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Thomas Petersen, Email Domain Manager (Europe), BP International

BP International

BP has transformed: growing from a UK oil company into a global energy group; employing over 96,000 people and operating in over 100 countries worldwide

In 1998 BP began a project to examine ways in which it could minimize the growth in bandwidth required over its global WAN, with the objective of reducing costs. Don Kolva, BackOffice/Email Service Line Manager based in Houston, Texas downloaded an evaluation copy of MaX Compression from the C2C website to see how it performed.

Thomas Petersen, Email Domain Manager for BP in Europe, based in Germany, began receiving email messages from Kolva with the attachments compressed. As Petersen explains, "We immediately saw the potential of this product in reducing the size of files we email over the network. Our initial testing showed that we could cut file sizes by as much as two thirds."

MaX Compression was piloted at a selection of BP's European domain of 17 physical sites, from 25 users in Hamburg to 600 in Rotterdam. It fitted well with BP's Common Operating Environment (COE), a standard desktop based on Windows and MS Office. Included in the COE is a ZIP application – one of the options that MaX Compression uses to compress and decompress attachments. During the pilot, FAQs about MaX Compression were posted on the company Intranet to resolve any potential user inquiries.

The pilot project showed that MaX Compression fitted well with the COE and was largely invisible to users. Moreover, it demonstrated a reduction in network traffic. "We're always looking for ways to improve our business processes and MaX Compression was a really good find. We were particularly impressed with how easy it was to install and set up the clients".

Over the course of about two months MaX Compression was rolled out to nearly 10,000 users in BP, spread over 43 Exchange Servers in all 17 sites across Europe. All software installation, upgrades or changes to the MaX Compression configuration can be administered centrally and distributed across the Exchange network by the domain administrator using SMS/WinInstall.

As well as noticing an immediate leveling-out of demand for bandwidth, Petersen also points out another major benefit to BP's large community of remote users.

"Nearly 30% of our users in Europe connect into the Exchange Server remotely. This means that messages with file attachments like Excel spreadsheets can take quite a long time to download. By using MaX Compression, our permanent and travelling remote users save both on time and transmission costs."

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