Tramedico Finds e-Collaboration with Domino for Linux

Lotus

About Stone-IT B.V.

Stone-IT (www.stone-it.com) is the leading Linux integrator in the Netherlands and provides one-stop shopping for commercial Linux environments. The services provided are Linux Consultancy, Linux Solutions, Linux Support, Hardware and Linux Training. Stone-IT is Business Partner and Certified Training Partner of Red Hat and Business Partner of SuSE, IBM and Caldera.

About GoTo Reality B.V.

GoTo Reality (www.goto.nl) provides consulting, developing, integration and system management services for the Lotus Notes/Domino and PalmOS platform. GoTo Reality is a business partner of IBM, Lotus and Palm.

About Tramedico International B.V.

Tramedico International (www.tramedico.nl) produces, imports and distributes pharmaceutical products, both over the counter products and prescription products. The mission statement of Tramedico is "Quality in Care" — being the main goal of Tramedico and its employees. Product-development, marketing and distribution are done in Tramedico's high tech production plant. Since its start in 1973, Tramedico has become a successful company with subsidiaries in the Netherlands and Belgium.

Tramedico International B.V., an importer and distributor of pharmaceutical products in the Netherlands and Belgium, faced a dilemma. The 28-year-old company had recently moved their e-mail router and Internet gateway to servers running SuSe Linux 7.0. Robin van Dijk, Tramedico ICT Manager, says, "It gave us a stable system, very good and inexpensive. That was our first experience with Linux."

Then, Tramedico sought to upgrade this computer infrastructure to help employees work together and share information. Integrated messaging, group calendaring, and knowledge management were high priorities. At the time, there was no groupware solution running on Linux to meet their needs.

When Lotus Domino for Linux became available, it provided the solution they needed.

Choosing Lotus Notes and Domino

Tramedico consulted with GoTo Reality B.V., a Lotus Business Partner Benelux, for advice on an integrated solution that would meet their growing needs.

"They wanted integrated calendaring and scheduling," René Van Gorp, Managing Director of GoTo Reality recalls. "They wanted to implement knowledge management, too, with one interface and one platform. Notes and Domino had all the ingredients to provide the functionality they needed. They also wanted a groupware solution that wasn't limited to a single operating system."

Tramedico's Van Dijk says, "For us the release of Domino R5 on the Linux platform was timed perfectly. Otherwise we would have been forced to look for alternatives, since prior to the Domino for Linux release, there was no groupware functionality on the Linux operating system."

Easy implementation

Tramedico called on Stone-IT, its support partner for their current Linux infrastructure, to implement Domino for Linux on their servers. Stone-IT has Linux as its core business.

The Linux mail servers were migrated to two new IBM Netfinity Servers running Red Hat Linux 6.2. "Converting to Domino for Linux was easy," says Peter Boerma, Sales Manager at Stone-IT. "It only took a couple of days."

GoTo Reality worked with Stone-IT on the implementation. GoTo Reality's Van Gorp remembers being among the first Lotus Business Partners in the Netherlands to implement Domino on Linux. "There was very little knowledge, at that time, about the combination of those platforms. Linux was new to us, but we had a lot of experience with the OS/2 platform — which was an advantage. We were very pleased to find out that Linux is a very stable platform, and it performs very well. Another advantage is that the main administration modules can be accessed from the Notes client. The Linux environment was more transparent to us than we expected it to be."

Short term benefits: collaboration and integrated messaging

The Domino for Linux implementation was completed in June 2000 and is now fully operational. Sixty users access their e-mail and calendaring via the Notes client. Some are using Web browsers to access their mail.

The transition to using the Notes client was smooth. Experts from Stone-IT and GoTo Reality provided a few hours of end-user training to the 60 employees at two locations.

Tramedico is pleased with Domino. Van Dijk says, "Of course it is more expensive than our old mail-only system, but it can do so much more." Even before developing groupware applications, there were benefits. He points to how much easier it is now for employees to schedule meetings. The integration between calendaring and e-mail means it's been easy for users to learn, and there is only one piece of software to maintain.

Domino for Linux: A foundation for growth

Tramedico selected Notes and Domino because this implementation met all their needs. Integrated messaging with group calendaring and scheduling to help employees work together from anywhere; document management for sharing knowledge.

Looking to the future, the gateway to the Internet in the future will remain a dedicated Linux server, fully secured with a Linux-based firewall. More users will access Domino via a Web browser. A team from Tramedico will be working with Stone-IT and GoTo Reality to design and implement knowledge management and workflow applications, and an intranet solution to help Tramedico keep its competitive edge.

"We are a pharmaceutical company," says Van Dijk. "We sell medical products. To sell effectively, you need a lot of knowledge about what you're selling, and you have to use that knowledge to move customers to buy. So we're aware we have to store that knowledge so it is reusable and make it work for us. In order for us to keep knowledge in-house, even when employees leave, we have to find a good way to store it." The shared databases and replication schemes underlying Notes and Domino make it an ideal platform.

Tramedico plans to create an intranet, based on Domino. Van Dijk looks forward to the time soon when, "not only one or two webmasters, but every Notes user can put content on the Internet."

GoTo Reality will create the intranet solution. Van Gorp says, "We're working with Tramedico to create personalized portals based on the Notes client. Our goal is to make available all the information they have in special knowledge bases."

"We can now combine the reliability and security of the Linux operating system with the many advantages of Domino, thus creating a solid basis for our network infrastructure. The many possibilities that Domino offers us for the future can be exploited easily thanks to the scalability of Linux."

Linux — an excellent choice

For Tramedico, Linux has proven to be an excellent choice. Van Dijk says, "Users don't even know it's there. They can't really see any difference other than excellent speed."

GoTo Reality sees the future in Linux. "We are getting more and more leads from Lotus using Linux as a supported Domino platform," says Van Gorp. "IT managers don't want to be locked into a single platform. They are very seriously looking for alternatives. This is a good signal from the market."

Stone-IT is finding that Linux is especially attractive to small and medium-sized businesses. "Our SMB customers choose Linux because it's stable, it's cheap, and it's a good Internet solution," says Boerma.

Configuration

- IBM Netfinity 5500 and IBM Netfinity 5000 servers
- Linux SuSe Version 7.0
- Lotus Domino R5.04
- Lotus Notes R5.04

For more information about Domino for Linux

Visit the Domino for Linux Web site at www.lotus.com/dominolinux.

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