

Exchange Support in New Mac OS Will Create End User Demand

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"Snow Leopard," Apple's Mac OS X 10.6, is most noted for its native support of Microsoft Exchange 2007 for e-mail and calendaring. While Exchange support is appealing, it does not signal Apple's enterprise readiness.

NEWS ANALYSIS

Event

On 24 August 2009, Apple announced that the next version of Mac OS X will be available 28 August 2009.

Analysis

Snow Leopard, which runs exclusively on Intel-based Macs, includes full 64-bit support, Grand Central Dispatch (which allows programmers to more easily use multicore processors), OpenCL (to more fully utilize the power of graphics processors), and Exchange support for Apple mail, contacts and calendar.

From an enterprise perspective, the most important feature is the ability for the Mac e-mail client to access Microsoft Exchange (2007 version only) in a native fashion. The Mac client binds to Exchange Web Services (EWS) via its Web services application programming interface (API), not the traditional messaging application programming interface (MAPI), which is difficult to write to and maintain. We expect that by the end of the year, this ability — combined with an improved version of Entourage, the e-mail client in Microsoft's Office: Mac — will result in growing end-user demand for IT groups to grant support for the Mac.

While native support for Exchange will allow users to run their Macs at work more easily, this does not mean that Macs can more easily replace Windows PCs in most organizations. Apple is not addressing enterprise needs for service or support, and most organizations will continue to require Windows to run a majority of their applications. Furthermore, to the extent Mac users may still require Office, either natively on Mac OS or running in a Windows virtual machine, native Exchange support, which does not support Outlook personal store files (PSTs), will address only part of the user need.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Enterprises:

- Understand the various ways Macs can support Exchange. Even if you don't officially support Macs, you will likely need to provide some assistance to users who are running them.
- Don't assume that because Apple is making Macs easier to integrate into the enterprise, the company is entering the enterprise market. Also, understand that this development will not allow Macs to easily replace Windows PCs in most cases.

IT groups:

- Prepare to handle requests for Mac integration into corporate networks.
- Before granting widespread support for Macs, consider the full range of user needs and Apple's ability to offer corporate-grade support.
- Continue to invest in Web-oriented architecture and service-oriented architecture, which will help you become more OS-neutral and allow more choice in hardware and software. If you run Web applications, move these forward to support the emerging set of Web

standards, such as HTML5 and CSS2.1, and interoperability protocols such as OpenID and OAuth.

RECOMMENDED READING

- "Enterprises Move to Provide Limited Support for Macs: Where to Start" — Many enterprises are thinking of supporting Mac, but IT management should discern if they have the expertise and tools to do this. **By Michael Silver and Terrence Cosgrove**
- "Working with Macs on Windows Networks" — Secure Apple Macintosh computers that connect to your enterprise network. **By Brian Gammage and John Girard**

(You may need to sign in or be a Gartner client to access the documents referenced in this First Take.)

This research is part of a set of related research pieces. See "Roundup of E-Mail Research Through 3Q09" for an overview.

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