Hosting Controller
Hybrid Cloud Automation

Consolidating Multi-Tenant Hosted Exchange Offering with Hosting Controller

A Solution Providers Perspective

Hosting Controller prides itself on being an all-encompassing, one window solution for the hosting needs of an MS Exchange provider. The dependable feature set of Hosting Controller allows such providers to take advantage of the ***all under one umbrella*** slogan of HC and offer a multi-tenant solution, packed with all the vital features of Exchange. Once the infrastructure and platform is firmly in place there are a number of delivery components considered essential for offering it as a hosted service.

What is required?

The service delivery components vital to the health of any Exchange environment include:

1) Multi-Tenant Interface
2) Automatic Provisioning and Sign-up
3) Self-Serve Portal
4) Plan and Quota Management
5) Service Management Platform
6) Billing and Payments
7) Channel Support Interfaces
8) Reports
9) Branding and White Labelling
10) Help Desk
11) Redundancy
12) Scaling and Import
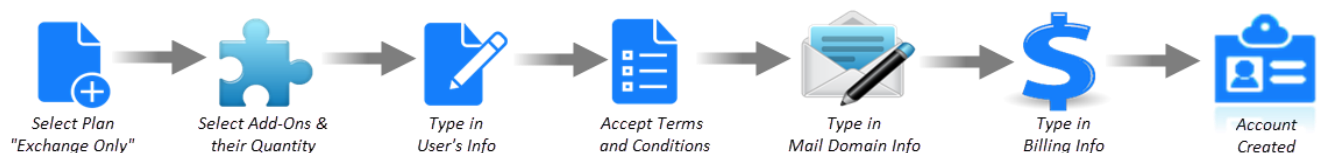13) API
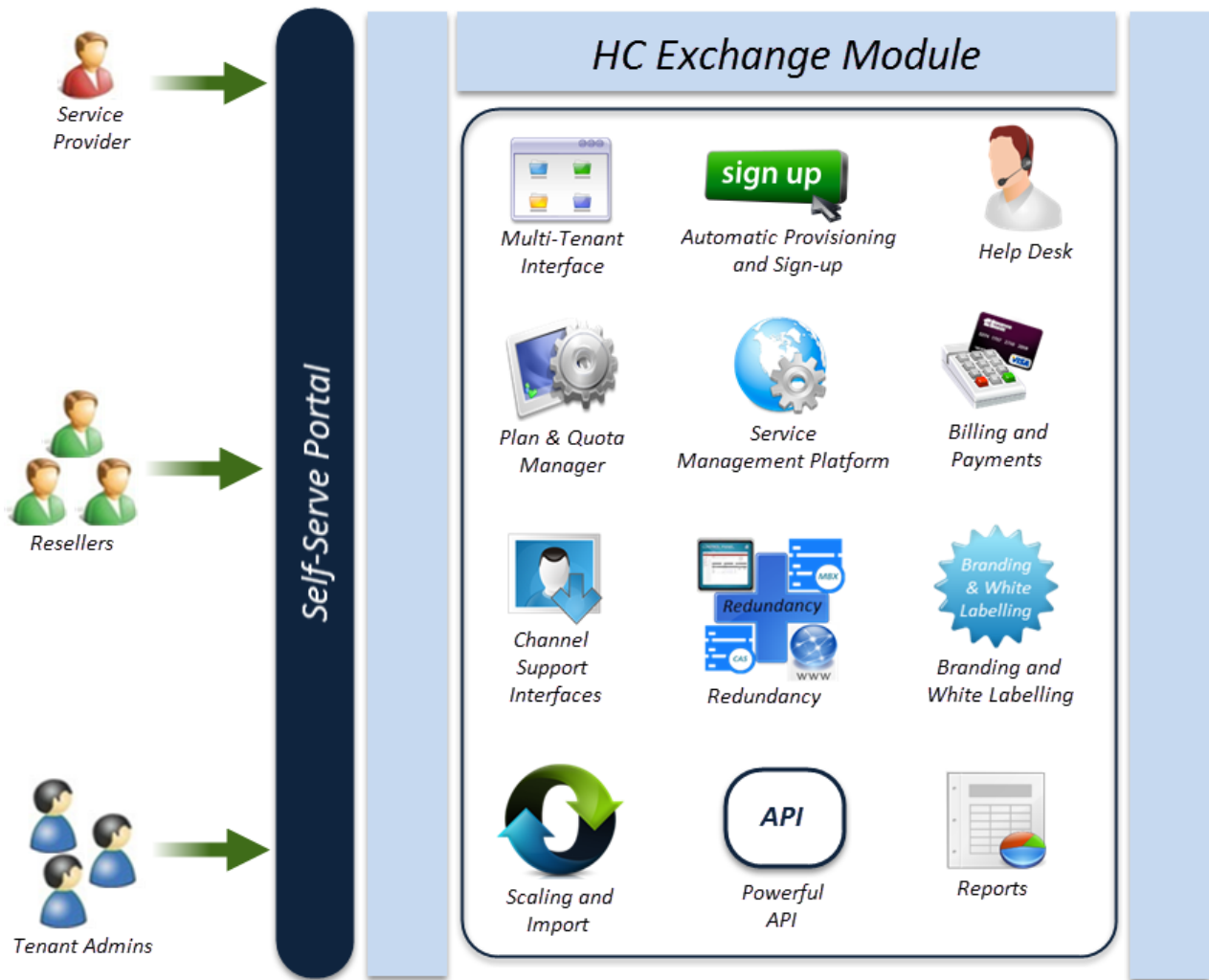
How is it accomplished?

