



MESSAGING SERVER

PRICE
From £225
for 25 users
(GMS Mail only)

SUPPLIER
Gordano
01275 345100

INTERNET
www.gordano.co.uk

REQUIREMENTS
Windows NT • 2000 •
XP • Solaris • Linux •
AIX

EASE OF USE
★★★★★

FEATURES
★★★★★

VALUE FOR MONEY
★★★★★

OVERALL
★★★★★

Gordano Messaging Suite

Adds extra features to Microsoft Exchange and costs less, with the only real downside being the basic webmail

Gordano Messaging Suite (GMS) was launched as NtMail in 1995, and this product has since evolved to the point where it has numerous collaboration features. Instant messaging, SMS gateway, list servers, tasks, shared calendars and public folders are all on offer, and all can be configured and accessed either from a web interface or through email clients.

It's no surprise that GMS's main rival is Microsoft's Exchange, but there are some important differences; GMS not only works over standard email protocols but also across Windows, Linux, Solaris and AIX. Plus, its hardware requirements are much lighter – a GMS server running Windows set up for 50 users could have a 450MHz CPU, 256MB of RAM and a 1GB hard disk. Gordano claims GMS will support 10,000 users on a single server, or 180,000 if you're just using the email services and not the collaboration tools.

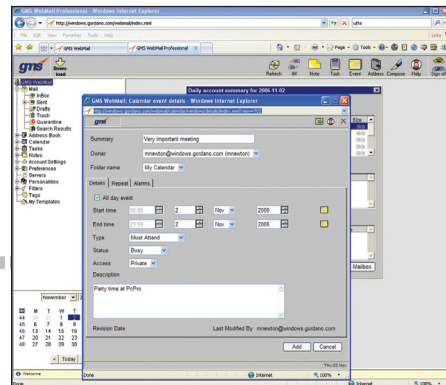
Another nice feature is that the user interface for the admin and the webmail is identical across all supported platforms, making administration consistent irrespective of the server configuration. Continuing the multiplatform support, the calendaring system from Macs (iCal) is fully supported, so employees with Macs and PCs can now send each other appointments.

One unique feature Gordano has patented is "disposable" email addresses, which can be set to time out. The address behaves like an alias and so emails to it will appear in the user's main mailbox, but after a set period the address will no longer exist and so any spam sent to it will bounce.

The SMS gateway can be configured to allow incoming SMS messages to appear in a user's inbox, thus providing a single point of message collection. Even IM conversations can be automatically sent to the inbox for archiving. The Cached Exchange mode is also supported in GMS – useful for mobile users with laptops, so they can store a local copy of their messages when offline.

If you're tempted away from Exchange, a migration tool can ease the task. In fact, by placing a GMS box in front of your existing Exchange box, you can migrate users seamlessly. When a user first logs onto the GMS box, their mailbox will be automatically migrated from the Exchange server.

Backing up the GMS storage is as simple as backing up files, and the whole configuration of the mail server can be backed up locally or transferred to Gordano so that, in the event of a server failure, an install



Manage all messaging systems in one place with GMS.

followed by a file restore will bring everything back.

But GMS does have faults. The web front-end needs to be re-written as a proper web application, using AJAX or similar, which would make the user experience more pleasant.

The other problem with GMS is the sheer number of modules and features: it can be confusing to know what you need to order, and consequently what it will cost. For example, GMS Mail, Anti-Virus, Anti-Spam, WebMail, List Server, Communication Server, Collaboration Server, Calendaring, Instant Messaging, Mobile Gateway and Archive & Recovery are all separate items in Gordano's price list.

Nevertheless, GMS is a very competent and flexible system – a serious competitor on both price and features to Microsoft's Exchange. If you're considering a messaging system that offers more than simple email then you should give GMS a trial run. **MARK NEWTON**