Unigraphics Solutions

Connecting globally with HP NetServers and Microsoft Exchange

Deliver the promise

Business
- Unigraphics Solutions is one of the fastest growing CAD/CAM product and service companies in the world. With its head-quarters in St Louis, Missouri, it employs 2,300 staff and has offices in over 30 countries

Challenge
- To implement a global messaging solution

Solution
- Microsoft Windows NT 4.0, Microsoft Exchange, HP NetServers LH Pro and LH2

Benefits
- Scalable messaging solution
- High system reliability
- Streamlined communications

Global communications requirements

In January 1998, Unigraphics Solutions became a wholly owned subsidiary of EDS. Six months later it was spun off as an independent company. Previously operating within the EDS infrastructure, the company now needed its own com-munications network. With 2,300 employees in over 30 countries, Unigraphics Solutions wanted to implement a global messaging solution to facilitate an effective communications infrastructure throughout the organisation.

Unigraphics Solutions is a leading global provider of scalable, inte-grated, enterprise-level CAD/CAM/CAE/PDM solutions that are used for virtual product development. Customers include companies from the automotive and transpor-tation, aerospace, consumer products, equipment and machin-ery, and electronics industries. The company develops and sells three core products: Unigraphics for high-end, complex design, manufacture and assembly; Solid Edge for mid-range Windows-based product design; and iMAN for product data management. Customers using these solutions include General Motors, Boeing, Siemens, Dyson, Fiat Avio, Sandvik and Philips.

Developing a messaging solution

With Unigraphics Solutions inde-pendent status and rapid growth, the company needed a messaging solution that had the capacity to support global communications.

The company chose a system based on Microsoft Exchange because they were impressed with Microsoft's experience and rep-utation in delivering superior, global messaging solutions. Additionally, Unigraphics Solutions employees were already using Microsoft Office, and this famili-arity with Microsoft products meant that it would be easier to introduce the system into the company.

The messaging solution was dev-eloped on the Windows NT 4.0 platform using Microsoft Exchange Server. HP NetServers LH Pro and LH 2 were chosen because of the high performance they provide when running the Windows NT platform, as well as the robustness and versatility that they offer.

Choosing the right hardware partner

Why did Unigraphics Solutions choose HP as their hardware partner? The company found the decision quite simple as HP and Unigraphics Solutions have enjoyed a close working relationship for many years. Out of the four global players in the CAD/CAM sector, Unigraphics Solutions is the only one that sells turnkey solutions,
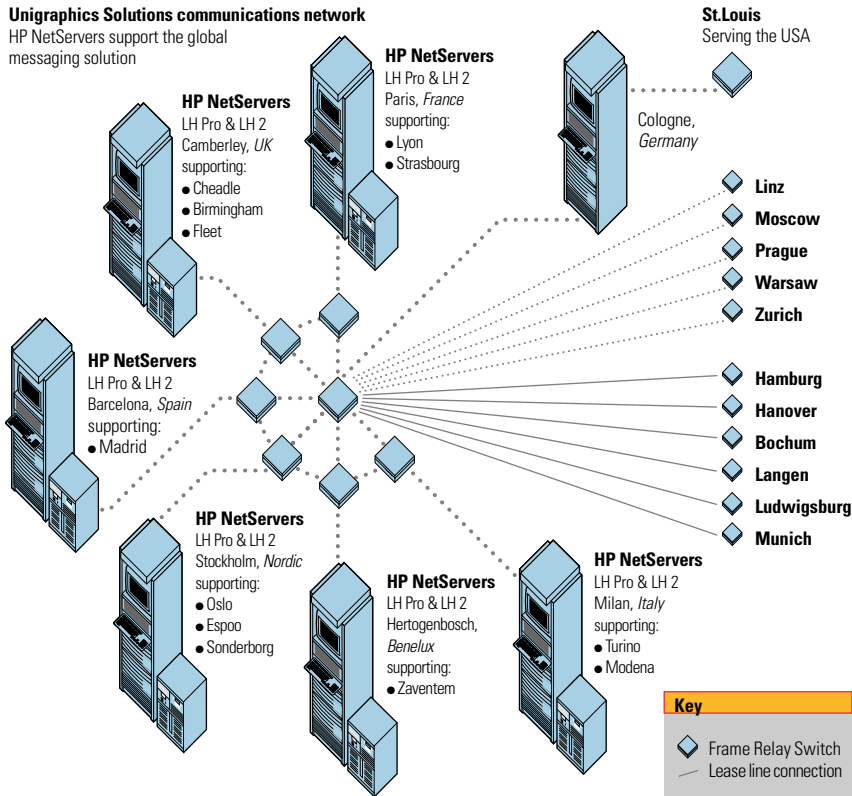
Unigraphics Solutions communications network
HP NetServers support the global messaging solution

