serviceable, were not at all conducive to inter-departmental collaboration.

In 2008, the university made a major decision to standardize the 40-plus email systems with a single email and calendaring platform. After a period of study, the project steering group chose Microsoft Exchange 2007 as its email/collaboration server. Because over 60% of all Oxford users access their email via the Web, Microsoft Exchange and Outlook Web Access (OWA) were deployed as the primary email client.

The University arranged a new team, the Nexus team, to deploy and support the service. Their careful preparation and campus training paid off in 2009 when the new system was successfully phased in. Before long, however, the team began to receive complaints, mainly from individuals using Firefox, Safari, and Chrome Web browsers. Because these users were not accessing the system using Microsoft Internet Explorer, they were compelled to use OWA Light, a reduced-function version of OWA.

“OWA Light executes basic functions well. Unfortunately, it doesn’t allow users to see the calendar views of others or share their own calendars,” explained Nexus Team member Paul Davis. “This presented a problem we were determined to solve.”

SOLUTION

The Nexus Team’s search to make OWA Light look and function more like the full Internet Explorer version of OWA led them to CalendarShare 2007 and Plus Pack 2007 from MessageWare. CalendarShare 2007 provides Outlook-style side-by-side views of shared and personal calendars, and gives OWA users the ability to delegate rights to others to view and manage calendars on their behalf. Plus Pack 2007 provides key Outlook-like features such as addressing, global address list contacts, roaming personal dictionaries and more.



Case Study

Enhance and Secure Outlook Web Access

“MessageWare’s two products were totally unique. We couldn’t find anything else on the market like them. The cross-functionality amongst browsers was as close to the Internet Explorer offering as we could get.”
 – Paul Davis, Nexus Team Member

For more information about MessageWare OWA Solutions, please contact:

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“MessageWare’s two products were totally unique. We couldn’t find anything else on the market like them,” said Davis. “The cross-functionality amongst browsers was as close to the Internet Explorer offering as we could get.” To evaluate the two products, the team installed CalendarShare and Plus Pack on a separate server and allowed the IT support staff to try them out. “The feedback was overwhelmingly positive so we moved forward with deployment.”

■ RESULTS

With Plus Pack and CalendarShare in place, the user experience for both OWA and OWA Light is significantly improved. For the first time, all of the Oxford users have access to features provided by MessageWare, such as the ability to see daily, weekly and monthly calendar views; simplified scheduling; calendar delegate permissions; new email notifications and more.

“Our OWA Light users who are exploring the calendaring feature for the first time are now more open to setting up meetings online,” Davis commented. “The global address capability is far improved as well. In the past, people had to go through separate departmental Web pages to find phone numbers. But since the global address list is linked to the telephone directory, all they have to do is use the ‘people finder’ feature.”

With MessageWare CalendarShare 2007 and Plus Pack 2007 in place, the Nexus Team feels it has finally achieved the universal, yet flexible productivity solution it set out to implement. Despite the tens of thousands of Oxford users accessing their email and calendars every day through a variety of channels, no one is left out.

“As an enterprise solution, this platform had to be attractive to all users. CalendarShare and Plus Pack helped achieve that,” said Davis. “They made the new system ‘sellable’ to the entire university.”

■ ABOUT MESSAGEWARE

MessageWare develops and markets solutions that enhance and secure Outlook Web Access. A trusted Microsoft Gold Certified Partner and a Global Exchange ISV for over 15 years, our applications give companies of all sizes the ability to enhance, secure, and customize OWA. MessageWare solutions give organizations a greater return on their Microsoft Exchange investment through increased employee productivity and reduced support and IT administration costs. MessageWare products are used by over 2,500 enterprises and five million users worldwide, from Fortune 500 companies to small businesses, in every major industry.