

Ensim Unify

INFRASTRUCTURE OPTIMIZATION FOR
MANAGED SERVICE PROVIDERS

An Ensim Business Whitepaper



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Infrastructure Optimization for Managed Service Providers

Managed service providers (MSPs) responsible for administering enterprise infrastructures have experienced tremendous growth over the past few years. Applications such as Microsoft Active Directory, Exchange, SharePoint, and BlackBerry Enterprise Server have generated profitable revenue opportunities as enterprises increasingly outsource their IT needs. This growth, however, is creating a shortage of resources that will only get more acute over time as enterprise requirements become more and more complex. MSPs must find a way to address the following six challenges exacerbated by this growth and complexity.

Key challenges facing Managed Service Providers

Challenge #1: Siloed Infrastructures Resulting in Administration Nightmares

Managed Service Providers today may support dozens or even hundreds of dedicated infrastructures requiring ongoing management and attention from their various teams. Each environment must be accessed via its own unique set of tools and, for larger customers, often with a dedicated team of administrators. This results in a series of deployments that are managed separately, increasing complexity of integration and management.

Challenge #2: Lack of Resources and Loss of New Business

Experiencing a shortage of manpower is not unexpected in times of growth. In the case of outsourced messaging and collaboration applications, however, the results of a shortage are less than desirable. Strained resources often result in cutting corners, provisioning users in non-standard ways, accessing servers with command line interfaces, or instructing unprepared administrators to do so. The consequences of these actions can lead to a relaxation in security and a lack of procedural standardization that can, in the worst case, result in customer downtime.

Challenge #3: Management Operations

Depending upon the level of management provided to customers, some MSPs may be required to support all IT management, including provisioning, daily change requests and helpdesk activities for example. In these cases, the silo effect is maximized as IT admins and helpdesks are stretched across numerous customers. Lack of automated management procedures results in labor intensive manual tasks that are prone to errors.

Likewise, the development of customized scripts is often ill-fitted for mission-critical applications as they lack standardization and cannot be used by a wide range of administrators.

Challenge #4: Ensuring Customer Satisfaction

Lower customer satisfaction results in increased churn, a problem most affiliated with poor response time for common administrative requests. Issues range from basic tasks such as password reset to broader user and application management demands. Customer satisfaction decreased from 90 percent in January 2006 to 80 percent in January 2007, according to CompTIA (http://www.comptia.org/pressroom/get_pr.aspx?prid=1224), which found that customer satisfaction "is at a moderate level, with room for improvement" at an average of 5.1 out of 7. Lack of comprehensive, yet user-friendly, self-service administration tools prevent administrators or end-users from easily managing and resolving their own problems quickly and efficiently.



Challenge #5: The rise of mixed environments

A study by Cutter Consortium (<http://www.cutter.com/press/070122.html>) in January 2007 endorsed Software as a Service (SaaS) as a major growth area: 43% of organizations polled are considering using SaaS, up from one-third in 2006. SaaS can incorporate both dedicated and shared infrastructure, but the key point is that enterprises looking to outsource their IT infrastructure will do so in different ways. While some applications will be requested on-demand from a pre-existing shared infrastructure, others will run on a dedicated infrastructure, either to give the perception of higher security and availability or to be customized to the specific needs of an organization. Regardless, MSPs targeting mid to large enterprises will need to efficiently mix and match applications with different types of infrastructure, which will further stretch their operations and resources.

Challenge #6: Increasing revenues through the delivery of new offerings and services

Over the past few years, several types of applications, such as CRM and messaging, have proven popular in a hosted model. It is nearly impossible, however, to predict which future applications will gain widespread popularity. Therefore, an extensible platform is essential to “bullet-proof” one’s investment. Finally, the addition of new offerings and new services is crucial in up-selling existing customers, ensuring broader satisfaction while nurturing the business at hand.

Addressing the Challenges

These critical challenges are already impacting Managed Service Providers today—and will only become more pronounced in the future. As more companies look to outsource their core IT applications, increased deployments and daily change management requests will be compounded. The ability for MSPs to efficiently handle these increasing demands will be of utmost importance in differentiating themselves and reducing costs affiliated with customer acquisition and management.

