

WHITE PAPER

Iron Mountain Simplifies the New E-mail Archive Decision

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July, 2009

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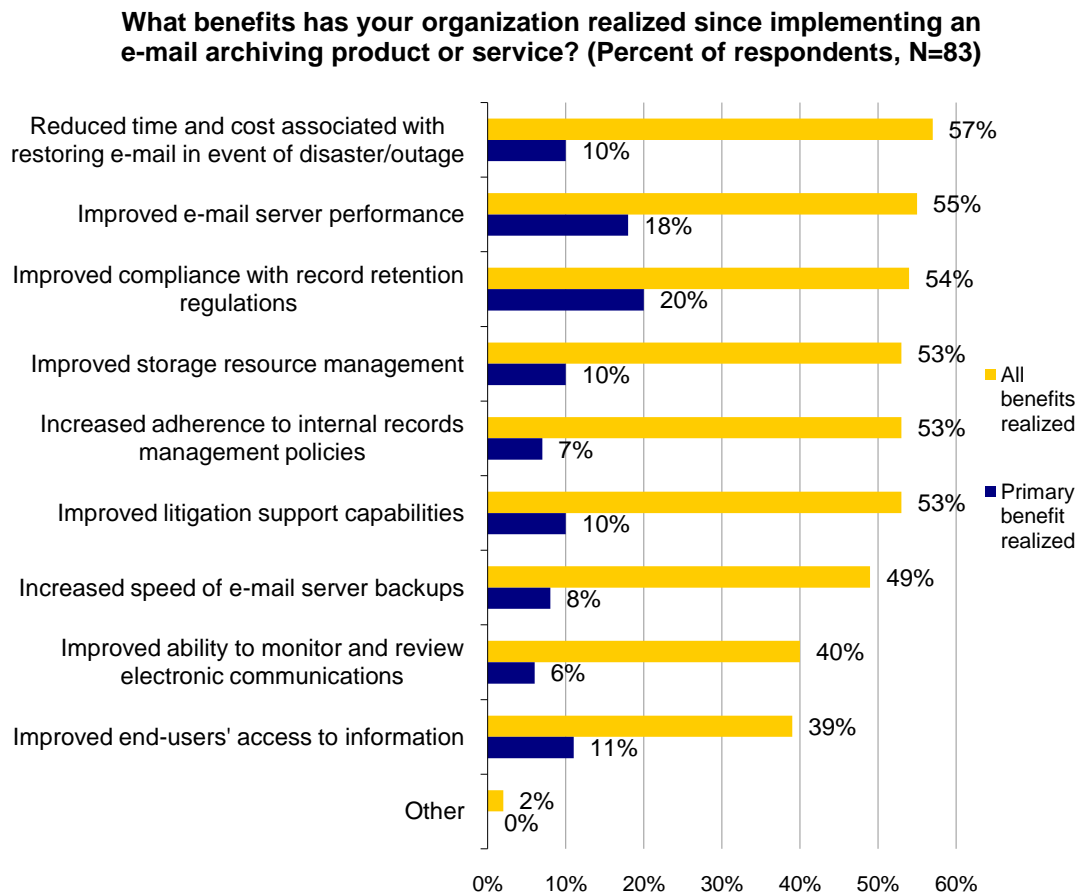
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Introduction

The word “versatility” is rarely used to describe a technology solution; most products do only one or two things very well and that’s the end of it. But, when referring to e-mail archiving solutions, calling them versatile becomes an understatement. Current users rave about the message application performance boost, lower storage costs, more efficient data protection operations, and simpler electronic discovery processes delivered by an e-mail archive implementation (see Figure 1). These benefits often overshadow the productivity improvements an e-mail archive can bring as they free employees from managing their own inbox due to cumbersome quotas.

FIGURE 1. E-MAIL ARCHIVING BENEFITS REPORTED BY CURRENT USERS



Source: ESG Research Report, *Electronic Discovery Requirements Escalate*, November 2007.

With so much to gain, organizations that have yet to implement an e-mail archiving solution should not be deciding *if* they will do so, they should be deciding *how* they are going archive. This creates a new e-mail archive decision: will a company use an on-premises or cloud-based (sometimes referred to as Software as a Service or SaaS) solution? The latter is more viable when the archive service is delivered by a reputable, well-established provider such as Iron Mountain.

The Basics

What is an E-mail Archive?

An e-mail archive is a separate environment where messages and attachments are kept for compliance, electronic discovery, and business reference purposes. By storing data outside of the primary e-mail environment, organizations can set retention policies and establish role-based access controls to (archived) messages without impacting the e-mail application itself. Additionally, organizations can choose the cost structure of the archive environment through lower cost servers and storage or a hosted service. Instead of saving all messages in the primary messaging infrastructure—which, for performance reasons, is usually built with fast and therefore expensive storage and servers—they can be moved to a more cost effective archive environment.

