

Your Current Challenges in the BizTalk Environment

BizTalk Server is the product that's been successfully used in the market for over a decade. Organisations have adapted various methodologies when it comes to operations, support, deployment etc. They may or may not realise some of the challenges that lies in the way they follow their methodologies, and may not realise how much money has been wasted directly or indirectly. Here are the top 5 challenges/issues we have seen the organisations are facing in our 12+ years of experience dealing with companies using Microsoft BizTalk server from our consulting background.



1. Ability to support your BizTalk environments without skilled BizTalk people

This is one of the biggest challenge at the moment. If you look at the way organisations support their BizTalk environments, they will always require skilled BizTalk professionals to support the BizTalk applications. This is mainly due to the lack of adequate tooling in BizTalk Server and it's nearly impossible to bring someone without any BizTalk knowledge to come and support your applications. The BizTalk admin console does everything right from development, deployment, configuration and support/operations. By the time it comes to support and operations the tool is way too powerful to give it to non-BizTalk people.

2. Operational Governance/Auditing - Understanding "who did what in the environment"

One of the other challenge at the moment is operational governance and auditing. Currently the operational/support activities performed by your BizTalk support team are not traceable. Example: Someone can start a BizTalk Host Instance, stop a Send Port, unenlist an Orchestration, or even terminate an important suspended message instance. These kind of gap in traceability could be potentially dangerous, you basically perform your day-to-day operations based on trust.

3. Advanced authorization – Security at one place

When it comes to authorization in BizTalk server from administration and operations point of view (out of the box) you are restricted to two NT groups “BizTalk Server Administrators” and “BizTalk Server Operators” with hard coded rules like “cannot view message properties and message bodies”. Due to this hard coded restrictions majority of the time every single support person in the organisation will be part of your “BizTalk administrators group” without any security restrictions. In addition your support people will have RDP root access to the production servers and also SQL server access to BizTalk system databases.

4. Ability to share your BizTalk Environment between business units

The BizTalk Administration console is not designed for shared usage of environments. Once somebody has access to BizTalk Admin console and connects to an environment, they will have access to pretty much everything in the environment (all the applications, hosts, host instances, message boxes etc.). This makes it complex to safely share your environment between different business units. Once a critical application is deployed into the environments, organisations resist to deploy anything else into the environment. Even though there may be enough spare capacity in the environment.

5. Keep your environment healthy by proactive monitoring

BizTalk server out of the box doesn't come with any inbuilt monitoring capabilities. When it comes to monitoring you need to invest in external tools like System Centre Operations Manager (SCOM), HP Operations Manager, and IBM Tivoli are something like this. Configuring these general purpose monitoring tools are complicated and it takes weeks and months to configure it. It's also challenging to find the right resources who are capable of understanding BizTalk and one of these monitoring tools and come with a good monitoring solution.

In addition to all these hard-core problems there is also one fundamental issue, there is no web based management access to your BizTalk environments. The current tool that comes out of the box BizTalk Administration console is a traditional MMC based snap-in.

“ BizTalk360 can address all the above challenges. It is a single software you need to increase your BizTalk environment operational efficiency. ”

Official Address: Level 12, The Broadgate Tower, 20 Primrose Street, London, EC2A 2EW, United Kingdom

Registered Address: 119 Spur Road, Orpington, Kent, BR6 0QP United Kingdom

www.biztalk360.com

contact@biztalk360.com

facebook.com/biztalk360

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