

# radio NRW

Scalix Success Story July 2009

Scalix partner and solution provider Dr. Bülow & Masiak GmbH, successfully converted the radio NRW network based in North Rhine-Westphalia, Germany from GroupWise to Scalix email, calendaring and messaging. Stephen E. Harris (SH), VP of Communications of Scalix' parent company Xandros spoke with Udo Spieker (US), technical director of radio NRW and Sebastian Ganschow (SG), System & Network Engineer at Bülow & Masiak to find out why they switched and how the conversion went.

**SH: First tell our readers something about radio NRW. What is your position in the German market? How many stations are in your network and how many listeners do you serve?**

US: radio NRW is the biggest radio provider in Germany with 45 local stations and 1.427 million listeners during the average hour.

## New messaging requirements - new solution

**SH: How many employees does radio NRW have?**

US: radio NRW has a total of 89 employees at its headquarters in Oberhausen and its studios in Berlin and Düsseldorf.

**SH: Please describe radio NRW's former GroupWise messaging system. What were its limitations?**

SG: It was a fairly complex system with three servers that were hard to manage. A simple task like administering user mailboxes was quite difficult. Client access was inadequate.

**SH: What led them to switch from GroupWise?**

SG: radio NRW wanted to use Microsoft Outlook instead of GroupWise's email solution. They also wanted mobile email and synchronization – all the bells and whistles GroupWise did not provide. The existing system would have required a costly and complex upgrade to meet radio NRW's new messaging requirements.

**SH: What were the basic requirements for the alternatives you evaluated?**

SG: High end Microsoft Exchange compatibility and a cluster with the minimum downtime possible.



►► Udo Spieker and Sebastian Ganschow

US: The new system had to run fail safe, and provide a fully functional web interface and connectivity to mobile devices.

**SH: How was Scalix chosen for radio NRW?**

SG: radio NRW is a long term customer of Dr. Bülow & Masiak GmbH and they asked us if we could deliver and install a Scalix mail system. Since we had implemented other Scalix projects, we were able to help. Scalix was a natural fit because it is much more straightforward in terms of hardware and administration, including the simplified ability to cluster and Active Directory integration. Users need to coordinate free/busy time via the web as well as Outlook, and Scalix offers extremely rich web client support. Scalix' mobile client support was another important consideration, including ActiveSync support for Apple iPhones and Microsoft Windows Mobile-based devices.

**„Scalix was a natural fit“**

**SH: Did you consider other alternatives to GroupWise, and, if so, what made Scalix stand out?**

SG: The first plan was to implement an Exchange mail solution. But the transition to Exchange 2007 would have nearly doubled both licensing and hardware costs, so radio NRW looked for an alternative. As Udo had knowledge of Scalix, he tested the Community Edition and was fully satisfied. Additionally, Scalix was the only Exchange-grade alternative without an Exchange price tag.

## Transition to Scalix - a challenging task

**SH: How did you manage the radio NRW transition to Scalix? Were there major challenges?**

**SG:** As the migration of 150 users in a single day or even over a weekend is a challenging task, we designed a soft migration to move users over one at a time. Our challenge was to be able to send messages from the old system to the new, and vice versa, during the transition period.

**US:** The simplest and easiest way was to connect to both systems with imap, and then simply migrate the message store to Scalix.

**SH: What is radio NRW's current system configuration?**

**US:** The system runs on a Red Hat Cluster with 2 IBM x3650 quad core Xeon servers and local storage of 438 GB. As shown in the diagram, there is one Red Hat cluster manager and one server for ActiveSync connectivity, both running as virtual servers.

**SH: What happens if the first Scalix server fails?**

**SG:** The second diagram shows the system in its failover state. The system has a predicted reliability of nearly 100% percent.