An e-mail archive solution identifies the messages to archive, when the data should be moved, and then sets and enforces any necessary retention policies. After data is in the archive, employees can access messages from their message application client (Outlook for Exchange, Lotus Notes, etc.) or via their browser. Typically, e-mail archive users provide individual employees with access to their messages while corporate counsel, records managers, and internal auditors usually have permission to search the entire archive.

Not the Same as Backup

Saving e-mail backup tapes for long periods of time does not constitute a corporate archive. This approach may have been feasible when older messages did not need to be regularly accessed by lawyers, regulators, auditors, and employees, but times have changed.

Archives are no longer dormant repositories; organizations have to change how they are built. When data is moved to an archive, it must be indexed (so it can be searched) and stored in native file format (so it can be easily retrieved). These requirements cannot be addressed by traditional backup software applications that change file formats to compress the data for protection operations. Further, backup software does not actually move data; it creates a copy on separate storage media. What's more, backup software creates a catalog to track where all the copies are stored, whereas an archive makes the actual message and attachment content (sender, recipient, keywords, etc.) searchable.

Backup and archive are distinct processes that serve different purposes: backups should be used if the primary copy of an e-mail is lost or the application is corrupted. Conversely, an archive should be used to manage and retrieve messages outside of the primary messaging application environment. When implemented together, organizations can actually get incremental benefits. By archiving data outside of the primary messaging environment, there is less data to protect and backup/restore operations are completed much faster.

Why Archive?

- **Create IT efficiencies.** As mentioned above, one of the immediate benefits of an e-mail archive is greater efficiency with regard to data protection operations. Constant data growth makes it difficult for IT departments to complete message application backups in the allowed amount of time. Moving a portion of data to an archive enables backups and restores to complete in a much shorter timeframe, thus minimizing the risk of any e-mail data loss or application downtime.

E-mail data growth, which is driven by its advent as the default corporate communication and collaboration platform, also degrades application performance. IT departments spend countless hours upgrading and adding new primary messaging servers and storage in an effort to maintain e-mail application performance. Moving messages to an archive frees up valuable compute and storage resources in the primary environment, mitigating resource contention and, more importantly, minimizing the need for IT to constantly optimize e-mail application performance.

- **Facilitate records management and electronic discovery.** A subset of an organization's e-mails may be considered business records and, as such, must be retained for compliance or corporate governance reasons. Additionally, messages provide unique insight into a company's operations, thus making them prime targets for regulators and litigators during discovery. Often, e-mail can provide context as to who knew what and when, which can make or break a case.

An e-mail archive gives corporate counsel a central location to search for relevant messages when an electronic discovery request arrives. When relevant messages are located, attorneys can place a retention policy on them for legal hold purposes. If e-mails aren't centralized, corporate counsel has to go to primary e-mail applications, PCs, and file shares where personal archives (.PSTs, .NSF files, etc) are stored as well as backup systems to locate all the necessary data—a very time consuming process. With an e-mail archive, corporate counsels can spend more time reviewing potential e-mail evidence rather than looking for it.

- **Improve productivity.** Nearly two-thirds of organizations surveyed by ESG implement mailbox quotas in order to curb e-mail related server and storage costs.¹ When quotas are in place, employees have to manage their own inboxes, which entails deleting messages or creating personal archives. In some cases, deleting messages is not possible as they are business records or potential evidence. Also, personal archives simply shift the e-mail storage burden outside of the primary messaging environment and complicate electronic discovery processes.

Quotas, however, when maintained by an archive, can be used to trigger message movement when an inbox reaches a certain size. In fact, IT organizations can actually set up policies where a primary e-mail environment never exceeds a predetermined size by archiving messages before the established threshold is hit. As an example, a 1,000 employee company may set e-mail quotas at 500 MB per individual mailbox. When any one mailbox gets close to this quota, data is archived and then deleted from the primary environment. This company's IT department knows that its primary e-mail environment will never grow beyond 500 GB (500 MB x 1,000 users), enabling the (primary e-mail) infrastructure to be sized appropriately.

The New E-mail Archive Decision

Rationalization is a Risk

With all of the potential benefits that an e-mail archive can bring, why haven't all organizations made an investment? Many believe that they are exempt from electronic discovery and record retention requirements. Others think that mailbox quotas (without a centralized archive back-end) are the best way to manage messaging environments. These rationalizations are extremely naïve and unfounded. Between 2005 and 2007, electronic discovery events increased by 43% in

¹ Source: ESG Research Report, *2007 E-mail Archiving Survey*, November 2007.

