



# Service Provider Cobweb Turns to MTI for storage and virtualisation

*UK Service Provider relies on MTI to deliver industry-leading highly available performance*

"MTI's track record with EMC's storage platforms made it the obvious choice for us. During the pre-sales process for example we engaged in a number of technical design sessions with both MTI and EMC, and at this time MTI demonstrated once again its strong competency and understanding of our specialist storage needs,"



**Dan Germain, Chief Technical Officer at Cobweb.**

## Overview

A privately-held company founded in 1996 in Fareham, Hampshire, Cobweb is today a Microsoft Gold Partner, counts 80 employees and is the UK's largest hosted Exchange (business email seats) provider. As an EMC partner, MTI provided Cobweb with multiple EMC Unified Storage arrays to slot alongside the original EMC Unified Storage appliances.

Back in 2009, as Cobweb scaled its legacy storage platform to meet growing requirements it experienced reliability issues; it therefore went to tender and considered solutions by MTI, HP, Hitachi and NetApp. However it was MTI's track record, its relationship with EMC, and its expertise with VMware technologies that mattered to Cobweb.

## The Challenge

At the top of the solution selection criteria were scalability, performance and reliability especially since Cobweb's services must be available 24/7 to all of its customers, including over 5,000 mailboxes outside the UK. Cost was another key factor and for an Exchange infrastructure to be economical yet agile it has to scale easily, quickly and smoothly. This was no small feat since Cobweb's Exchange 2003 platform sometimes requires the mailbox servers to grow to 10,000 mailboxes, generating a colossal I/O demand. Also, because Cobweb's services are sold on a user/month basis MTI's solution needed to scale to up further, to 50,000 mailboxes.

## The Solution

As a result MTI designed a high-performance, reliable and scalable virtualisation and storage solution that would enable Cobweb to meet the current and future demands placed by its Exchange environment.

In order to be cost-effective. The MTI design took the whole infrastructure into consideration and today allows Cobweb to meet the needs of its enterprise and SMB customers alike.

"Our strategy is to work with 'best of breed' technologies and partners only and MTI fits the bill perfectly. There is trust between the two teams because they understand our challenges and objectives as if they were their own," commented Dan Germain Chief Technology Officer at Cobweb. "Our storage infrastructure is now MTI's responsibility and we are very happy with this set up. Honestly, we don't worry about our storage anymore and that is a major milestone for a service provider."

## The Benefits

Today all the Cobweb managed services from the billing and customer management tools, to end-user services such as SharePoint and Exchange rely on hundreds of terabytes of MTI-supported storage. The provider's IT staff can now confidently plan new or expanded services using known metrics and design rules. The current storage infrastructure gives them increased performance, reduced administration and ultimately peace of mind, allowing them to focus on other tasks and projects that make it more productive. The time spent managing the systems is "very little and our quarterly service reviews are short and sweet," according to Germain.



In the coming months Cobweb plans to expand and develop all its services across multiple data centres located in two separate physical locations to offer improved data protection and recovery to customers.

MTI offers its customers specialist technical knowledge around infrastructure, virtualisation, storage, backup & recovery, business continuity, archiving and data lifecycle management solutions and its offerings range from design to managed services. The company currently partners with leading vendors such as EMC, VMware, Brocade, Cisco, Citrix, Emulex, Riverbed and Symantec.

## About MTI

MTI is a leading international provider of consulting services and comprehensive information infrastructure solutions for mid to large-size organisations. With more than 20 years' expertise as a storage technology innovator, MTI is uniquely qualified to assess, design, implement and support all data centre initiatives. Today MTI enjoys strategic partnerships with industry leaders including VMware, Cisco and EMC and offers the best data centre and cloud computing solutions and services available today. By employing a strategic, consultative approach, MTI provides customers with a single point of contact that eliminates complexities while delivering operational efficiencies and competitive advantages. More information is available at [www.mti.com](http://www.mti.com).

## Case Study