

This article discusses the features and benefits that the Axigen Free Mail Server offers compared to open source solutions. It provides a comprehensive analysis of the factors that IT and Business managers should consider when choosing a messaging platform, particularly addressing the needs of small to medium sized businesses.

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Are you planning to jump on the “open source software” bandwagon? Or contemplating the idea of switching from an open source setup to a commercial solution? Here are a few considerations to keep in mind.



## **Axigen Free Mail Server A Great Alternative to Open Source**

With email being the backbone of business communications, having a reliable messaging solution can make the difference in terms of maintaining productivity and even continuity. Spam and virus protection, back-up and archiving, shared calendars, contacts and tasks, support for various web and desktop email clients, mobile access – these are just some of the requirements that mail servers should meet besides sending and receiving email messages. Designing and using your own email system made of several open source components could save you some money (great money, in some cases), but it could also prove to be quite draining. Not only that it usually takes a significant amount of time and knowledge to research, integrate, test and support the various components into a custom, fully-functional messaging solution, but maintaining it is far more laborious than imagined.

An easy way out is always proprietary software. One may say that it's too traditional, that users have no choice but to use the software “as is”, or that it's too expensive. What if it's free and quite flexible? If we have caught your interest, then you might have a look at the Axigen Free Mail Server. It is a turnkey messaging solution with 100 free email users and 5 calendaring users – just about enough to get you started. Focused on innovation in order to differentiate itself in the market, this all-in-one solution offers a clear roadmap evolution to guarantee the inclusion of new features and keeping you in control as your business evolves. All in all, it's a great alternative to Open Source.

Nevertheless, there are no true winners or losers – just different solutions. After analyzing the specific messaging needs of your business, you'll only have to consider where to shift your budget focus: on in-house configuration and development, integrating third-party applications, or licensing, support and maintenance etc.

Here are a few points to consider when making your decision:



Free Open Source Mail Server	Axigen Free Mail Server
<b>Costs</b>	
<p><b>Free</b></p> <p>The basic idea behind Open Source is that it is freely available. You have the freedom to run the program for any purpose, to modify it and to redistribute copies of either the original or the modified program (without having to pay royalties to previous developers).</p>	<p><b>It's also free!</b></p> <p>You just have to spend 5 minutes to register your license in order to benefit from integrated mail services for 100 users (including WebMail access from PCs and mobile phones, and 5 calendaring users), unlimited domains, advanced security and effortless administration, totally free of charge.</p>
<b>Compatibility</b>	
<p><b>Linux-prone</b></p> <p>Very few open source software applications adjust well with Windows, hence lots of effort is put into integrating an open source mail server and its complementary applications. However, if you are using Linux, compatibility is not an issue, and there are several open source candidates for enterprise deployment.</p>	<p><b>Multi-platform</b></p> <p>Axigen allows you to switch platforms freely, without additional costs – the solution is available on both Windows and Linux OS (32 or 64-bit), and supports integration with various third-party applications (e.g. billing, CRM, AntiSpam). It also keeps you worry-free by compliance with major international standards and data retention regulations.</p>
<b>Usability</b>	
<p><b>Too little, too late</b></p> <p>Some open source software applications may lack a consistent look and feel, since they depend on various developers' preferences and are not specifically designed by keeping the end user in mind. From the administrator's point of view it gets even harder, since complete documentation for open source applications usually lacks.</p>	<p><b>User-centric look and feel</b></p> <p>Technology shouldn't get in the way – that is why the Axigen Free Mail Server is adapted to work the way you do, bringing an extensive set of usability features for both users and system administrators. Moreover, the mail server installation is quick and easy – taking only 10-15 minutes of your time, configuration is a breeze and maintenance is simple and straightforward.</p>
<b>Flexibility</b>	
<p><b>Freedom of choice</b></p> <p>Open Source encourages hands-on: whether you're just passionate about technology, or your budget is tight, you are likely to want to make modifications to the software yourself. Hence, by not prohibiting the inspection and modification of the source code, Open Source allows users to make improvements, adapt it or fix bugs. In any case, the software evolves constantly thanks to the community around it. An open source mail server generally offers basic-like features and you need to integrate or modify lots of additional applications. This might take a lot of time (and even money) to research, install, configure and maintain.</p>	<p><b>Moving forward on your terms</b></p> <p>In the case of proprietary software, the common belief is that users have limited input, since vendors protect their code by copyright laws. However, even if modifications or derivative works by unauthorized developers are not permitted, the team at Axigen constantly stays in touch with customers and strongly encourages feedback and suggestions. Axigen's flexibility also consists in allowing you to add to this free mail server different premium features such as Outlook Connector, mobile sync etc., as your business continues to grow. No effort is needed – you will simply receive a new license key with the add-on parameters included.</p>



