Process
One

Process-one provides a stable and flexible platform for **leading European ISP**

Goals

- Improve the stability of the messaging server

- Integrate instant messaging into a broad range of customer services

- Create a platform capable of supporting future growth

Solution

- Migrate to the Process One Instant Messaging server

- Appoint Process One to support the migration and development process

Benefits

- Easy to customise and integrate with existing VoIP system

- Compatible with other messaging systems, due to the use of industry standards

- Scalable to meet future business growth

- Fault tolerant, ensuring high availability for users

Owned by **Portugal Telecom**, SAPO is the largest Internet Service Provider (ISP) in Portugal. The company had a large online messaging community, but its existing server was simply not stable enough to cope with demand.

"We had daily interruptions in service, which were costing us customers," explains Pedro Melo, technical consultant at SAPO. "We worked with the existing supplier for quite a long time to try to resolve these stability issues, but it just got to the point when we couldn't put up with the costs and problems any longer."

As an ISP, the company needed a stable server to support its instant messaging (IM) capability and a more flexible platform for delivering a wider range of customer services. In addition, it needed a server that could scale horizontally as its customer base grew.

SAPO was already aware of Process One and so contacted the company for its advice. "We discovered that Process One solutions were already successfully powering some very big and growing sites, and this gave us all the reassurance we wanted," says Melo. "We didn't need to look any further."

Migrating platforms quickly

Process One specialises in developing high-performance messaging solutions based on the ejabberd server. A standard technology from the Internet Engineering Task Force, ejabberd is based on the widely accepted eXtensible Messaging and Presence Protocol (XMPP) and offers a highly robust messaging platform. ejabberd is also an open source technology and is thus a secure choice for SAPO.

Process One helped SAPO to prepare the migration from its existing server and then customise the technology. It advised the company about integration with its existing internal infrastructure and provided tools for load testing. The migration was completed very quickly and without any significant issues.

"We were up and running in less than two months," explains Melo. "Process One was extremely helpful. The team was interested in our business, provided us with good advice and support and always reacted quickly if we had any issues."

SAPO is confident that it made the right decision in selecting an ejabberd-based platform. "ejabberd is the enterprise-class, large-scale deployment king," says Melo. "It has been working very, very well."

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Living in an open world

SAPO has a longstanding commitment to open source technologies, so ejabberd provides a good fit with the company's IT strategy. If it needs to, the company knows that it can look into the code itself, diagnose problems and suggest fixes or customisations. "SAPO has a strong open source culture," explains Celso Martinho, CTO of SAPO. "Using open source software enables us to be innovative, flexible and reactive in a global market where the absence of these qualities can seriously hurt your business."

Through their work together, Process One has produced a number of ejabberd product extensions to meet SAPO's specific business requirements, and SAPO now plans to make these extensions openly available to other users of ejabberd. SAPO also plans to publish the code it developed for migrating from its previous solution to the ejabberd platform, and it believes that this, in particular, will be very useful to other companies.

But it is not just the ejabberd technology that is open. Process One also has a very open relationship with its clients. "The company provides us with access to its internal development site, so that we can see exactly what it is doing and the status of all tasks," explains Delfim Machado, technical project leader at SAPO. "Both sides feel that nothing is hidden."

Delivering integrated services

Since going live with ejabberd, SAPO has been able to successfully use IM to enhance other services. For example, it has integrated its ejabberd server with its SMS network, so customers can now send messages to the mobile phones of friends and colleagues from their PCs using IM. Similarly, customers can elect to receive an IM message when a new comment is posted to their blog or when they receive an important email from a specific email address.

"We are really excited about all of the possibilities with ejabberd," says Melo. "The integration of IM with other services creates a really strong differentiator for us. In the future, we plan to integrate more and more services with IM."

In particular, SAPO plans to work with Process One in the months ahead to extend the use of IM into the areas of multi-media and Voice over IP (VoIP). As new technology standards emerge, SAPO will also work with Process One to integrate these into its ejabberd platform and services.

Martinho concludes: "ejabberd has proven to be a carrier-class solution. It has provided us with a robust and scalable platform that we can trust for our messaging projects. We have a strong relationship with Process One and are very confident about the future."