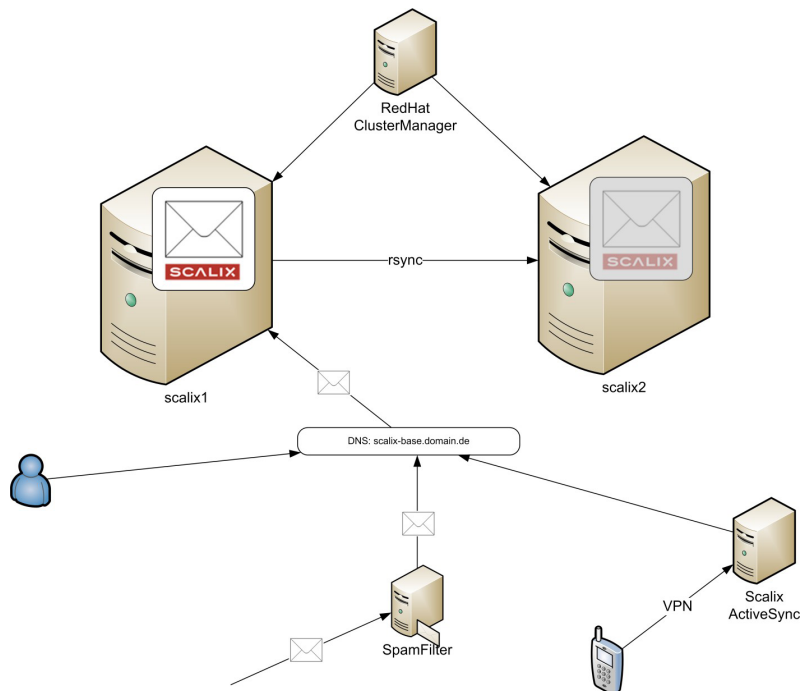
## Requirements fulfilled

**SH: Did Scalix resolve radio NRW's issues?**

**US:** Yes, all requirements were fulfilled to our complete satisfaction. The system is extremely stable – it runs without any errors.

**SH: Are radio NRW's users happy with the change?**

**US:** Users see no change in their Outlook client, their normal means of access. Only when they use the web interface do they see that the system is Scalix.



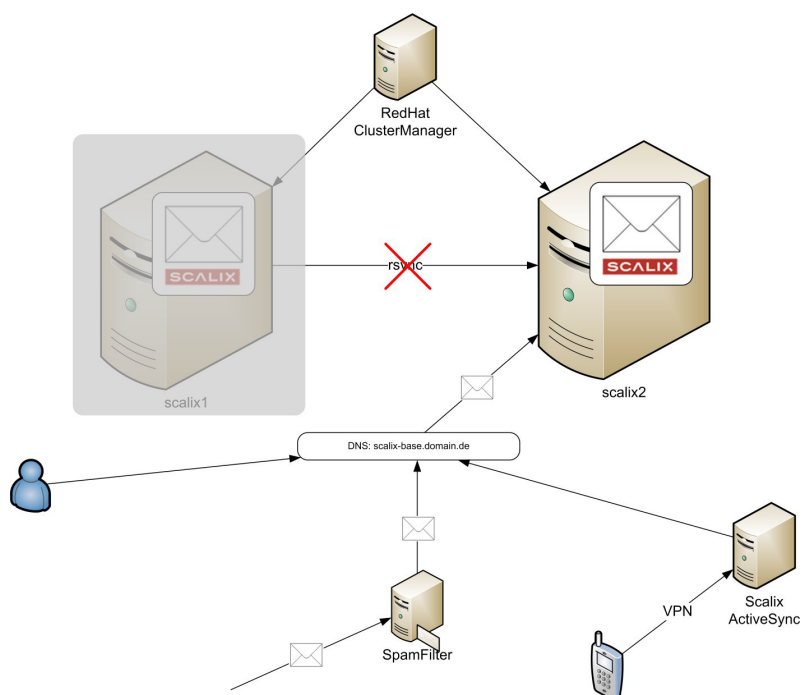
▶▶ Normal Operation

**SH: How did the move affect licensing, maintenance, and other costs?**

**US:** The TCO is much better than with the GroupWise System.

**SH: What is radio NRW's overall assessment of Scalix?**

**US:** I think with Scalix we have a flexible and expandable system that will



▶▶ Failover State

## Upgrade to Scalix 11.4.4 and Scalix ActiveSync

serve us well into the future.

**SH: I understand that you recently upgraded the servers to Scalix 11.4.4 and are now using the Scalix implementation of Microsoft's ActiveSync protocol, rather than a third-party solution. How did that transition go and are you pleased with the results?**

SG: The update between patch releases is quite simple. It takes about 15-20 minutes to update the cluster, 30 minutes in the worst case. As you can see in the diagram, the Acti-

veSync service has been installed on a separate virtual server. All dependencies considered, the installation of the Scalix ActiveSync was done in a very short time. The integration of mobile devices is quite simple, as you don't have to configure much.

**A reliable high end messaging solution**

**SH: Thank you very much for your time.**

SG: Thank you for a reliable high end messaging solution.

## Dr. Bülow & Masiak GmbH Professional Network Solutions

Wir bieten seit 1995 als IT-Systemhaus und Internet-Service-Provider rund um Hardware, Software und Kommunikationstechnik das Spezialwissen erfahrener IT-Fachkräfte, die sich in zahlreichen Projekten erfolgreich bewährt haben: ein Netzwerk der Kompetenz.

Wir verstehen uns als Partner, der Ihnen sowohl bei Einzelaufgaben als auch bei der Abwicklung von komplexen Projekten alle erforderlichen Leistungen aus einer Hand anbietet. Unser Angebotsspektrum reicht von der Konzeption und Realisierung bis zur kontinuierlichen Betreuung Ihrer IT.

Professionelle Anforderungen verlangen nach professionellen Lösungen. Wir kümmern uns darum, dass Ihre IT in der täglichen Praxis reibungslos funktioniert.

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