

MailSite Collaborator SP Sample Cluster Environments

For Email Administrators and Architects

A MailSite Software Incorporated White Paper

Last updated: July 2007

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Introduction

This white paper provides an overview of some MailSite SP cluster installations current at the time of writing. MailSite SP is an almost infinitely flexible messaging solution, and so there is no typical configuration. This guide describes some real world examples so that existing or prospective MailSite SP customers can understand what customers are doing with MailSite. The examples used are a mixture of recent MailSite releases. It is worth noting that all of the numbers documented are for active mailboxes. Some vendors cite examples of huge numbers of mailboxes running on very small systems, but that can be misleading as many of those accounts never, or rarely, login, or do not use the CPU intensive content scanning services common to modern messaging systems.

MailSite, Inc. suggests that administrators use the examples documented in this white paper as a rough guide to the performance and scalability characteristics that you can expect from typical high volume MailSite SP cluster installations.

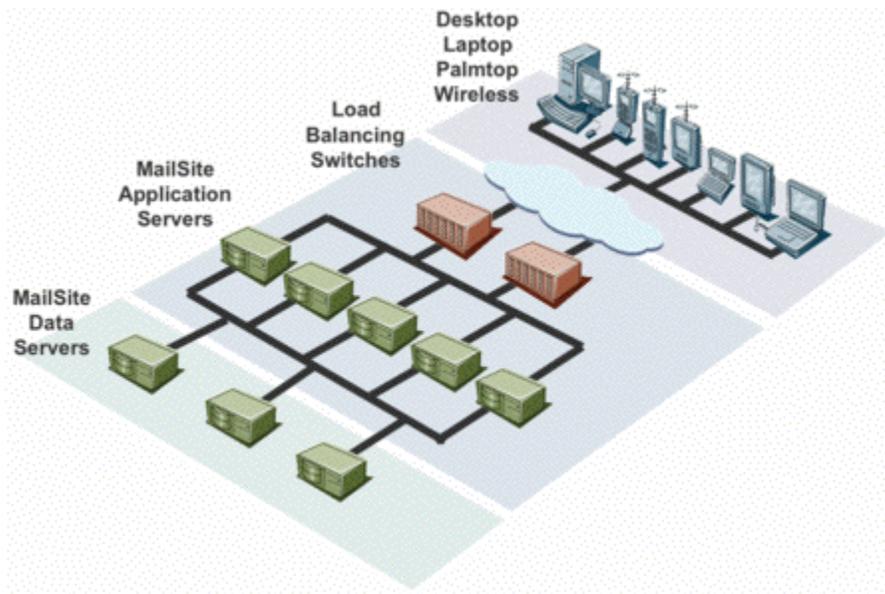


Fig 1: Typical MailSite SP Cluster Architecture

Quotes from MailSite SP customers

“More cost-efficient than Exchange” – *Alexander Friedensburg, Active24.*

“The main advantages of MailSite for us are the simplicity of the solution and that it plugs into Microsoft SQL Server” – *Dwayne Varey, Westnet.*

“Stability, scalability, very efficient technical support...and a very easy setup procedure, which can't be said of the Linux open-source competitors” – *Manuel Wenger, Ticinocom.*

Overview

MailSite SP is typically deployed by Service Providers (SPs) who wish to run a load-balanced, fault-tolerant and scalable messaging cluster with flexible SQL Server provisioning. MailSite is deployed in environments ranging in size from 100 mailboxes to nearly 2 million mailboxes. It is not easy to configure such environments in an optimal way, or even to know whether the installation is optimized once complete.

Some points made by the customers featured in this guide:

- A customer chose MailSite over Microsoft Exchange after extensive analysis showed MailSite SP to be significantly more cost effective.
- 2 of the 4 customers recently evaluated Open-Source competitors. MailSite SP was found to be easier to install, more stable and more scalable (easy clustering).
- MailSite SP's strong SQL integration makes large scale administration, provisioning and integration simple.
- MailSite SP's clean CIFS message store interface allows administrators to deploy any standards-based file server they wish, whether a SAN, NAS or DAS.
- Low TCO. 250,000 active customers on a clustered MailSite SP environment can require as little as 1 administrator.
- MailSite Software Inc's excellent Technical Support is one of the main reasons demanding SP customers continue to choose MailSite

US Tier 1 Telco

A well-known tier one telecommunications carrier in the United States uses a shared MailSite SP cluster to host emails for small businesses.

