

New Software Suite Improves Productivity and Slashes Costs for Small and Medium Size Businesses

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Press release from: [Bruce Marshall Associates](#)

October 7, 2005 -- Small and medium size businesses can now cut costs and improve productivity by introducing a new software suite that enables them to save time and money by slashing the time it takes to work effectively with colleagues. A Microsoft survey of 38,000 workers in 200 countries revealed that office workers average three productive days a week. Despite this just 34 per cent of them use scheduling tools(1).

The new Softalk Collaboration Suite lets users of Microsoft Outlook share calendars, contacts, tasks, notes and email with their colleagues. Softalk Collaboration Suite includes the WorkgroupMail email server with integrated anti-virus and spam protection. It also includes Softalk Organizer, a web-based collaboration tool that enables workers who are away from the office to access all of the data in the shared Outlook folders, including synchronising email that has been sent and read on the road with that in Outlook in the office.

"Softalk Collaboration Suite enables you to benefit from all the advantages of better team working such as quickly seeing when a colleague is free or finding a customer's contact details, without any of the additional expense of a Microsoft Exchange or Small Business Server solution," said Simon Bates, joint CEO of Softalk. "Small and medium size businesses don't want the complexities of a huge, enterprise level system that has artificial limitations simply so that it can be sold to a different market. Instead we've designed and built a system that specifically meets the needs of small and medium size businesses as well as education, government and voluntary sector organisations."

Softalk Collaboration Suite (SCS) comprises of three integrated products with a shared database. SCS includes updated versions of Softalk's flagship products, WorkgroupMail and WorkgroupShare, as well as Softalk Organizer, the new web-based collaboration client.

WorkgroupShare is a cost effective alternative to the Outlook collaboration functions of Microsoft Small Business Server and Exchange. WorkgroupMail is a cost effective mail server that not only provides scaleable, secure messaging but also integrated anti-virus and spam protection. It also now offers email message archiving, searching and retrieval to enable businesses to comply with new laws regarding storing data and correspondence for several years. Softalk Organiser is a web-based collaboration client that also provides a group view of calendars, a feature that is not well implemented in Exchange Server.

Softalk Collaboration Suite provides similar benefits to Microsoft Small Business Server and for 50 users it costs just \$40 per user compared to \$100 for Small Business Server (which also imposes a maximum limit of 75 users while Softalk Collaboration Suite is scaleable to cope with future expansion). The ease of use and lower hardware requirements for Softalk Collaboration Suite mean that the long term cost of ownership is also significantly less than for Small Business Server or Exchange.

"Not only does Softalk Collaboration Suite cost less to buy than Microsoft Small Business Server or Exchange but the long term cost of ownership is also considerably less. SCS can run on a much less powerful PC than is needed for Exchange, and doesn't even need a dedicated server meaning that the PC can be also be used for day to day office work," explained Simon Bates. "Setting up, configuring and maintaining Exchange Server all require a very high degree of technical expertise that most small and medium size businesses don't have. In contrast any user with reasonable IT skills can have SCS up and running in just a few minutes."

Notes to Editors

(1) The Microsoft Office Personal Productivity Challenge published on March 15, 2005. Further details at www.microsoft.com/presspass

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