



Add-On Products customer solution case study



Overview

Country: Denmark
Industry: IT

Customer profile:

ATEA is Denmark and Scandinavia's leading supplier of IT infrastructure.

Business activities span the entire value chain from hardware and software to service, project management, installation, operation and training.

ATEA is part of Ementor Group and employs nearly 3,200 people at 48 locations throughout the Nordic region.

Issue:

ATEA wished to streamline the scheduling of its consultants.

Solution:

The company decided to implement Exchange Central group calendar for Microsoft Exchange and Outlook and to cooperate with Add-On Products in developing drag-and-drop functionality for the scheduling of its consultants.

Benefits:

- Efficient and simple scheduling of meetings and consultant appointments
- Drag-and-drop consultant appointments
- Total overview of consultant groups
- Greater flexibility
- Real-time updating of appointments.

ATEA streamlines the scheduling of meetings and internal resources

“Thanks to Exchange Central our customers receive better service and we use fewer resources in serving them.”

Head of IT Jens Erik Rasmussen, ATEA

ATEA coordinates a large number of meetings with customers on a daily basis. These customers request assistance from the company's internal and external consultants, and are often in crisis situations requiring a rapid response. Identifying a consultant with the necessary competence who has spare capacity in his schedule, as well as the subsequent notifying of the consultant of the content of the appointment, is often a time-consuming process.

ATEA contacted Add-On Products concerning their desire to develop a scheduling solution for their existing Outlook and Exchange platform. By developing drag-and-drop functionality, ATEA has received a professional solution allowing them to book appointments directly in employees' calendars and transfer appointments between the consultants at the same time.

Thanks to Exchange Central, ATEA can now offer its customers an even better service while in the process streamlining their consulting activities.



ISV/Software Solutions
Custom Development Solutions
Information Worker Solutions
Mobility Solutions



“We save more time. Not only that but we use less travel time as well – and therefore have lower travel costs – and our technicians arrive at our customers in less time. So everyone wins from our use of Exchange Central.”

Jens Erik Rasmussen, Head of IT
ATEA



“We employ Denmark’s largest team of over 200 IT technicians who travel out to the customers nationwide and handle all their pressing problems with networks, printers, servers and so on. So when a customer calls us with an issue, our ‘dispatchers’ – service planners – must be able to locate the right technician with the necessary time and skills to solve the problem while still on the phone to the customer. In other words, a vital but also complex planning task.

For this task we use Exchange Central from Add-On Products. It’s a fantastic solution – the best we’ve seen by far.”

This is the view of Jens Erik Rasmussen, who is educated as a Bachelor in business economics and commerce, and who is the current Head of IT at ATEA. The company is Denmark’s largest IT supplier – both hardware and software – to Danish trade and industry.

Service company

But ATEA is not only the country’s largest IT supplier, it is also its largest service company, offering service agreements (normally as Service Level Agreements) on the maintenance of the customers’ IT equipment and a rapid response service when problems arise.

And it is in managing this rapid response function that ATEA uses Exchange Central, which is a superstructure built onto MS Outlook’s calendar function, making it possible for ATEA’s ‘dispatchers’ to view not only the calendars of individual technicians but those of all technicians – on a single screen.

This lets the dispatcher see on his/her screen who is busy and who is not – based on technical skills – and allocate the assignment and inform the customer who will be coming, as well

as around what time to expect them.

If they need to move assignments between several technicians, this is done with a simple drag-and-drop mouse action, after which, the affected technicians’ schedules are immediately updated. Finally, they are notified by e-mail, telephone or SMS.

In this way, Exchange Central is used as a staff planning tool, and it works instantly because it incorporates an ‘agent’ which registers all changes to all technicians’ schedules. The revised overview is ready in the blink of an eye. The system does not need to first look in all schedules before it can generate this overview – the dispatcher does not have time to wait for that.

Better service and lower costs

Compared to ATEA’s total IT set-up Exchange Central is only a tiny ‘utility program’, which barely makes a blip on the budget. But its significance is far greater according to Head of IT Rasmussen:

“Technical service is a hard-as-nails industry, with massive competition at both the price and service levels. So a tool like Exchange Central can simply make the difference between success and disaster.

We now offer our customers better technical service than before, while at the same time using our technicians’ time more efficiently.

We save more time. Not only that but we use less travel time as well – and therefore have lower travel costs – and our technicians arrive at our customers in less time. So everyone wins from our use of Exchange Central.”

Satisfaction with the new tool also

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Jens Erik Rasmussen, Head of IT
ATEA

Further information

For more information on Add-On Products

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extends to its user-friendliness, as Rasmussen explains:

“When we decided to purchase Exchange Central it was mainly because we couldn’t handle this task using MS Outlook’s standard functions. It was simply too tricky. But another reason for our choice was that the program is fully integrated with Outlook – so well, in fact, that users don’t notice that there are two different programs. They were already familiar with the user interface, making the program extremely easy to learn to use.”

A superb investment

The decision to purchase the Exchange Central solution was not made on the basis of a cost-benefit analysis. The decision-makers had a clear perception of the product being a superb investment. According to Rasmussen:

“The price of Exchange Central is so low that in relation to our other IT expenses it’s inconsequential. So we didn’t do any calculation on it. But if we did it would certainly show that we’ve recouped the running cost of the license and support many times over.”

The company therefore also entered into a support agreement with Add-On Products, about which Rasmussen also has good things to say:

“There have been a couple times we’ve needed to contact Add-On’s support team and we can only speak well of them. It’s a flexible and very accommodating service – and we almost always get an answer at once.”

Until now, Exchange Central has only been used by ATEA’s technical service division. However, Rasmussen expects that it will soon be used for many other functions:

“After all, Exchange Central is a general tool for resource planning – and not only human resources, but also such things as meeting facilities and technical equipment. So how we’ve used it so far is only the beginning – but still a very important and successful beginning.”

Facts on Exchange Central

Exchange Central is a group calendar and a planning tool for Microsoft Exchange and Outlook allowing users to view and work with consolidated calendars and resources across the company. With over 400,000 licences sold, Exchange Central is the most used group calendar in the world for Microsoft operating systems.

Facts on Add-On Products

Add-On Products develops and markets add-ons – additional functionality – to Microsoft Exchange and Outlook. The company has its head office in Vejle and local offices in North America and the Benelux countries.

The following add-ons are marketed globally:

- Resource Central – booking solution – reserves resources and orders catering, tables etc.
- Exchange Central – group calendar – overview and scheduling of agreements
- WebTeam Central – group calendar – web-based overview and scheduling of agreements
- Mailbox Central – e-mail signature management – branding and campaign control in e-mails
- Office Central – e-mail registration – registration of incoming and outgoing mails, contacts etc.