- ❑ Full Anti-Virus & Anti-Spam
- ❑ Nearly 40,000 mailboxes

The carrier has a relatively modest MailSite SP cluster hosting just under 40,000 mailboxes. Anti-virus and anti-spam scanning adds considerably to the SMTP processing load.

- ❑ 5 application servers dedicated to MailSite
- ❑ 2 SQL Servers dedicated to MailSite running on HP DL380
- ❑ 1 DAS file server

Active24

Active24 is a large hosting provider based in Europe. They use a MailSite SP cluster for their shared email hosting, providing POP, IMAP, SMTP and webmail access to small businesses. Active24 chose MailSite after determining that it was significantly more cost effective than Microsoft Exchange for their purposes. Active24 already had a large customer base on MailSite SP and has migrated thousands of mailboxes from other Linux messaging platforms to its MailSite SP cluster.

- ❑ Full Anti-Virus & SIEVE filters
- ❑ 280,000 mailboxes

Active24 hosts a large number of small business accounts and therefore the message volume and usage is very high for 280,000 mailboxes. Anti-virus scanning and SIEVE filters produce a heavy processing load for SMTP.

- ❑ 14 application servers dedicated to MailSite
- ❑ 1 Microsoft SQL Server dedicated to MailSite running on IBM's x345 dual 2.0 GHz
- ❑ 2 Windows 2003 SAN clusters with 3 nodes in each
- ❑ Lights out operation with 1 full time administrator

Westnet

Westnet is one of Australia's leading ISPs. It uses a MailSite SP cluster for large volume messaging with heavy POP, IMAP, SMTP, webmail and mail forwarding. Westnet uses a number of MailSite's features such as SIEVE filters, mail forwards, auto-replies and mailing lists. Westnet likes the way that MailSite SP interfaces with Microsoft SQL Server and that the message store uses industry standard CIFS. Westnet also likes the simple mailbox and domain provisioning, database manipulation, and ease of administration.

- ❑ Uses SIEVE Filters, Mail Forwarding & Mailing Lists
- ❑ 252,000 mailboxes

Westnet pride themselves on their customer satisfaction and so they demand very high reliability. MailSite SP allows them to run a large cluster, building in redundancy and fault-tolerance.

- ❑ 7 application servers dedicated to MailSite
- ❑ 1 Microsoft SQL Server dedicated to MailSite running on Quad Xeon 3GHZ, 4GB of RAM
- ❑ 1 NAS frontend, running CIFS. Currently using about 4TB.

Ticinocom

Ticinocom is a leading Swiss ISP. Ticinocom uses MailSite SP as the mail server for their ADSL and hosting customers. They chose MailSite SP after evaluating many open-source competitors because of MailSite's stability, scalability, easy clustering, excellent technical support and multi-language webmail. They also found the setup procedure very easy in contrast to the Linux open-source competitors.

- ❑ Anti-Virus, Anti-Spam, DHAP (Directory Harvest Attack Protection), SIEVE Filters, TLS

- ❑ 32,000 mailboxes

Ticinocom uses a large number of MailSite's security features and so in common with many MailSite SP customers they assign roles to each of their application servers.

- ❑ 5 application servers dedicated to MailSite. 2 SMTP MX receivers, 1 Anti-Spam and Anti-Virus filtering gateway, 1 running MailSite Express Webmail, 1 running POP and IMAP

- ❑ 1 Microsoft SQL Server dedicated to MailSite running on IBM x445 with VMware ESX virtualization platform

- ❑ 1 IBM DS4300 SAN shared with other applications

Appendix

Related Links

MailSite Collaborator SP Product Page:

<http://www.mailsite.com/products/mailsite-sp/windows-email-server.asp>

MailSite Clustering Whitepaper:

<http://www.mailsite.com/products/whitepapers/clustering.pdf>

MailSite SP Data Sheet:

<http://www.mailsite.com/Press/resources/datasheets/MailSiteSPDataSheet.pdf>

MailSite Software, Inc. Support Homepage:

<http://www.mailsite.com/support/>

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