

# Norbord improves business resilience with IBM Lotus Domino and BE Systems

## Overview

### ■ The Challenge

*Strengthen core messaging platform, databases and applications against possible malicious attacks; minimise the effects of potential hardware failures on business systems; enable rapid rollout of technology updates to Europe-wide users*

### ■ The Solution

*Worked with IBM Business Partner and Lotus Domino specialist BE Systems ([www.besystems.eu](http://www.besystems.eu)) to upgrade to Lotus Notes and Domino 6.5; took advantage of Lotus Notes Smart Upgrade tool to roll out to all users quickly and cost-effectively*

### ■ The Benefits

*Extremely fast, low-risk rollout of Lotus Notes and Domino upgrade via automated deployment; clustering capabilities in Lotus Domino protect against downtime in the messaging environment due to hardware failure (zero downtime in the six months since implementation)*



Norbord Inc. is an international manufacturer of wood-based panels, specialising in oriented strand board (OSB); it is also a major producer of medium-density fibreboard, particleboard, plywood and I-joists.

The company runs 16 plants across Europe and North America and has assets of \$1.3 billion. Its European division, Norbord Ltd, is based in Stirlingshire, Scotland, and employs around 1,000 people at three sites in the UK and one in Belgium.

Norbord Ltd is a long-term user of IBM Lotus technologies, and was using Lotus Domino 5 as a platform for email, sales and health & safety databases, an application which generates quotations for customers, and the company intranet, among other functions.

“Lotus Domino is at the heart of our business,” says Stuart Auld, Network Team Leader at Norbord Ltd. “It

not only gives us a full-featured communication platform; it also provides access to key databases and applications for users at all our sites and for our travelling sales teams.”

As so much of the business relies on the Lotus Domino platform, Norbord became concerned about the resilience of its IT infrastructure.

“We knew that Lotus Domino itself is a highly reliable solution, but we still felt vulnerable to hardware failures and malicious attacks,” says Stuart Auld. “We wanted to be sure that our business-critical Lotus Domino messaging and collaboration servers would remain online in even the worst-case scenario.”

### Lotus Domino clustering

Norbord consulted BE Systems, an IBM Business Partner that specialises in Lotus Notes and Domino technologies. BE Systems advised an



upgrade to Lotus Notes and Domino 6.5, to take advantage of the platform's improved clustering functionality.

Warren Elsmore, Technical Director of BE Systems, explains: "With clustering, Norbord could run Lotus Domino across a number of servers, to improve load balancing. This would help ensure high availability, helping Norbord employees get access to the systems they need."

Besides providing high availability, the move to Lotus Domino 6.5 would enable Norbord to update its intranet and standardise its software environment across all four European sites. Norbord decided to proceed with the upgrade, and commissioned BE Systems to handle the implementation.

"Norbord needed the implementation to be completed in a very narrow window, to minimise the business risk which would be occasioned by a lengthy handover period," explains Warren Elsmore. "We used another new feature in Lotus Notes and Domino 6.5 – Smart Upgrade – to push the new client software out to all the users at the click of a button, and designed a number of desktop policies to ensure a seamless transition to the new system."

"The BE Systems team was outstanding," says Stuart Auld. "All four European sites were fully upgraded to the new solution within four weeks – and we have not had a single technical problem or a moment's downtime with the new environment in the six months since the transition. It has been a real advantage to work with Lotus Domino specialists – their slogan is 'Excellence in Lotus software' – as we could be completely confident in their ability to bring the project to a successful conclusion."

### Maintaining information flow

With the new version of Lotus Notes and Domino, Norbord is able to ensure that information keeps flowing throughout the organisation and is always accessible to staff when they need it – keeping productivity levels high.

"Before, if our Lotus Domino servers had been brought down by larger system failure, we would have been unable to generate quotations for customers, which would have severely hampered our sales teams," says Stuart Auld.

"With the upgraded solution, we can be much more confident in the resilience of our messaging and collaboration environment.

The Lotus Notes and Domino 6.5 solution will also enable further mobilisation of the sales force, as BE Systems is helping Norbord to implement PDA-based mobile clients that will interface with the Domino servers. Combined with the newly redesigned intranet, and a project to Web-enable several key business applications, this will further improve information flow throughout the enterprise.

Norbord is shortly to begin working with BE Systems again on a further upgrade – this time to Lotus Notes and Domino 7 – which will enable the company to integrate its IBM DB2 databases more closely with the Domino platform. Once again, BE Systems should be able to provide a seamless transition using Smart Upgrade and the desktop policies it has already designed.

"Working with IBM and BE Systems has been a rewarding experience for Norbord, helping us add fresh functionality to our existing Lotus Domino platform and support a mobile workforce, while ensuring the high availability and system resilience which is vital to the productivity of our business," concludes Stuart Auld.

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LOC03004-GBEN-00 (11/06)