Success Story | Henry Elliott & Company

The Challenge

Established in 1992, Henry Elliott & Company provisions highly-skilled consultants, programmers and analysts on a contract or direct-hire basis—exclusively within the Caché and M (MUMPS) technology sectors. The company places a strong emphasis on providing personnel with extensive healthcare application experience as well as complimentary Web and object-oriented software knowledge.

E-mail is a critical application at Henry Elliott & Company because the business relies heavily on e-mail to exchange important business forms with clients and consultants providing services all over the United States. This includes time sheets, expense reports, requisitions and project updates. If the e-mail system goes down for any period of time, company operations come to a halt. Although most work is conducted during the work week, weekend e-mail exchanges also occur regularly, so the firm essentially requires 24x7 up time.

“It was critical for us to increase the reliability and redundancy of our Microsoft Exchange e-mail server,” said Ken Wagner, the president of Henry Elliott & Company. “As a company that provides technology services, if our system goes down, it not only hampers business operations, but also reflects on our reputation as a technology firm. We thus have zero down-time tolerance. Even if we are down for three to four hours, it can devastate the business.”

Key Business Elements:

The Problem: With business operations highly-dependent on its Microsoft Exchange e-mail server operating 24x7, Henry Elliott & Company could not tolerate any down time.

The Objective: Deploy a technology infrastructure that ensures internal staff can send and receive client and consultant e-mails 24x7.

The ROI: By upgrading to Microsoft Exchange 2010 and deploying an off-site failover server hosted by All Covered, Henry Elliott now maintains e-mail services at all times—even if the primary on-site server experiences down time. In addition to keeping the company functional, this also helps maintain the company reputation as a leading technology provider.

MICROSOFT EXCHANGE 2010 OFF-SITE FAILOVER KEY BENEFITS:

- Ensures e-mail services remain operational 24x7
- Allows staff to exchange key business documents with clients and consultants at all times
- Helps maintain company reputation for offering leading technology solutions
- Switches users over to off-site server in the event of a failure to the on-site server or if a disaster strikes the main office building

“All Covered plans projects very well in determining exactly what we need to do for major upgrades such as this Microsoft Exchange 2010 project. They want to succeed and build systems correctly as much as we do.”

Ken Wagner - President of Henry Elliott & Company
The Solution

Henry Elliott & Company previously relied on Microsoft Exchange Server 2007 for e-mail, but its long-time technology partner, All Covered recommended upgrading to Exchange 2010 for the more immediate and smooth failover it offers. Having this capability is critical so that client communications do not suffer any delays and because e-mails sometimes spool during downtime, but they can also be lost permanently.

“We have partnered with All Covered (formally Covisia Solutions) for nearly 15 years and trust the technology recommendations they give us,” Wagner said. “All Covered explained how Exchange 2010 would facilitate deploying an off-site failover server that we could immediately switch to if our primary server goes down.”

All Covered upgraded the server hardware and deployed Microsoft Exchange 2010 at the Henry Elliott & Company offices as well as a matching server at a co-location facility. All Covered configured the on-site server so that it replicates e-mail activity to the off-site server every 15 minutes over a wide-area-network.

“We now have two mirror images of all of our e-mail,” Wagner said. “Should the primary server fail, we can switch the staff to the off-site version within seconds. Our users simply go through a two-step process to access the back-up server.”

The migration to Exchange 2010 and off-site server took place with minimal business interruption. All Covered systems engineers configured the servers in advance and performed most of the prep work on weekends and evenings. When the live switch-over took place, All Covered provided extra technical resources to smooth out any issues that end users experienced.

“Any migration that a business goes through always has some issues, but All Covered takes the steps to mitigate and minimize problems so that users do not lose any productivity,” Wagner said. “With All Covered there to answer user issues, our interruption to business activity was minimal.”

The Benefits

The redundant off-site Microsoft Exchange server has stabilized the Henry Elliott & Company e-mail environment, and since deploying the solution, the system has been maintenance-free while functioning without any interruptions. The off-site server also complements other redundancy efforts that All Covered has assisted with such as installing two T1 wide-area-network connections, and integrating the phone system with the data network-infrastructure environment.

“Exchange 2010 has operated consistently from day one,” Wagner said. “When we tested the new failover capability, it worked within seconds so users could work within e-mail as they normally do.”

Henry Elliott & Company will continue to look to All Covered for advice on redundancy and preventing downtime for all of its technology systems. “They plan projects very well in determining exactly what we need to do for major upgrades such as this Exchange server project,” Wagner added. “We partner with All Covered because they want to succeed and build systems correctly as much as we do.”

When issues arise, All Covered does not make excuses—the entire staff takes them head on. Having a technology partner that adopts this approach is critical since some issues arise because of end-user issues while others occur because of technology systems that All Covered does not manage.

“When problems arise, All Covered accesses whatever resources are needed to resolve the issue,” Wagner said. “And if it’s a major problem, they escalate it to senior personnel and work with other technology vendors to find the root of the problem. They act in crisis mode alongside of us with the same level of urgency. Because they have a wide array of expertise, no matter which technology area we need help in, All Covered likely has a resource that can help.”

In Summary

Henry Elliott & Company needed to ensure its Microsoft Exchange e-mail server functioned 24x7 to ensure the ability to send and receive business documents related to clients and consultants across the United States. The business turned to All Covered, which recommended and deployed an upgrade to Microsoft Exchange 2010 with a matching off-site failover server. Henry Elliott & Company can now continue to provision e-mail services to end users should the main server experience a problem.

All Covered is the nation’s leading IT services company serving small to medium-sized businesses. For over 12 years, All Covered has been helping businesses across all verticals with their IT support needs. All Covered has local offices in over 20 cities with more than 200 engineers, and is fully certified in all major technologies. Across the US, more businesses trust All Covered for their IT support than any other company.