The presence of the above components is sacred to the portfolio of any provider of hosted Exchange. Enterprises offering hosted Exchange or Cloud services for that matter, very well understand the importance of an integrated offering in a fast growing and highly competitive market. The unavailability even of any one of the above service components may spell trouble for an enterprise. Keeping this in view Hosting Controller Exchange Module unifies the utility of all the above to bring you an enterprise class web based control panel. The keyword here is **"centrally managed"** and that is exactly what Hosting Controller has in store.

1. Multi-Tenant Interface

Microsoft Exchange, out of the box is designed to run for a single enterprise. The requirement for service providers is to be able to share the same installation of MS Exchange among multiple enterprises or **"tenants"**. The control panel provides the required layer of segregation which allows multiple enterprises to share the same infrastructure and platform for their own unified messaging or unified communication needs. In fact Microsoft itself advocates the use of a control panel to achieve multi-tenancy.

2. Automatic Provisioning and Sign-up

Configuring a new instance of Exchange for a new enterprise to offer services, needs extensive and concerted provisioning of different resources within the Operating Systems, MS Exchange itself, Active Directory and other places. Provisioning of MS Exchange resources require an orchestrated execution of provisioning work flows to be done correctly. An automation control panel should come bundled with all these work flows for unified messaging and unified communications setups. It should offer its own web based sign up process. Hosting Controller takes this to a whole new level with its integrated Auto-Signup.

Select Plan "Exchange Only" → Select Add-Ons & their Quantity → Type in User's Info → Accept Terms and Conditions → Type in Mail Domain Info → Type in Billing Info → Account Created

The easy to understand flow of the shopping cart lets any user arriving at the website of the provider, pay online and signup for an Exchange account within minutes.

3. Self-Serve Portal

Any hosted platform gives control to its end customers, so that they are able to self-serve themselves. This is not only required for reasons of efficiency, but also for many others. Service provider driven provisioning and management just cannot work. The requirement for self-serve is intense for unified messaging & communication products where the total self-serve use cases run into hundreds. Customers want full control over their shared multi-tenant partition of the platform. An automation control panel ought to provide full self-serve capability for the complete suite of unified messaging and communication products. Hosting Controller not only provides a self-serve to the service provider but also takes it to the lower tiers, enabling Resellers and end users to independently administer their accounts.

