



Application Story

The Shubert Organization

The Shubert Organization Deploys WiredRed's e/pop for Real Time Communication with Box Office Personnel

Enterprise Instant Messaging (EIM) has been proven to increase the business efficiency by eliminating expensive communications delays in nearly every industry. Hospitals, law firms, trading and finance, commercial airlines, manufacturers and ship builders have deployed instant messaging to meet specific needs related to urgent communications. Government agencies and public and private schools have also discovered that EIM can help to bring a geographically challenging work environment together to work smarter.

It's difficult to dispute the fact that instant messaging designed for the corporate environment has found a rightful place among the smallest of companies to the Global 1000. One organization somewhere in between is Shubert Organization's Ticketing Services. The Shubert Organization is the largest owner of Broadway and Off-Broadway theatres in the US. It owns and operates 17 Broadway theatres and several others located throughout the US. Since 1914, Shubert has offered quality Broadway entertainment producing shows such as Chorus Line, Cats, Phantom of the Opera, Miss Saigon, Gypsy and Mamma Mia.

Shubert Ticketing Services provides the ticketing infrastructure, including phone, Internet and box office sales, for its own theatres as well as for 70 client-owned theatres in New York, Boston, Philadelphia and Washington, DC. Overall, Shubert sells 11 million tickets per year. Providing ticketing services in four different cities requires constant coordination and communication between Shubert headquarters and ticket sellers. When Shubert IT personnel began to upgrade the ticketing system they realized there was an urgent need to replace the previous system's messaging capabilities in order for all Shubert employees and its clients to be instantly informed about the status of the system.

"We spent two years developing the new ticketing system and knew that once it went online there would be initial bugs and problems that could result in server outages," explained IT Director Larry Yedwab. "Initially we tried to use email to broadcast messages but found that

Problem:

- Notifying personnel in 65 box offices in four cities about IT-related issues simultaneously

Solution:

- e/pop Alert, a secure high priority one-way instant messaging system

Business & IT Benefits:

- Better communication about network outages and application availability
- More efficient customer service for Shubert's clients and ticket buyers

email was too easy to ignore and didn't convey the sense of urgency we needed. We knew that using the phone wasn't an effective use of time. It wasn't hard to determine that IM would work best in our environment."

"But in addition to notifying employees of potential outages and problems, it allows us to disseminate information immediately about application and system updates to everyone at once," adds Yedwab.

After a short research phase, Yedwab found two products, WiredRed's e/pop Alert, a secure high priority one-way instant messaging system for business, and another that provided similar functionality and evaluated each product. Yedwab chose e/pop Alert based on its feature set, scalability, ease of use and unavoidable message display. e/pop Alert fit well within the Shubert network infrastructure, which is essentially locked down, on a secure VPN and bandwidth sensitive.

e/pop ALERT provides the ability to send customized emergency messages, including embedded WAV files, such as siren alarms, that play instantly when the alert pops up on the client PC. It can be used to notify hundreds or thousands of users in geographically dispersed offices about company-wide meetings, emergencies or, in the case of Shubert and many other companies, to notify employees about the status of the network, server or application accessibility.

According to Shubert's Director of Business Development and Client Services for the ticketing services division, Vince Rieger, e/pop Alert is an essential customer service tool.

"In an ideal world we would never have a need for e/pop Alert, but because problems do arise when you're dealing with complicated software and hardware systems, we are able to stay in touch constantly with our own box offices and those of our clients," says Rieger. "Shubert prides itself on offering a very high level of service to our clients, keeping them informed is part of our delivery on the promise of premium customer service."

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