

CommuniGate Pro Messaging Platform

Transforming Email and Calendaring



Overview

As e-mail continues to be the preferred method of business communication, choosing a mature and complete e-mail server becomes a mission critical decision. Organizations need a robust yet easy to manage solution and reliable technical support from the system vendor. According to a report from technology analysts IDC, on an average day in 2000,

9.7 billion e-mail messages were sent worldwide. By the year 2005 that number will grow to 35 billion.

Making matters more complicated, offering only e-mail is not enough. Organizations must offer other services including mailing lists, address books, calendaring and scheduling, look-ups for local and remote account information, secure Web based e-mail, and personal Web sites. Is your messaging infrastructure ready?

This overview will introduce you to CommuniGate Pro, the carrier scale internet messaging software from CommuniGate Systems.

A review by CNET summed the product up nicely saying

“CommuniGate Pro is a feature-rich messaging server that not only offers superior IMAP, POP3, and SMTP services, but also provides HTML-based e-mail access, excellent anti-spam capabilities, LDAP support, and a state-of-the-art list server.”

Internet standard messaging, combined with sophisticated collaborative functionality makes CommuniGate Pro an ideal solution for organizations looking for calendaring and scheduling on the desktop, or those wanting to replace expensive and unreliable messaging environments without losing end user functionality.

Proven

First released in 1998, CommuniGate Pro is a proven solution, with several thousand servers hosting 30 million active users worldwide. It earned its excellent reputation meeting the rigorous uptime, security and growth demands of service provider and telco customers, and continues to build upon

that reputation to become the solution of choice for organizations of all sizes. Current implementations range in size from smaller enterprises and universities installations with under 30,000 users, to mid-size ISPs with 30,000-300,000 users, to the largest telcos serving 300,000-5,000,000 users.

Because of its reliable performance and standards based architecture, CommuniGate Pro is utilized as the platform for a wide variety of services. Enterprises looking for advanced end user functionality deploy CommuniGate Pro in their secure corporate messaging and calendaring environments. Educational institutions rely on CommuniGate Pro when consolidating departmental servers and supporting the diversity in their students' e-mail clients. The largest international telcos use CommuniGate Pro to provide multi-language, Web-based e-mail, and as the backbone for wireless messaging systems.

Mature Company

CommuniGate Systems is the technology leader in integrated messaging, developing software for over 30 major computer platforms including all UNIX flavors, Linux, AS/400, Windows, and MacOS X. We are a mature and stable company, profitably in operation since 1991, and completely focused on internet messaging.

That focus allows us to listen to and deliver on the requirements of our customers, which is quite a refreshing change in an industry where so many companies are focused on mergers and financial difficulties.

As one reviewer from Linux Journal noted after monitoring the CommuniGate Systems technical support mailing list for several months, "for the most part problems are answered the same day, sometimes within hours, including on weekends... staff members at CommuniGate Systems are very motivated to keep their customers happy."

Reliable Performance

Does your business depend on e-mail? Would you like to rescue your system administrators from unscheduled downtimes and corrupt mailboxes? CommuniGate Pro is the answer. Besides being an extremely stable product, as Linux Journal reported, "administrators should rarely need to use the monitors section as the system practically runs itself," CommuniGate Pro supports a Dynamic Cluster environment where servers can be added or taken off-line without affecting service.

The unique CommuniGate Pro Dynamic Cluster technology is a software solution, running on a group of servers, that relies on multi-tier load balancing and redundancy to pro-

vide the reliable performance required by modern messaging providers. All servers in a CommuniGate Pro Dynamic Cluster work together, processing mail and serving user requests. The Dynamic Cluster controls the load on each server and directs new requests to the least busy server.

In the event of hardware failure, the Dynamic Cluster controller detects it and removes the server from the cluster. The e-mail system continues to work without interruption. There is no "intermediate" time, like in simple fail-over solutions when the hot stand-by server replaces the failed one. When the failed server is restored or when a replacement server is installed, it joins the cluster automatically, again without any service interruption.

With no-single-point-of-failure, the Dynamic Cluster architecture allows organizations to exceed 99.999% uptime requirements.

Virus/SPAM Protection

The damage caused by recent "worms" and viruses shows how vulnerable e-mail systems can be. CommuniGate Pro supports the use of third-party products to scan all incoming or outgoing messages for virus detection and content filtering. CommuniGate Systems partners with leading anti-virus and anti-spam vendors to manufacture various filtering plugins designed especially for CommuniGate Pro. Unlike "scanning tools" created by other mail-server vendors, CommuniGate Pro Plugins are developed together by CommuniGate Systems and the scanning engine companies (McAfee/Network Associates, Sophos, MailShell, etc) to ensure scalability and minimal impact on system performance.

CommuniGate Pro also has effective built-in anti-spam functionality. Through the intuitive Web based interface, the administrator can instruct the system when to accept or reject messages. Messages can be blocked from offending hosts based either on IP addresses or on hosts found in the Realtime Blackhole Lists (RBLs). The interface also provides flexible mail-relaying options to control routing of legitimate messages.

Scalable

CommuniGate Pro is completely standards-based. By choosing an open-standards-based solution, you avoid getting locked into a proprietary hardware/software system and can create an extensible messaging platform that will grow with your business.