4. Plan and Quota Management

Plan and Quota Management signifies the **"enforcement factor"** within self-serve. It makes sure that any requests for provisioning are within the bounds, set by the plans purchased by the customers and within the quotas extended to them against those subscriptions. It has to be flexible enough to fall in-line with

varying business and product management needs of the service providers. Web control panels should provide such plan and quota managers and enforce limits in real or near real-time as the need may be. It can be integrated with the service provider's order management system so that users can buy new plans on the fly when and if they run out of quota. Hosting Controller showcases a cohesive **"Exchange-only"** plan and quota manager, defining limits exclusively for Exchange customers.

5. Service Management Platform

Service Management is about suspending and resuming services of customers automatically as and when required based on their payment status. In a multi-tenant cloud based hosted offering, such automation is key. It is important for such service management automation to be integrated behind a billing and payment system so that services for customers can automatically be suspended when needed and automatically resumed upon receiving payment.

6. Billing and Payments

A Billing system provides periodic billing of subscription based services and allows the service provider to define their plans and packages & periodic charges. It also has an integrated payment processing system to process customer payments through different online payment methods or through self-serve portals where customers can pay manually. When it comes to Hosting Controller, it has its own tightly integrated marketplace and billing module as well as supports **WHMCS** (a popular third party billing software).

7. Channel Support Interfaces

If the service providers want to delegate the role of actual sales to other channel partners or Resellers, a self-serve layer for such channel partners is needed where they can order new sales and do basic self-serve on them. Hosting Controller provides such support and makes sure that the back end infrastructure can be shared between and among all the channel sales providers or Resellers. It also ensures a fully private labeled self-serve to the customers of Resellers, making the Reseller seem a primary service provider. This allows service providers to focus on their core competence of providing and maintaining networks and delegate sales roles to Resellers.

8. Reports

Accurate reporting both at the micro and macro levels enables organizations to take informed decisions. For a hosted Exchange provider SPLA reporting is indispensable. Wouldn't knowing the exact number of mail domains, mailboxes etc under each of your customers be just ideal. Hosting Controller brings forth an elaborate reporting module allowing providers at all levels to take inventory of their offerings.

9. Branding and White Labelling

In order to maintain consistency the self-serve portal at each level of the providing chain needs to emulate the company look and feel. Branding and customization falls under this genre. Hosting Controller lets the provider lend his own theme to the panel console and brand it according to his wishes. It further allows the provider to offer a fully branded offering to his channel partners.

10. Help Desk

The presence of an effective means of communication between the provider and his customers is mandatory. After sales or support calls need to be routed up or down the provisioning chain. The end user (tenant admin) may need to request an additional plan or report a problem. Hosting Controller handles the Help Desk with an effective trouble ticketing.

11. Redundancy

In the perilous world of hosting one of the most sought-after features is failover capability. Most hosted Exchange providers desire a redundant setup in order to keep their content highly available (H.A) and minimize the chances of downtime in case of a disaster. They usually require the Exchange control panel to be served by more than one servers in a highly available cluster. Hosting Controller guarantees uptime by supporting CAS and MBX high availability. The contingency for primary and secondary CAS setup and support for the MBX **Database Availability Group** (DAG) distinguishes HC from its competition.

12. Scaling and Import

Scaling is the natural process of gradually adding new resources to an Exchange setup with the intention of serving a larger customer base. Every enterprise offering hosted Exchange at some point looks at increasing its revenue stream. This normally requires an upscale of resources. With its extremely flexible design, Hosting Controller lets Exchange providers add more Exchange CAS/MBX roles to the existing infrastructure, without disturbing the overall messaging podium. Similarly users from an existing platform can seamlessly be imported into Hosting Controller with an advanced free import utility.

13. API

Hosting Controller comes with APIs that allow integration with any other external order management or CRM systems to take new orders and provision them accordingly. Similarly the HC Exchange Module API can be used to perform all MS Exchange related operations in terms of sending/receiving emails in HC without the need to login into the control panel or in other words from an external interface.

Contact Us

In case of any ambiguity/query regarding these provisions, please feel free to contact us at support@hostingcontroller.com.