HP NetServers
LH Pro & LH 2
Camberley, *UK*
supporting:
● Cheadle
● Birmingham
● Fleet

HP NetServers
LH Pro & LH 2
Paris, *France*
supporting:
● Lyon
● Strasbourg

St.Louis
Serving the USA

Cologne,
Germany

◆ **Linz**
◆ **Moscow**
◆ **Prague**
◆ **Warsaw**
◆ **Zurich**

◆ **Hamburg**
◆ **Hanover**
◆ **Bochum**
◆ **Langen**
◆ **Ludwigsburg**
◆ **Munich**

HP NetServers
LH Pro & LH 2
Barcelona, *Spain*
supporting:
● Madrid

HP NetServers
LH Pro & LH 2
Stockholm, *Nordic*
supporting:
● Oslo
● Espoo
● Sonderborg

HP NetServers
LH Pro & LH 2
Hertogenbosch,
Benelux
supporting:
● Zaventem

HP NetServers
LH Pro & LH 2
Milan, *Italy*
supporting:
● Turino
● Modena

Key
◆ Frame Relay Switch
— Lease line connection

and is the biggest reseller for HP in the CAD/CAM environment. HP also provides the development platforms for the company's CAD/CAM solutions, which have impressed Unigraphics with their strong performance, scalability and high-system reliability. In addition, as Unigraphics Solutions uses mostly HP products for internal use – such as installation, hotline and training – this is where they have their best skills and experience.

Ulrich Kohler, Director of Operations in Europe, Unigraphics Solutions, says: "We chose HP because we needed a strong hardware partner with excellent service and support, and they were able to provide a superior end-to-end customer delivery system for the Exchange implementation. We also took a long range view and wanted to invest for future development. The HP NetServers can scale easily to accommodate changing business requirements, and as the company anticipates continued expansion, we need to ensure that our messaging system is supported by a stable platform that can adapt to rapid growth."

Implementation and roll-out
The initial implementation of the messaging solution took place in the USA and Germany. The order for the HP NetServers was placed centrally from Cologne to ensure the same configuration, minimise risk and ensure worldwide standardisation for problem resolution. The main server is located in Germany (Cologne) and the six sub servers are hosted in Spain (Barcelona), UK (Camberley), Nordic (Stockholm), Benelux (S'-Hertogenbosch), Italy (Milan) and France (Paris).

The company is using a Cisco router-based network to deliver its enterprise-wide messaging solution. The routers connect the company's offices via a Frame Relay service to offer reliability and flexibility, and ensure high-speed network access. It also offers an optimum combination of security, functionality and support for multiple protocols and traffic management, including managing different portal speeds.

Since May 1999 the entire messaging solution has been up and running successfully throughout Europe.

"**We needed a robust, stable platform for our messaging solution, and HP NetServers were the natural choice. Not only do they offer high levels of performance and reliability, but HP has always been such powerful partner for us.**"

Ulrich Kohler
Director of Operations in Europe
Unigraphics Solutions

iMAN – a product data management (PDM) software tool to help companies improve their product development processes.

ProductVision – an integrated, easy-to-use development framework that enables desktop visualisation for product engineering data.

Solid Edge – a mid-range, Windows-based product design system for mechanical assembly and part modelling.

Unigraphics – an advanced software system for complex design, manufacture and assembly.