



Customer Profile

Draper Tools is a world-leading tool distributor exporting hardware to 61 nations in almost every corner of the globe. The company has an extensive local area network (LAN) as well as numerous remote users.

Challenge

Draper needed a robust, flexible email server suited for safe communications with staff, suppliers and customers. The server needed to be powerful and scalable, without being needlessly complicated to administer. Other essentials included comprehensive protection against spam and viruses, easy backup and restoration, convenient upgrades and strong technical support.

Solution

MDaemon email server, SecurityPlus and Outlook Connector from Alt-N Technologies, plus Archive Server from Achab.

www.altn.com

Distribution

Powerful features and easy administration give global tool wholesaler safe email communications, saving money and time

As one of the world's leading tool distributors, Draper Tools exports hardware to 61 nations worldwide. Because of its global business, Draper needed a robust and flexible email server suited to their primary requirement of safe communications with staff, suppliers and customers wherever they are located.

As an experienced network administrator, Colin Richmond evaluated the alternatives and chose Alt-N Technologies' MDaemon email server for Windows. "It is what I consider to be the most feature-rich product for the price in its class," he says. "That, coupled with the ongoing development of features, made it an excellent choice. MDaemon ticked all the right boxes and saved our company considerable money and time."

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In addition to choosing MDaemon as the email server, Mr. Richmond specified two MDaemon plugins—SecurityPlus for enhanced protection against email threats and Outlook Connector for groupware functions. He also deployed the Archive Server plugin from Achab. The result is a robust and flexible core communications platform for Draper's global tool business.

Evaluating the features and benefits of an email server is important to ensure a proper fit to each individual business. Mr. Richmond found the levels of complexity varied enormously among email servers. For example, he says "I have used MS Exchange, but I found it overly heavy and complicated to administer."

In contrast, he says, "Alt-N clearly listens to its customers. For example, MDaemon has usable, real-world features that are designed to solve user problems for businesses, rather than being included because they are technically possible. This is not something other developers can claim."

In particular, the anti-spam and anti-virus facilities provided by MDaemon and SecurityPlus are very important for Draper Tools. "We use these extensively," Mr. Richmond explains. "They are very powerful and have significantly reduced the spam and other unwanted email entering our user accounts."

As with any IT implementation, another important consideration is proven support. "The quality of the technical support department—both online and by phone—is a major benefit for us," adds Mr. Richmond. "Any queries are handled quickly and efficiently by a knowledgeable and experienced team."



MDaemon Product Features

Remote Connection

Draper Tools has around 100 PCs connected over a LAN covering three sites. Remotely, it has approximately 70 users—mostly department heads and the sales team—who either dial in or connect from their homes via ADSL to check their email. It does not have any PDAs or smart phones at present, however it is something that Mr. Richmond is considering for use in the future.

“For remote access to emails from home or on the road, we use the WorldClient web mail interface included within MDAemon. This keeps your email conveniently all in one place,” says Mr. Richmond.

Groupware Collaboration

Draper staff use Microsoft Outlook’s collaborative functions through the Outlook Connector for MDAemon plug-in. Their primary usage of collaboration is to share and coordinate business calendars.

Backup & Archiving

The company uses Achab’s Archive Server for MDAemon to back up all inbound and outbound email messages. The entire system is backed up daily to tape. This is mostly to create an audit trail of invoices, orders and other important items that have been sent and received. Also Mr. Richmond finds it useful for tracing correspondence.

Web Administration/User Options

Draper Tools uses MDAemon’s built-in WebAdmin application to allow administrators to remotely manage the server and allow users to configure some options for their own accounts.

MDaemon’s design provides for easy installing, upgrading and restoring, plus low requirements for maintenance and server hardware

The initial installation process for Draper Tools had the MDAemon system up and running in just a couple of hours, according to Mr. Richmond. “The documentation for MDAemon on the web site is great,” he says. “It is easy to understand and follow and includes everything from basic instructions to more advanced user tips.” Draper Tools keeps up to date with the latest versions of MDAemon and SecurityPlus at all times to ensure they maintain the best virus and spam protection possible. Mr. Richmond says he has found the upgrade process to be very simple and it has never taken more than a few minutes.

Restoring MDAemon following a hardware failure is very easy, “It was up and running in minutes—simple as that!”

From personal experience, Mr. Richmond knows MDAemon is easy to restore. This became necessary once because of a major hardware failure. “The process was very simple,” he explains. “We restored the MDAemon directories over a new installation. It was up and running in minutes—simple as that!”

“I doubt that it takes up more that an hour or so per week to look after—MDaemon is a breeze.”

Draper Tools has approximately 100 local PCs, plus 70 remote users who remotely access their email through the WorldClient web mail interface. Despite this number of users, Mr. Richmond finds administration a straightforward process. “I doubt that it takes up more that an hour or so per week to look after,” he explains. “MDaemon is a breeze.”

Because MDAemon is designed to use minimal system resources, Draper Tools is able to run the email server on a Windows XP machine with modest performance specifications, but with plenty of disk space for storing email messages. “The hardware requirements were not particularly a consideration for us when purchasing MDAemon, but it certainly helps in terms of lower cost of ownership,” says Mr. Richmond.

“Overall, MDAemon offers us a powerful, scalable and flexible email solution for our business, at a highly competitive price,” Mr. Richmond concludes.



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