

IRS MODERNIZES E-MAIL SYSTEM

WASHINGTON -- The Internal Revenue Service on Monday announced plans to install a new electronic mail system designed to standardize the agency's internal communications network and improve taxpayer service.

The new network will replace 11 different types of e-mail being used on IRS computers around the country. The new, unified IRS system will also help avoid e-mail troubles involving the Year 2000 computer problem.

"To provide the best service to taxpayers, IRS employees must have a reliable e-mail system to communicate with each other," said Charles O. Rossotti, Commissioner of Internal Revenue. "This new set-up will help take the kinks out of our current system and bring us up to speed."

Rossotti said the new e-mail system will improve internal communications and help bring cohesion to workers during a crucial period of change at the agency.

"This will pull the far-flung family of IRS employees closer together and help the entire agency focus on our efforts to provide better service to the public," Rossotti said.

The IRS awarded the bid for the new system to Telos Corp., an information technology company based in Ashburn, Va. The deal could be worth up to \$4.3 million.

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The new e-mail package will use Microsoft Exchange Server Version 5.5 along with the Microsoft Outlook 98 desktop product. The IRS will switch over to the new system during the next 12 months.

IRS Chief Information Officer Paul Cosgrave said that among the “best-in-market” software considered, Microsoft Exchange provided the best match for IRS requirements and offered the greatest value to the agency.

Cosgrave said the new system is just part of the larger effort modernize the agency’s technology.

“Commissioner Rossotti has asked me to move the IRS toward a much more standardized approach to delivering information technology services. The decision to roll out a standard e-mail package is just one of the steps we are taking to accomplish that,” said Cosgrave, who has 25 years of technology management experience in the private sector.

Cosgrave said the agency’s technology modernization efforts, including the new e-mail package, will help deliver significant improvements in taxpayer service during the next few years.

“We’re doing everything we can to modernize the IRS, and this represents just one more step in our efforts,” Cosgrave said.

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