Currently, CommuniGate Pro installations range in size from 50 to 5 million users. Customers are able to deploy on their preferred hardware/operating system and take advantage of CommuniGate Pro's flexible architecture options. You may

choose to begin with a single server implementation, then upgrade to a multi-server cluster when demand reaches the necessary level. Once in the Dynamic Cluster, easily add capacity or upgrade to a more robust hardware/operating system combination when necessary.

Easy Administration

CommuniGate Pro has an abundance of features which are easily administered, allowing your staff to focus on other tasks. System administrators can choose to work in the intuitive Web based administration interface or use the Application Program Interface (API) which allows them to build external provisioning, monitoring, and billing applications to integrate with the messaging server.

The Web based administration interface supports hierarchical "domain delegation," where each domain may have its own set of administrators. This functionality liberates your support staff from client calls requesting a change in domain settings or the creation of a new account within their domain.

To support migrating from another e-mail system, CommuniGate Pro provides simple tools to import users and mailboxes. For organizations moving thousands of users, these tools can reduce the complexity and time needed to complete a migration.

Choice of Operating Systems

CommuniGate Pro runs on over 30 operating systems and chip sets so you will not be forced to purchase new hardware or retrain your support staff. The product is based on the CommuniGate Systems Foundation Framework, which allows us to easily support Solaris, Tru64, Linux/LinuxPPC, FreeBSD, BSDi, Windows, UnixWare, MacOS X, AIX, Cobalt, HP/UX, IRIX, OS/400 and Linux for S390, allowing you to utilize existing hardware/operating system infrastructure. The server takes full advantage of modern multi-threaded and multi-processor environments allowing for efficient and reliable message processing while still being easy on system resources.

If customers' operating system requirements change, they can switch hardware platforms on the fly, or mix hardware/OS platforms in the same installation. There is no additional licensing fee for moving from one operating system to another.

Sophisticated End User Functionality

With so many e-mail infrastructure options to choose from, sometimes the most important requirements are overlooked

– those of your end users. Recently Network Computing suggested "approach the decision from the user perspective, assuming the customer experience is paramount."

CommuniGate Pro supports access by any standards compliant e-mail clients, web browsers, and many legacy applications, reducing support costs by allowing your users to keep their favorite e-mail client whether it is Outlook, Netscape, Eudora, or even Pine.

Integrated Groupware

The Groupware module of CommuniGate Pro provides a framework for teams of people to work together. With Outlook's advanced functionality and a full-featured Webmail client, users stay productive, accessing the same information in and out of the office.

Enabling Outlook

Users who prefer Outlook on the desktop can now take advantage of its advanced collaboration features. Working in Corporate Workgroup mode they receive e-mail, arrange meetings, share contacts, access free/busy information and reply to requests in the familiar Outlook interface. Users who previously ran Outlook in limited Internet mode can now utilize its advanced calendaring and scheduling functionality.

Full-Featured Web Client

CommuniGate Pro's groupware functionality is not limited solely to Outlook on the desktop. The Webmail interface is a secure groupware client, supporting messaging, scheduling, electronic discussions, and contact creation and maintenance. Now users can access the same mailboxes, folders and calendars from any browser, just as they would with Outlook.

Self-Service Account Administration

Within the Web interface, users set permissions that define how others may access their account. For instance the marketing team might have a 'marketing contacts' folder where each team member adds, deletes, and updates information, while a manager might allow her assistant read-only access to her personal calendar.

To more efficiently manage their daily deluge of e-mail, each user can define their own message filtering and forwarding rules in a way that makes sense to them, taking that burden off your system administrator. Users also have control over their vacation messages, and can reset passwords or have the password sent to them if they forget.

Don't Just Take our Word for It

CommuniGate Pro has also proven itself in head-to-head performance contests. For example, Network Computing invited six vendors including CommuniGate Systems, iPlanet, Critical Path, Rockliffe, Mirapoint and Novell to submit proposals for two fictitious RFPs. The first was an e-mail system for a 10,000-user corporation and the second was an e-mail system for a 250,000-user ISP. The editors then tested each solution with a simulated user population performing e-mail transactions. The number of transactions was gradually increased to measure performance of each e-mail server under extreme loads. All of the testing was performed in Network Computing's Real-World Labs® at Syracuse University.

Network Computing awarded both bids to CommuniGate Systems, based on the analysis of the proposals and the benchmarking performed in the labs. The reviewer wrote "CommuniGate Pro worked flawlessly on the least expensive hardware during the performance testing and nailed the functionality requirements" leading testers to conclude that CommuniGate Pro had the best price/performance ratio.

Outlook Interface – "Elegant and Brilliant"

A recent independent review of CommuniGate Pro, touted its potential as a solution to be used in place of a Microsoft Exchange server. The VARBusiness reviewer stated "CommuniGate Systems' Outlook interface is an elegant and brilliant engineering feat... I couldn't tell whether my Outlook XP client was connected to a CommuniGate Pro server or an Exchange Server. Everything in all of the standard Outlook folders was properly stored and displayed."

And We Agree

CommuniGate Systems wants you to try CommuniGate Pro and evaluate for yourself how well it meets your organization's needs. We offer fully functioning, fully supported versions that you can download and install from our Website at www.communiGate.com/download.html. Free pre-sales support and the CommuniGate Pro mailing list are also accessible from the site at: <http://www.communiGate.com/support/cpro.html>.

We're sure that you will find the rich set of advanced messaging features, scalability, reliability, and unmatched performance make the CommuniGate Pro software the best choice for your organization.

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