



AT A GLANCE

What they needed:

- To reliably serve customers with a industry-standard email solution
- To reduce the time and expense needed to keep an in-house system up to date

What they did:

- Implemented Google Apps ISP across an entire customer network
- Increased customer features and value through email, calendaring, home pages, chat, and Google Gadgets

What they accomplished:

- Enhanced customer engagement and satisfaction with a leading-edge email solution
 - Removed untold hours of maintenance and development from ongoing workloads
 - Freed internal teams to focus on core competencies
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Sunrise

Sunrise Communications AG implements Google Apps for customers, adding email value while cutting costs

Company

With more than 2.86 million customers, Sunrise is Switzerland's second-largest telecommunications service provider, offering private and business customers mobile, fixed network, and Internet services. The Sunrise mobile network is based on the GSM, EDGE, UMTS and HSDPA standards and delivers signal to 99% of the Swiss population. Sunrise plans to supply 80% of Swiss households with its broadband services by 2010. In fiscal 2008 the Zurich-based company achieved total net sales of CHF 1.86 billion from mobile telephony, fixed network, and Internet services.

Challenge

As one of Switzerland's leading telecommunications providers, Sunrise offered email services to a large population of subscribers under the "freesurf plus," "mysunrise," and "premiumsurf" brands. These services were based on a legacy email system comprised of various front ends, including some in-house developments. But lack of storage capacity, insufficient spam protection, and usability were not keeping up with industry standards. The results? High costs in both customer support and platform maintenance for the team at Sunrise.

What's more, the complexity of email account management meant that users were "unknown" to Sunrise, which complicated the assignment of key customer data. Sunrise hoped to solve these problems with their existing service, and launched various projects to enhance or replace their email platforms. But nothing led to a lasting solution. The problem was big enough that Sunrise questioned the viability of providing email services as a core competency. Outsourcing appealed – but they needed absolute certainty that the solution they chose would "just work," long-term, so that Sunrise could continue to uphold their brand value and standards of service.

"No other similar solutions available on the market comes close to the one offered by Google."

Solution

Sunrise surveyed the full spectrum of providers and found one solution that outshone the competition: Google Apps ISP Edition. No other hosted solution performed as well or offered the range of features and services. "It's vital that our email solution is continually improved and enhanced, without us having to perform the basic development work," says Christian Wulle, Product Manager. "No other similar solutions available on the market comes close to the one offered by Google."

Backed by Google, Sunrise launched "Sunrise Mail," which includes email, a calendar, and a personal home page delivered through the Google Apps ISP Edition. This new solution unified Sunrise's email strategy and replaced all previous Sunrise email services, and allowed them to deliver a whole new level of customer benefits. Using Google Gadget technology, Sunrise powered users to enjoy a range of useful options such as free SMS and MMS messaging from their home page, daily TV tips, music charts, and more. These options have engaged users and delighted the Sunrise management team. "The Google Gadgets concept is really exciting," Wulle says. "It's a fast, easy way of integrating personal content into the Sunrise experience."

“We expect other ISPs around the world to choose a hosted solution based on Google Apps.”

Christian Wulle
Product Manager

ABOUT GOOGLE APPS PARTNER EDITION

With Google Apps Partner Edition, ISPs and portals can offer their subscribers powerful Google applications including Gmail, Google Calendar, Google Talk, and online document sharing. This lets ISPs offer their customers an entire suite of communication and collaboration services on their ISP domain. The Partner Edition comes with APIs that make it simple for ISPs to provision, customise, and integrate Google Apps into their existing infrastructure while decreasing operating costs, enhancing UI, offering email storage, and delivering the latest innovation from Google on ISP domains.

For more information, visit
www.google.co.uk/enterprise

From an in-house perspective, Sunrise applauds the technical leadership, stability, and performance of the Google solution. They also value the huge storage capacity. “We like the fact that the mailbox capacity increases all the time,” Wulle adds, and anti-spam functions. Together with tried-and-tested usability, low price per mailbox, and customising options, Google Apps proved to be a perfect solution for Sunrise, with great satisfaction by customers and the in-house team.

Summarising, Wulle says, “We think it’s vital that the product is continually improved and developed, without us having to perform the basic development work. There are currently no other solutions available on the market that come close to the Google Apps ISP Edition.”

The entire provisioning (registration, lifecycle, and password management) is operated by Sunrise using Google’s APIs and SAML-SSO. Since Swiss legislation requires a dedicated monitoring infrastructure, deployment of the email platform implied customised development work. Google and Sunrise worked together to build this, meeting all requirements swiftly and without a hitch.

Migration of existing customer accounts from the three previous legacy platforms to Google Apps began in February 2008, and was completed in November 2008. Although email migration is sometimes difficult on the customer end, Sunrise reports that the process was streamlined by Google’s stability. “Google’s support throughout the entire implementation phase was excellent,” Wulle reports. “We also benefited from Google’s ongoing development in terms of service maintenance.” Since the completion of the migration, hundreds of thousands of satisfied customers rely on the much-improved service.

Results

Sunrise reports true satisfaction with Google Apps ISP Edition, with ongoing enhancement and development, and with the committed, uncomplicated support provided by Google during the migration to the new system. Due to the highly positive experience with Google Apps, Sunrise is certain that Google Apps will impress a lot of other companies in the near future: “We expect other ISPs around the world to choose a hosted solution based on Google Apps. In-house developments that require ongoing maintenance, but that aren’t part of the core business, are losing importance all the time. Outsourcing such services represents a solid solution to this problem.”

Sunrise plans to expand its existing partnership with Google in the near future. After all, it doesn’t just use Google’s e-mail technology, it also benefits from services such as Google AdSense, Google AdWords, and the Google Search Appliance (GSA), which powers its intranet search.