In today’s multi-vendor, multi-application environments, only a commercially available solution can provide an integrated management center capable of addressing the challenges described in this document and eliminate the key risks and burden faced by administrators, IT managers, and CIOs. The ideal solution would deliver security, control, compliance, ease of use, flexibility, and extensibility.

While piecemeal solutions exist to address many of the management issues for individual applications, the result is overly complicated, expensive, and difficult to launch, manage, and maintain. Few offer a comprehensive solution—none provide an integrated one. Unify from Ensim, the leader in messaging and collaboration infrastructure management, offers a single, simple software solution that addresses all of the problems described in this document for as little as \$2.50 per user per month.

Ensim Unify - Automation & Management Software for Microsoft Exchange, Active Directory, Mobility, and more

Ensim Unify Managed Edition enables service providers to easily manage an unlimited number of dedicated deployments via a single management center. With a core focus on unified communications, messaging, and collaboration, Unify Managed Edition streamlines the management of mission-critical applications used by nearly every employee. Furthermore, Unify’s comprehensive, pre-built connectors lower operating expenses and expand revenue opportunities. Today, Unify Managed Edition supports Microsoft Active Directory, Exchange, SharePoint, and BlackBerry Enterprise Server.



Ensim Unify Eliminates All Critical Problems

1. Centralized Solution

Unify provides a centralized web interface to manage both dedicated and multi-tenant environments. Using a single, easy-to-use interface to manage dedicated systems as well as multi-tenant environments increases the overall efficiency of operation groups, enabling MSPs to quickly provision and administer servers, applications, and their users. The ability for MSPs to delegate administration rights for basic self-service requirements reduces costs further while increasing customer satisfaction.

2. Streamlined Provisioning

Ensim Unify allows MSPs to easily streamline and automate change management requests. A powerful role-based delegated administration allows administrators, helpdesk and end-users to handle changes affiliated with their administrative rights using a standard provisioning and change management method thereby ensuring a constant process. Each action taken through Ensim Unify is time-stamped and allows administrators to easily review changes on a daily or weekly basis. Furthermore, if a problem occurs during a change request, Ensim Unify will notify the administrator and automatically roll back to its previous healthy state ensuring that no action is taken and left unfinished.

3. Provisioning & Change Management Automation

By automating the provisioning and management of Users, (individuals, groups, departments, etc), Applications (on or off premise, server, or services based), and Devices (front end; mobile, desktop, SIP, etc...), Unify significantly reduces errors, downtime, and cost of administration, while greatly increasing productivity, security, and compliance enforcement. Automation of client software and hardware allows new users to be setup quickly and easily, making them more productive faster. Unify has been proven to reduce as much as 70% of the cost of maintenance and administration per year. Automation of provisioning workflow ensures that all users are created in the same consistent manner; in case of any unexpected errors, Unify will ensure that a complete rollback is performed, making certain your infrastructure is left intact.



4. Self-Service & Customer Satisfaction

Ensim Unify offers a powerful role-based management system enabling IT organizations to define custom roles for administrators.

Junior administrators can be prevented from accessing harmful data while department managers and employees can self-manage through a simple user portal, automating and simplifying common operations, thus reducing the load on Helpdesks. Pre-built end-user self-services include:

Universal password reset

With 40% of IT time spent on basic maintenance tasks such as password changes, Unify allows employees to easily set-up a password reminder and reset it at will. Additionally, the same username and password can be used for all applications managed by Unify, further simplifying password management issues.

