Is MFT really necessary?

The Problem

Since the introduction of serious Information Technology, enterprises have needed to – simple as it sounds – move data from one point to another. As IT has grown, the amount of data that needs to be transported has also grown with it. IT departments have a limited number of ways to solve this problem.

What about FTP?

In many cases, they have selected what looks on the surface like the simplest solution: the venerable **File Transfer Protocol**, or **FTP**. FTP has a lot plus-points. For example, it is non-invasive software with zero license fees. After half an hour's training, a technician can use FTP to transfer a file of any format or character encoding over any IP-based network.

With these advantages, is MFT really necessary?

FTP is not the answer...

The answer to that question involves exploring how and why FTP fails to handle the data transport requirements of modern enterprises. FTP cannot adequately respond to a large number of genuinely critical computing and business imperatives:

- ❑ *No security*

- ❑ *No guaranteed delivery*

- ❑ *Limited error handling and recovery possibilities*

- ❑ *Limited to IP-based networks*

- ❑ *No monitoring – no broadcasting – no automation – no restarts – no retries – no store and forward...*

For all the apparent advantages of "free" software then, FTP ends up introducing many uncertainties into the data exchange process, and using a lot of resources – most of them, human. In modern terms, its "Total Cost of Ownership" is unacceptably high.

What about MOM?

Message-Oriented Middleware (MOM) made the transfer of information between applications and data stores into a sure thing – a reliable, guaranteed, securable; automatable way of moving information between applications without the requirement for human operators at every step.

Still not the answer...

By working in message mode rather than file mode, MOM has partially helped transform the nature of the need to transport data. However, MOM is still not the universal data-movement solution. Even after a dozen or so years of working in computing environments that now include not only MOM, but ERP, CRM, SCM, EAI and so on, it is still true that about **80% of corporate data exchanges are still performed using files**. Even if your enterprise manages to reduce that number to 60% or even 40%, neither FTP nor MOM can solve this problem.

Managed File Transfer can.

What about Managed File Transfer?

MFT provides a global environment for transporting files in the enterprise. It provides Internet-enabled, asynchronous, secured, automatable, guaranteed delivery of data to multiple destinations.

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MFT = "*More than* File Transfers"

But MFT is much more than simple "file transfer software". It combines:

❑ **High security**
Supporting a full suite of security algorithms and standards, operating in a DMZ, supporting firewalls and proxies, supporting SSL/TLS and PKI, incorporating virtual directories with targeted, specific external file visibility, file encryption, partner identification...

❑ **Global visibility**
Over the transfer process, including end-to-end acknowledgments, even when one "end" is in another enterprise.

❑ **Automation**
Including scheduling transfers for any time and at any frequency, or restarting failed transfers from pre-selected and pre-defined points.

❑ **Internet access**
Mediate and integrate dataflows from/to the Internet to/from your legacy systems.

❑ **Data compression**
To transfer files of any size – and faster.

❑ **File groups**
Transfer groups of files.

❑ **Programming exits**
Apply a programming exit during processing, or automatically execute post-transfer processes.

❑ **Mode switch**
Operate in continuous mode when you need it, or in batch mode *when systems aren't tied up at their expensive day-jobs.*

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