

## Resellernews

### Crossware steps out with Microsoft, but still loves Lotus Notes

#### New partnership won't diminish relationship with IBM

By Louis van Wyk, Auckland | Thursday, September 11 2008

Partnering with Microsoft will not diminish collaboration specialist Crossware's long-standing relationship with IBM, the company says.

Crossware recently became a Microsoft partner in a move to expand its collaboration offerings to include the software giant's Sharepoint suite.

However, managing director Per Andersen says the company will still offer IBM's Lotus Notes platform, on which Crossware was founded. "We will deliver what the market demands – as long as there is a demand for the Notes solutions, we will supply it."

Taking on Sharepoint cements the company's position as a collaboration specialist, says Andersen. "Collaboration has been in the company's genes from the start. If we want to be the collaborative experts, why should we only offer Lotus Notes? We're trying to go to our clients and say if you want to talk about collaboration, we can help you – [whether] it's with Lotus Notes or Sharepoint."

With Sharepoint, Crossware can now serve customers who want to run on Microsoft, adds Andersen. "If you want a Microsoft platform we can do it for you. People in New Zealand love Microsoft – if they love it then we'll give it to them."

While Crossware evaluated earlier versions of Sharepoint, it found them lacking as a true collaboration offering, says Andersen, adding this has changed with the current edition. "I would say two years ago there was no reality in the product, but the 2007 version has upped the ante in collaboration software."

To develop its Sharepoint practice, the company has appointed its products general manager Paul Graham to focus on the suite.

Graham attended Microsoft's recent Worldwide Partner Conference in Houston and was impressed with the vendor's commitment to the product. "We have noticed the commitment Microsoft has put into moving the software so far so fast."

In contrast to Sharepoint, Lotus has been developing at a slower rate, claims Graham. "The pace at which it is evolving has slowed, whereas the pace at which Sharepoint is evolving is accelerating," he believes.

Graham sees opportunities for Crossware in the fact that there is currently a lack of Sharepoint skills in the market, while the demand for collaboration is growing.

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