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## Overview

**Country or Region:** United States

**Industry:** Professional services—  
Marketing

### Customer Profile

Texas-based Harte-Hanks is a global marketing company that provides creative, database, mailing, fulfillment, and lead management services. The company has 5,000 employees.

### Business Situation

Harte-Hanks was concerned about the cost of its messaging infrastructure, the reliability of email, and the ability to provide users with productivity tools on more devices.

### Solution

Harte-Hanks moved to the Microsoft Business Productivity Online Standard Suite, which provides email, collaboration, web conferencing, and instant messaging software as online services.

### Benefits

- Messaging costs reduced 30 percent
- Better use of IT resources
- Faster delivery of services to customers

## Marketing Firm Cuts Email Costs 30 Percent by Moving to Microsoft Online Services

“Time that our IT staff used to focus on email can now be refocused on supporting resources that drive revenue. We like the fact that managing email infrastructure is now someone else’s responsibility.”

*Robert Neill, Vice President, Corporate Technology Services, Harte-Hanks*

As a global company, Harte-Hanks depends on email messaging to keep its 4,000 information workers in touch with one another and with customers. Concerned about the rising cost and complexity of its existing email solution, Harte-Hanks migrated to the Microsoft Business Productivity Online Standard Suite, part of Microsoft Online Services. With the help of Binary Tree, a Microsoft Gold Certified Partner, Harte-Hanks migrated 4,000 mailboxes to Microsoft Online Services in two weekends and cut messaging costs by approximately 30 percent. Relieved of messaging administration, the Harte-Hanks IT staff can focus more time on creating and supporting solutions that drive revenue. With the availability of instant messaging and web conferencing, and able to access email messages from more mobile devices, Harte-Hanks can be more responsive to its customers.

“For at least five years, we had discussions about potentially switching to a new email platform, but it required significant financial commitment.”

Robert Neill, Vice President, Corporate Technology Services, Harte-Hanks

### Situation

Harte-Hanks is a worldwide marketing company that provides multichannel direct and digital marketing solutions as well as shopper advertising opportunities to local, regional, national, and international consumer and business-to-business marketers. Based in San Antonio, Texas, Harte-Hanks has 5,000 employees (4,000 information workers and 1,000 production workers) in more than 30 offices worldwide.

Harte-Hanks used the same email messaging software for many years. However, with numerous clusters of mail servers around the world, two administrators devoted to email administration, and remote-office personnel spending considerable time supporting email infrastructure, the company was concerned about rising costs.

Additionally, many employees, especially newer additions, were more familiar and experienced with Microsoft Outlook and Microsoft Exchange Server than they were with the existing messaging solution. In many cases, new employees had to climb a learning curve just to become familiar with a service as basic as email messaging. Also, productivity functions such as instant messaging and video conferencing were not included with the existing solution, so Harte-Hanks had to provide them as separate applications. Launching and switching between multiple applications throughout the day reduced employee productivity; additionally, access to some of these programs was limited because of the high licensing costs. While employees were increasingly using smartphones and wanted to access email messages, calendars, and contacts from these devices, those services required extra servers.

“For at least five years, we had discussions about potentially switching to a new email platform, but it required significant financial commitment, and we couldn’t justify

bringing in a brand new email infrastructure,” says Robert Neill, Vice President of Corporate Technology Services for Harte-Hanks.

### Solution

In late 2008, Harte-Hanks learned about the Microsoft Business Productivity Online Standard Suite from its local Microsoft account team. This suite includes Microsoft Exchange Online messaging software, Microsoft SharePoint Online collaboration software, Microsoft Office Live Meeting for PC-based web conferencing, and Microsoft Office Communications Online for instant messaging. These enterprise communication and collaboration applications are hosted in the “cloud,” in Microsoft data centers, and are purchased from Microsoft or its partners.

The Harte-Hanks IT staff was familiar and comfortable with Microsoft software, as many of the company’s servers ran the Windows Server operating systems. The company also runs many of its databases on Microsoft SQL Server data management software, uses Microsoft Office productivity software on its desktops, and uses Microsoft Office SharePoint Server 2007 for collaboration sites.