<b>Technical Support</b>	
<p><b>Community support</b></p> <p>Open Source support usually consists of online resources, mostly forums (“word-of-mouth” support), where the community does not have a legal obligation to answer your questions. There are almost no up-to-date help documents and manuals made available, since the software is being changed very often. Some even say that once you decide to use open source software you are on your own.</p> <p>Of course you can ask for professional help, but qualified technical support can prove to be really expensive, since this is the only revenue model perceived in Open Source.</p>	<p><b>24x7 technical support</b></p> <p>Technical support is one of the most important elements for a great working experience with Axigen messaging platform. If you do not mind a fair yearly fee, you can count on the Axigen team 24x7 and benefit from:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Human response time within an average of 2 hours, by email</li> <li>• Support in local language by local partners</li> <li>• Assistance for: installation, migration, configuration, troubleshooting etc.</li> <li>• Multiple additional online resources</li> <li>• Software maintenance (full access to new product versions and updates)</li> </ul>
<b>Maintenance</b>	
<p><b>Unpredictable future</b></p> <p>Some open source software projects can have huge communities of programmers involved, and allow for the rapid implementation of new features and security fixes.</p> <p>Still, there is no guarantee of regular improvements. Since most contributors are non-profit, but for passion or own use and interest, the development frequency varies, making it hard to track and predict application updates.</p>	<p><b>Clear roadmap</b></p> <p>Axigen follows a clear roadmap and is focused on specific long-term performance objectives. Periodical newsletters announce you about new version upgrades, patches or updates, so you can benefit from the latest features or bug fixes instantly. All new implementations are carefully tested before a release, in order to cover all potential usage scenarios and issues.</p>
<b>Reliability</b>	
<p><b>Debatable</b></p> <p>Open Source combines the knowledge and expertise of different developers, therefore, for some projects, the source code is frequently checked and issues are dealt efficiently with quick, global networking and communication. But most applications are products of hobbyists and do not enjoy the same rigorous testing protocol. So it is more likely that the software contains fatal errors, viruses or other problems. Also, take into consideration that programmers might lose interest, projects can die and communities can dissipate.</p>	<p><b>Rock solid</b></p> <p>For a proprietary solution, reliability is a non-negotiable requirement. Moreover, closed source software companies pay salaries to people to develop the software and therefore development is pretty much guaranteed.</p> <p>Axigen's high performance mail server technology is specifically built to provide a fast and secure email transfer, processing and delivery. Choosing this reliable platform that's easy to manage and maintain will help you reduce the costs of ensuring service availability and uptime, as well as the costs associated with end-user productivity.</p>
<b>Security</b>	
<p><b>Good potential</b></p> <p>Vulnerabilities are found in many software products no matter where they come from, but when the source is open, it is more prone to security holes.</p> <p>On the other hand, some experts believe that the open source nature is actually the one</p>	<p><b>Fully secure messaging</b></p> <p>The Axigen Free Mail Server guarantees secure email communication, protecting your confidential data with an extensive set of defensive tools. It constantly raises the bar for email security, determined to offer solid defense against the latest messaging borne threats.</p>



<p>making security vulnerabilities easier to spot and fix. But even if it has the potential of being more secure, you should check the actual status of the open source applications that you are planning to use when building your messaging solution.</p>	<p>For extra email protection, Axigen Free Mail Server allows you to extend your security toolset with several add-ons (such as AVG or Commtouch) or by integrating any of the available commercial AntiVirus / AntiSpam applications.</p>
<p><b>Licensing</b></p>	
<p><b>Flexible, yet not so generous</b></p> <p>This is an issue where the line between Open and Closed Source blurs. Many open source projects contain contributions from many people and this can increase the risk that a bit of copyrighted code might find itself in there, and therefore raise legal issues.</p> <p>Read it carefully, because the typical license agreement does not include too many articles in favor of the licensee, but a broad disclaimer of all warranties that benefits the contributors (meaning that all risks are borne by the user).</p>	<p><b>Friendly licensing terms</b></p> <p>Axigen provides you with a flexible licensing model that allows you to focus on growing your business. The Axigen Free Mail Server license is free of charge, and only has to be renewed on a yearly basis. It includes maintenance (free access to new version updates and upgrades) and, as mentioned before, it supports 100 mailboxes in total, and allows you to easily expand the solution with new features, via add-ons (including a more than affordable SOHO pack to help kick-start or advance your business).</p>

### Final thoughts

Both open source and proprietary messaging solutions have their pros and cons, so it is just a matter of choice. The business world is, in most cases, a hybrid one, that continues to integrate proprietary and open source code altogether. In the end, the more options you can choose from, the better.

The Axigen Free Mail Server is, however, a great place to start. The powerful technology it's based on makes it reliable and safe, while still remaining quite adaptable to work the way you do. You'll definitely enjoy the comfort of easy communication with this all-in-one, friendly messaging solution.

For further details on this free mail server, or any other products and services offered by Axigen, we invite you to [visit the Axigen website](#) or get in touch with the Axigen team at [contact@axigen.com](mailto:contact@axigen.com).

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#### About Gecad Technologies and Axigen

Established in 2001, Gecad Technologies SA, member of the GECAD Group and ISO 9001:2008 certified, is the vendor of Axigen, an integrated email, calendaring and collaboration platform, masterfully built using a unique mail server technology, for increased speed and security. Axigen ensures an efficient and secure worldwide communication environment and business growth for both service providers and companies of all sizes. It is currently distributed internationally by 300 partners from 100 countries and manages the email traffic for more than 11,000 companies with 8 million end-users. For further details, please visit [www.axigen.com](http://www.axigen.com)

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