Self-configuration of clients and devices

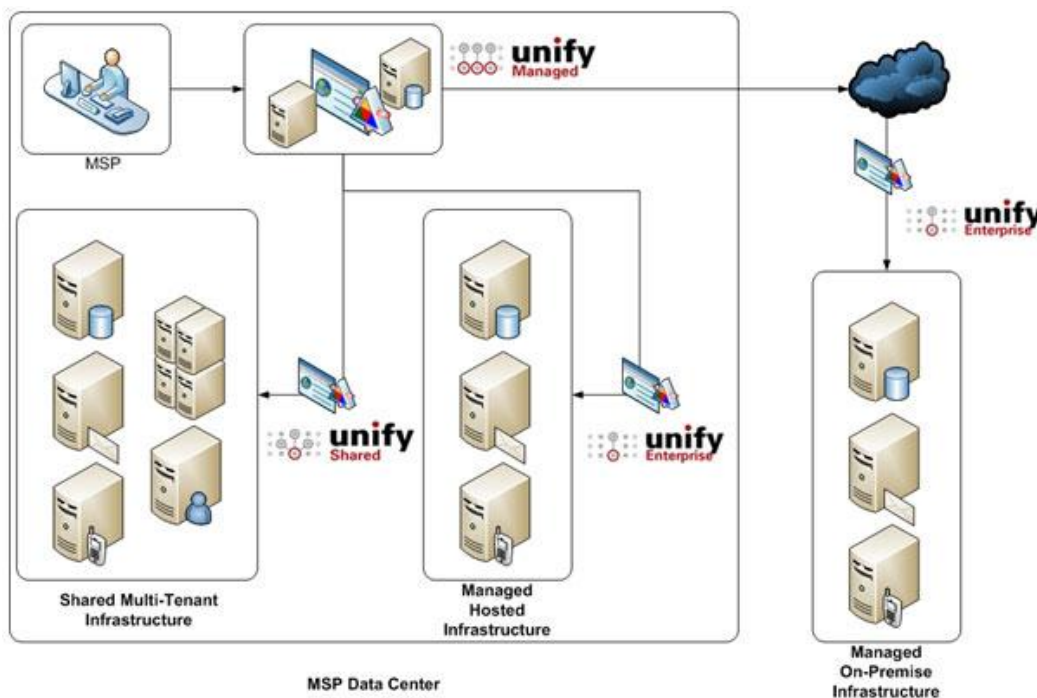
For each new employee, IT generally needs to go from desk to desk in order to configure a variety of clients and smart phones. Unify provides user-friendly self-configuration tools allowing employees to easily set-up their own Outlook client and mobile devices through single-click operations and Over the Air (OTA).

Distribution list management

Unify allows Exchange administrators to delegate the management of distribution groups to employees. Each user can create and manage membership for groups they own. These list owners can further use the web-management center to define list membership on the basis of a directory attribute or a logical combination of several attributes. Once the membership criterion is defined, Unify automatically keeps the list up to date by periodically adding users who meet the membership criterion. Automation from Unify eliminates the chances of human errors and streamlines distribution group management for non-administrator users.

5. Enabling SaaS and Mixed Environments

Ensim Unify offers the ability to manage both dedicated and multi-tenant environments under a single management center, thereby reducing overall costs and simplifying the ongoing management of customers further. Rather than managing multiple environments in silos, Unify offers MSPs with a bird's eye view of each of their customers' infrastructure, whether shared or dedicated. Administrators can log-in to each infrastructure easily from a single point.



6. Ensuring Extensibility

Built with extensibility in mind, Ensim Unify comes with a comprehensive, open-standards based web-services API, allowing for easy integration with legacy systems. A complete SDK allows MSPs or ISVs to develop additional connectors for additional enterprise applications, enabling MSPs to grow their business and stay ahead of competition

1,000,000 Users are administered by Ensim Unify today

Ensim Corporation is the leading provider of management software for unified communications and collaboration infrastructure. Ensim products are used by service providers and enterprises worldwide to accelerate and enable deployment of integrated solutions, simplify and automate secure management of complex environments, and increase user and IT productivity.



Information Worker Solutions
Advanced Infrastructure Solutions
ISV/Software Solutions



For more information, visit <http://ensim.com/products/unify/managed/index.html>

or

contact us directly at 1-888-248-4003.

About Ensim Corporation: Ensim Corporation is the leading provider of management software for Unified Communications and Collaboration infrastructure. Ensim products are used by service providers and enterprises worldwide to accelerate and enable deployment of integrated solutions, simplify and automate secure management of complex environments, and increase user and IT productivity. Ensim is a Microsoft Gold Certified partner and also maintains strategic partnerships with many leading Infrastructure vendors, including Research In Motion (BlackBerry), Hewlett-Packard, Accenture, Siemens and BroadSoft.