Harte-Hanks decided to run a pilot program of Microsoft Business Productivity Online Standard Suite, a part of Microsoft Online Services, and other cloud-based email solutions, which provided similar functionality. Using a pilot group of 40 users, mostly in the IT organization, Harte-Hanks tested basic email functions, including scheduling meetings, creating collaboration sites, checking email and calendars from smartphones, and other functions. It ultimately decided on Microsoft Online Services.

“We don’t have to make a huge capital outlay for an email server and required licensing just to add 100 employees. It’s nice to have incremental costs that match our incremental growth.”

Robert Neill, Vice President, Corporate Technology Services, Harte-Hanks

“We liked the level of integration between the various components—how well messaging and calendaring and Live Meeting melded together, for example,” Neill says. “We also saw benefit from how easily our iPhones and other smartphones could be configured on Microsoft Online Services.” Using Microsoft Exchange ActiveSync technology, Harte-Hanks employees can easily and quickly synchronize email, calendar, contacts, and tasks between Microsoft Exchange Online and their mobile devices, including iPhones.

#### **4,000 Mailboxes Migrated in Two Weekends**

In June 2009, to obtain help in migrating to Microsoft Online Services, Harte-Hanks engaged Binary Tree, a Microsoft Gold Certified Partner and a finalist for the 2010 Microsoft Notes Migration Partner of the Year Award.

“Binary Tree provided a hosted migration of the Harte-Hanks user mailboxes and messaging data, so no onsite consulting was needed. We did everything remotely,” says Colleena Jazrawi, Senior Account Manager for Binary Tree. “We first performed an analysis of the Harte-Hanks environment to see if there was anything that would impact the migration and then we successfully migrated the email messages, calendars, contacts, and to-do lists for their 4,000 users in just two weekends via our remote migration data center.”

“Binary Tree helped us plan the migration,” Neill says. “It also performed a custom data migration for 750 of our most prolific users, migrating a higher volume of their historical mail messages and data.”

Harte-Hanks also created a training portal where employees could view visual, step-by-step instruction guides for each of the major

tasks they could perform with Microsoft Online Services, such as send email, schedule a meeting, and set up a collaboration site. “People don’t have hours at a time to attend training, but they can find five minutes here and there,” Neill says. “The training portal was a big success. We sent all employees emails informing them of the switchover and driving them to the training portal so they would be prepared. The migration was very smooth.”

#### **Closing the Distance Gap**

Today, all 4,000 information workers at Harte-Hanks use Microsoft Exchange Online for email messaging. The company also purchased 1,400 licenses of the deskless worker version of Exchange Online for its production workers. They can access email, calendars, and contacts using Outlook Web App, a feature of Microsoft Exchange Server that provides web-based email access.

With Exchange Online, employees have easier, faster web access to their email using the familiar Microsoft Office Outlook 2007 messaging and communications client. Employees can view shared calendars and move more smoothly between their Microsoft Office documents and email. Employees are also able to access mail, calendars, contacts, and to-do lists from their smartphones. “Microsoft Online Services really expanded the array of mobile devices our staff could use,” Neill says. “Our employees have remote and on-the-go access to mail, calendars, contacts, and the company directory. The result is a boost in productivity since such a significant percentage of our employees are on the road consulting with clients.”

By using Microsoft Office Communications Online, Harte-Hanks has been able to widely deploy instant messaging. “Messaging gives us another tool to interact with one another,” Neill says. “Since we’re spread

“Even though it’s difficult to measure, the collective efficiencies result in faster delivery of solutions to our customers.”

Robert Neill, Vice President, Corporate Technology Services, Harte-Hanks

across multiple locations, it helps close the distance gap. Sometimes our employees find it more efficient to share quick bits of information via instant messaging.”

Employees are in the early stages of transitioning to the Microsoft Office Live Meeting service, which provides PC-based web conferencing. “We’ve started to see significant growth in the use of Live Meeting,” Neill says. “We had a limited number of licenses for another usage-based web conferencing solution, but were cautious about deploying it more widely because of expense concerns. With Office Live Meeting, web conferencing is part of our flat monthly fee, so everyone is free to use Live Meeting.”

