

GroupServer Comparative Analysis

Comparison of key features of GroupServer with its main competitors

Fully

turns email into a group medium, supporting multiple concurrent conversations and shared archives

Not at all

overloads and isolates people; where shared folders are present, they're usually not used

Not at all

conversations are in a separate place

Not at all

most provide only web forums that don't use email

Fully

turns email into a group medium

Fully

accessible from any Internet-connected computer, running any operating system; web pages download quickly; participants can use email only in many cases and work while off-line

Poorly

often can only be accessed via in-house network, WAN or VPN

Partly

requires active Internet connection

Partly

requires active Internet connection

Fully

as with GroupServer, requires only Internet email and part-time Web connection

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Fully

turns email into a group medium

Partly

files can have descriptions and be organised in folders

Partly

file system provides for folders and very good (but seldom used) meta-data

Not at all

files may not even be supported

Fully

sophisticated metadata management (superseding files altogether) is available

Partly

files can have descriptions and be organised in folders

Fully

interface highly configurable using CSS

Not at all

interface is as it is; very hard to create sense of place when messages and files are in different places

Partly

usually quite configurable

Fully

often highly configurable

Poorly

intrusive ads in web and email; can name and theme groups; no flexibility with overall context of interface

Partly

flexible, standards-compliant (XML, DocBook); currently requires manual maintenance (provided as part of the GroupSense support service)

Not at all

not possible to associate static content with shared repositories

Poorly

some support static content

Fully

excellent support for static content via integration with CMS

Not at all

very limited support for static content

Partly

supports survey forms, structured data display, statistical processing and reporting; highly flexible with customisation

Not at all

usually not supported

Poorly

supported in the higher end solutions

Fully

excellent support via integration technologies

Not at all

not supported

Fully

flexible, robust security sub-system provides high level of control

Adequately

file system can be very well controlled but emails are managed separately and seldom shared anyway

Adequately

high end ones are highly configurable

Fully

highly configurable

Not at all

no control beyond limited features provided; no backup

Not at all

most are not yet implemented

Not at all

not supported

Poorly

some have calendars

Fully

sites support wide range of portlets

Adequately

calendars, tables, chat, polls are good

Partly

email, web, screen readers, PDAs and PDF

Not at all

email client and file system browser

Poorly

usually web-only, some with email notification and posting

Fully

support integration with wide variety of devices

Poorly

email and the web