

## **Small companies demand better IT-solutions**

There are approximately one million small businesses with up to 9 employees in the UK. You'll find them in all kinds of industries. Common to them all is that they use IT in their daily work as much as larger companies - or at least they would like to.

Some people say small businesses have other needs but in reality they can't afford to invest in firewalls, switches, e-mail and virus filters and collaboration tools that the larger companies use within their well protected networks. It's simply too expensive and too complicated.

The argument that is often used is that small businesses are less demanding. But would a small business suffer less from an attack on its network or loss of critical files or documents? Of course not! Probably quite the opposite.

Truth is that it hasn't been profitable enough to offer small business's solutions that are flexible, scalable and secure at the same time until now. Historically, it appears to have been uneconomic to put the smaller business's needs above those of large corporations. This in turn has led software giants, which are the only ones capable of creating and distributing such technologies, to only address larger companies needs.

Today we can change this. The UK is a forerunner within the "Software-as-a-service" arena and it is now possible to make available such software directly in the web browser. The dream for any small business user would be not to have to worry about their IT systems and run everything remotely on secure servers for a small fee. That way they can focus on their core business and let someone else take care of the technology – the way it's done in larger companies.

However, you still need tens of thousands of paying users in order to keep the price low enough for your service to become interesting. The larger vendors who have servers capable of delivering this have typically not been interested in this customer group.

Why? Mainly because of an unwillingness to change what already generates money today. Vendors that actually do address small businesses are quite content with selling cut down versions. Thus one million small companies are stuck with both bad and insecure solutions.

It is time for the big dragons to realize that small businesses demand the same power and security as anyone else – but are unable to acquire and run it on their own. The one who realizes this first has pole position – the UK market alone has one million possible customers.

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