The company is increasing use of Microsoft SharePoint Online to deploy team collaboration sites. “SharePoint wasn’t a big focus of our initial online services deployment, but we have found that it’s much easier to create a new site in the online environment than in the existing on-premises environment,” Neill says.

### Benefits

By migrating to the Microsoft Business Productivity Online Standard Suite, Harte-Hanks reduced its messaging costs by approximately 30 percent, freed up IT staff time, which can now be spent on creating and supporting revenue-producing services, and improved responsiveness to customers. It also outfitted its 4,000 information workers with a richer palette of communications options.

#### **Messaging Costs Reduced 30 Percent**

With the move to Microsoft Online Services, Harte-Hanks reduced its messaging costs by approximately 30 percent. That savings comes from eliminating on-premises messaging server infrastructure and maintenance for those servers, software

licensing, email administrators, and the previous videoconferencing software licensing.

In addition to eliminating dedicated email administrators, Harte-Hanks recouped time across its IT staff previously spent managing the on-premises messaging infrastructure. “Numerous server administrators and data center operations managers had to be concerned about the health of our messaging infrastructure,” Neill says. “By switching to Microsoft Online Services, we freed up IT staff time equivalent to roughly one full-time employee.”

Also, the company’s messaging costs are now tied directly to its business cycles: Messaging expenses grow in direct proportion to business growth. “We don’t have to make a huge capital outlay for an email server and required licensing just to add 100 employees,” Neill adds. “It’s nice to have incremental costs that match our incremental growth.”

#### **Better Use of IT Resources**

One of the most appealing aspects of moving messaging into the cloud is that Harte-Hanks can get out of the email administration business. The IT staff no longer has to worry about keeping server hardware up-to-date, applying security updates, and deploying new messaging servers. “We are a marketing solutions company, and now we can focus our energies on what we do best,” Neill says. “Time that our IT staff used to focus on email now can be refocused on supporting resources that drive revenue. We like the fact that managing email infrastructure is now someone else’s responsibility. This is our first large foray into cloud computing, but it probably won’t be our last.”

#### **Faster Delivery of Services to Customers**

## For More Information

For more information about Microsoft products and services, call the Microsoft Sales Information Center at (800) 426-9400. In Canada, call the Microsoft Canada Information Centre at (877) 568-2495. Customers in the United States and Canada who are deaf or hard-of-hearing can reach Microsoft text telephone (TTY/TDD) services at (800) 892-5234. Outside the 50 United States and Canada, please contact your local Microsoft subsidiary. To access information using the World Wide Web, go to:

[www.microsoft.com](http://www.microsoft.com)

For more information about Binary Tree products and services, call (212) 244-3635 or visit the website at:

[www.binarytree.com](http://www.binarytree.com)

For more information about Harte-Hanks solutions and services, call (800) 456-9748 or visit the website at: [www.harte-hanks.com](http://www.harte-hanks.com)

Harte-Hanks can also deliver solutions to clients faster, because employees can communicate more efficiently with tools such as instant messaging and web conferencing. "Even though it's difficult to measure, the collective efficiencies result in faster delivery of solutions to our customers," Neill says. "Down the road, we look forward to federating these services with customers who are using the same tools so we can improve our service even further."

## Microsoft Online Services

Microsoft Online Services are business-class communication and collaboration solutions delivered as a subscription service and hosted by Microsoft. With these offerings, customers can cost-effectively access the most up-to-date technologies and immediately benefit from streamlined communications, simplified management, and business-class reliability and security features. For IT staffers, Microsoft Online Services are backed by strong service level agreements and help reduce the burden of performing routine IT management, freeing up time to focus on core business initiatives.

For more information, visit:

[www.microsoft.com/online](http://www.microsoft.com/online)

### Software and Services

- Microsoft Online Services
  - Microsoft Business Productivity Online Standard Suite
  - Microsoft Exchange Online
  - Microsoft Office Communications Online

- Microsoft Office Live Meeting
- Microsoft SharePoint Online

### Partners

- Binary Tree