



What's Ahead with Microsoft Exchange 2010?

Microsoft recently released the first public Beta of Exchange 2010, and we've been getting lots of questions from customers who want to know about this product. While a final official release is likely 6 to 12 months away (Microsoft is pushing to get this out by the end of the year) and the all-important Service Pack 1 is probably a good 3 to 4 months after that we wanted to give you a heads up regarding what to expect.

There are a lot of features planned for Exchange 2010 that we feel will make this a very exciting option down the road. Highlights include:

Easier High Availability and Disaster Recovery – Look for a number of features designed to make high availability and disaster recovery easier than ever before. Exchange 2010...

- **Has Built-In Clustering** – Exchange 2010 will eliminate the need for separate Windows clustering, as the clustering functions will all be built in. In a system that will essentially combine the Cluster Continuous Replication and Standby Continuous Replication of Microsoft Exchange 2007, all of the log replication functions will now be built in and seamless to the Exchange administration tools.
- **Can Run on 2 Servers** – Because the high availability servers will be able to have hub transport and client access roles on them, you'll be able to get full redundancy with just two servers (as compared to three or four with Exchange 2007). Good news for smaller organizations!
- **Lets You Add High Availability at Any Time** – Adding high availability after your infrastructure has been built will be a simple task with Exchange 2010. Whereas with Exchange 2007 adding high availability means rebuilding your servers to add the clustering for Windows, with this product you'll be able to use your existing servers "as is."
- **Uses Database Level Failover** – Exchange 2010 will give administrators the capability to failover individual databases instead of just full storage groups.
- **Moves Mailboxes without Down Time** – No more scheduling mailbox moves during off hours! You'll be able to move users between databases such as for maintenance or migration without the user experiencing any down time at all.

Integrated Email Archiving – Exchange 2010 promises to eliminate the need for a third party email archiving solution. It will all be built in, utilizing a personal archive system. Each user will have an additional mailbox (the "archiving mailbox") associated with his primary mailbox. You'll have the option of storing the personal archives on a separate server. Users will be able to manually move mail to the archive or you can have server retention policies handle the task automatically. Time will tell whether the feature set from Microsoft will equal that of third party archive vendors like Symantec and ZL Technologies.

Introduction of Mail Tips – These will be built in rules that can be triggered when certain actions occur, such as warning a user that they are about to "reply all" to a large group of people. Mail tips will help protect users from themselves.

Use of Dynamic Signatures – Exchange 2010 will give you the ability to automatically apply a signature, logo, or message to the bottom of all emails, based on Active Directory attributes. This can be especially useful for meeting legal requirements.

Improvements to Outlook Web Access – A variety of improvements are being made to Outlook Web Access...

- **Supports Multiple Browsers** – Users will be able to have the same premium Outlook Web Access experience whether they use Internet Explorer, Firefox, or Safari.

- **Presents All Messages on One Page** – Regardless of how many messages are in the inbox, all messages will be shown in single page view for easy scrolling. No more paging through a big list of emails!
- **Has Built-In Instant Messaging** – Complete IM functionality will be built in to Outlook Web Access.
- **Shows User Present Information** – You'll be able to see if a user is online and available to chat.

Enhanced Mobile Mail – The mobile mail system is also being enhanced...

- **Displays Free/Busy Data** – You will be able to view a contact's free/busy information, so you'll know when someone will be available.
- **Syncs Text Messages** – Users will be able to sync text messages to their inboxes, so that email and text will be viewable from a single location.
- **Shows Reply Status** – When things get busy it's sometimes hard to remember if you replied to or forwarded a particular message or not. Exchange 2010 will make it easy to tell at a glance, even if you used Outlook to send your message.

On the negative side, though, there is no in-place upgrade path. Exchange 2010 will only run on Windows 2008. Just like the migration from Exchange 2003 to Exchange 2007, you'll have to load Exchange 2010 up on new hardware and then migrate your mailboxes to the new server.

Coyote Creek Consulting is currently evaluating the Beta version of Exchange 2010 to validate that the software really can do all these great things that Microsoft says it can. We'll keep you posted if we discover anything alarming. In the meantime, feel free to contact us with any questions you may have.