

# Scalix brings group calendaring to Linux

**REVIEW:** EMAIL AND CALENDARING PLATFORM 8.2 IS SOLID, BUT WEB CLIENT IS LIMITED TO E-MAIL

By Michael Caton

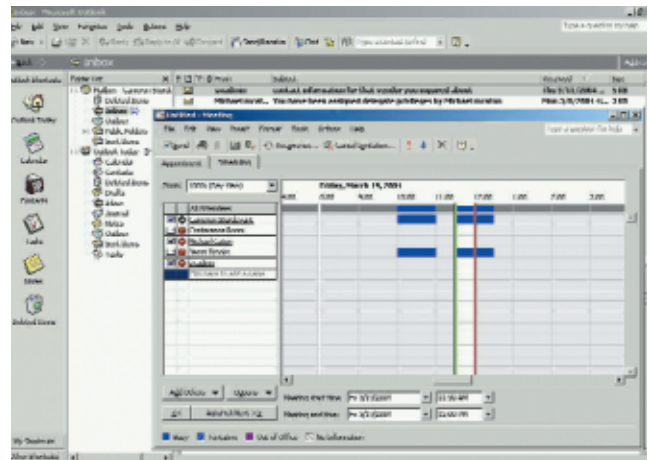
**V**ERSION 8.2 OF SCALIX Corp.'s namesake e-mail and calendaring platform for Linux does a good job of hitting the major features needed to give Outlook users a solid e-mail and group calendar experience.

Pricing starts at \$60 per user, with servers costing \$600 for a server with 500 mailboxes and \$3,500 for Enterprise Edition. Scalix Email and Calendaring Platform 8.2 began shipping in January, and this update represents a good alternative to Microsoft Corp.'s Exchange for companies looking to get off the upgrade treadmill or to make a smooth transition to a Linux server environment.

In eWEEK Labs' tests, Scalix Email and Calendaring Platform 8.2 ably delivered the key delegation and scheduling features that Outlook users expect. However, the Web client experience is limited to e-mail support. We'd like broader management tools to manage the server and deploy the client as well, but overall we found Scalix easy to manage.

The platform consists of three components: Scalix Server, Scalix Web Access and Scalix Connect for Microsoft's Outlook. Scalix Connect, an Outlook plug-in, enables users to share calendars and create delegates. From a user perspective, we found that Outlook 2000 and Outlook 2002 functioned almost entirely as they would when connecting to an Exchange 5.5 or Exchange 2000 server.

In tests, we were able to share calendars; create public folders; create shared resources, such as conference rooms; and create delegates largely as we could with Exchange (see screen). We could also work on our e-mail, calendar and folders offline. We could create public folders via Outlook using accounts with administrative privileges or via the command line on the server. This points out the all-or-nothing nature of rights in Scalix. The ability to allocate different levels of rights to



Scalix supports group calendaring through a MAPI connector in Outlook.

users or groups would be a welcome addition.

As administrators, we could remotely distribute the Scalix Connect plug-in with all the necessary user-specific information contained in a configuration file. It can also be configured to self-update by checking the server for a more recent version.

By default, the Connect application exposes features that some administrators would prefer stay hidden, such as the logging settings for the client.

The Scalix Server is based on Hewlett-Packard Co.'s OpenMail, and configuring the server is handled through the initial install application and a command-line interface. There are a couple of scripts that simplify migrating user data from an LDAP directory and Exchange 5.5. We would like to see more options from an administrative standpoint, such as a Web-based console, particularly some tools for quickly assessing the capacity utilization of the server.

The Web-based experience is the only area in which Scalix doesn't measure up to its Exchange and IBM Lotus Domino counterparts. Although the Webmail client largely mirrors the Outlook Web Access experience of Exchange 2000—with a three-pane view of mail folders, a message list and message content—it doesn't give the user access to the calendar or the folders.

We found the Webmail client very easy to use. As with competitors, the e-mail editor supports rich text, but it also has the right mix of buttons for simplifying tasks such as address and spell checking without cluttering up the interface. Managing e-mail from within the main interface is easy as well because it supports message drag-and-drop. When logging in to Webmail, the server launches the Webmail client in a new window. This caused us concern regarding a user's ability to be diligent about security in kiosk environments.

Webmail works only with Internet Explorer 5.5 or later and requires Tomcat 4 and Sun Microsystems Inc.'s Java 2 Runtime Environment on the Web server. Any client that supports POP or IMAP should also be able to connect to a Scalix Server, albeit without Messaging API functionality. Scalix also supports BlackBerry wireless devices. **e**

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**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

## Email and Calendaring Platform 8.2

Companies looking to migrate from Exchange to a Linux-based

### KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

USABILITY	EXCELLENT
CAPABILITY	GOOD
PERFORMANCE	GOOD
INTEROPERABILITY	GOOD
MANAGEABILITY	GOOD
SCALABILITY	EXCELLENT
SECURITY	GOOD

messaging system or that want broader groupware functionality will find a good solution in Scalix's Email and Calendaring Platform. From the user's perspective, the Outlook experience is very good, although the Web client could use some improvement. Email and Calendaring Platform is priced at \$60 per user, \$600 for a server with

500 mailboxes and \$3,500 for the Enterprise Edition. More information is available at [www.scalix.com](http://www.scalix.com).

**+** Excellent Outlook support; Outlook plug-in can be updated remotely. **-** Web client supports only e-mail; administration is limited to the command line.

### EVALUATION SHORT LIST

- Microsoft's Exchange 2003
- IBM's Lotus Domino and Notes 6.5
- Stalker Software Inc.'s CommuniGate Pro 4.1

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