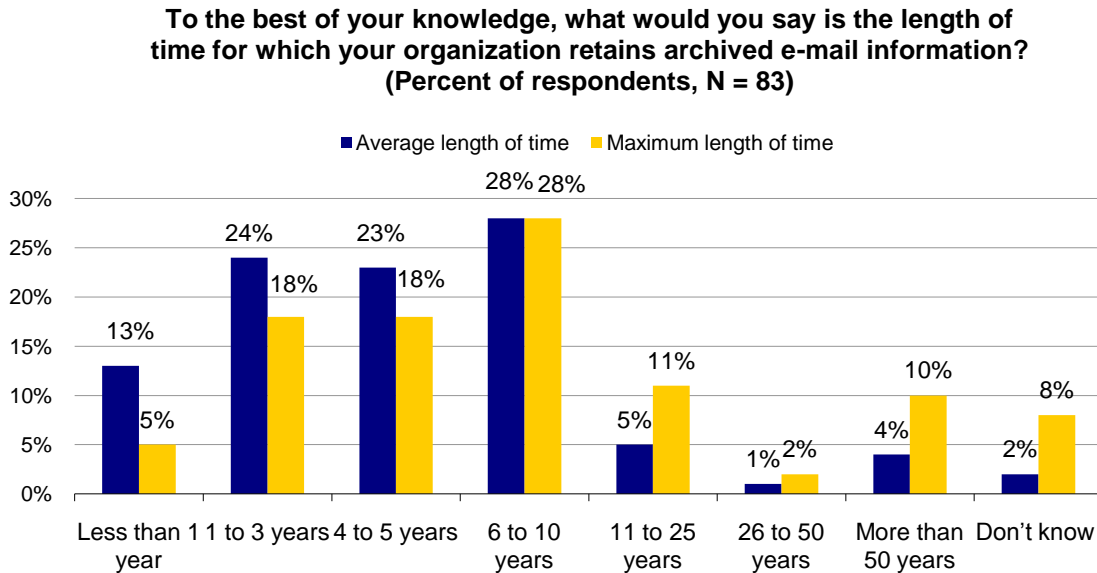
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large enterprises (over 20,000 employees), 17% in medium enterprises (1,000 - 20,000 employees), and 22% in small and medium size businesses (1 – 1,000 employees).² These figures likely grew in 2008 due to the ever-increasing frequency of regulatory and legal matters involving electronically stored information such as e-mails and application files. Almost every industry—including healthcare, pharmaceuticals, education, energy, financial services, and manufacturing—are subject to record retention regulations. So long as business is conducted over e-mail, organizations will need to find ways to properly save messages in accordance with these mandates.

The Cloud Makes it Easier

There is no shortage of excuses as to why organizations have yet to implement an e-mail archive; however, these may mask the real reason. ESG believes that e-mail archive non-adopters are hesitant to make an investment because an archive introduces a new, separate infrastructure into the messaging environment. IT departments have to implement, configure, and then operate this environment over an extended timeframe as retention periods can extend well beyond 3 years (see Figure 2).

FIGURE 2. AVERAGE AND MAXIMUM LENGTHS OF TIME ARCHIVED E-MAIL IS RETAINED



Source: ESG Research Report, 2007 E-mail Archiving Survey, November 2007.

The upfront expense and ongoing operational costs should no longer be viewed as impediments to adopting an e-mail archive thanks to cloud-based solutions. These offerings can be set up in a few hours after only minor configuration changes to the primary message application. After receiving the messages, the provider indexes and stores them for the desired retention period. Employees can access messages as if they were kept in a local archive or still in their inbox. The provider charges a monthly fee based on parameters such as the number of inboxes being archived and the amount of archive storage being consumed. Different providers have varying fee structures, but it is still a recurring fee as opposed to an upfront capital expense (IT does not need to buy e-mail archive software, application servers, and storage). Most importantly, the organization does not have to manage the archive.

² Source: ESG Research Report, *Electronic Discovery Requirements Escalate*, November 2007.

A Natural Progression

Although it isn't today, e-mail archiving is likely to become widely deployed, similar to other message management solutions. Anti-spam and antivirus solutions are now ubiquitous, but they once weren't and as a result, some organizations did not believe that malware or a worm could cripple messaging systems until they themselves became victims. Companies complained about the cost of big e-mail filtering systems, but made the investment because the risk and cost of doing nothing was too great.

Today, companies are becoming victims of electronic discovery requests and rapidly growing storage expenses. There is an inherent legal risk to the business if corporate counsel cannot find relevant messages quickly and organizations are running out of money (to buy storage) and power (to run all of the capacity). With cloud-based archiving providing an alternative to on-premises solutions and eliminating the aforementioned rationalizations (as to why companies do not currently build and e-mail archive), organizations will soon be deciding *how* to archive rather than *if*.

A Mountain of Stability

It's Not the Cloud, it's the Provider

When making the "how to archive e-mail" decision, organizations must determine whether they want an on-premises solution or a cloud-based archive service. There are pros and cons to each, which is outside the scope of this discussion, yet some companies immediately eliminate the cloud-based alternative because they refuse to trust a third party with their e-mails. Others cite data security concerns as to why they will not consider a cloud-based e-mail archive option. While these are undoubtedly legitimate issues when considering a cloud provider lacking experience in meeting service levels, they are easily addressed when a provider like Iron Mountain is mentioned.

With established customer trust, experience in delivering service levels, and multi-level security measures in place, Iron Mountain provides a unique level of stability to cloud-based e-mail archive offerings, making it much easier to include such an option in "how to archive e-mail" decisions. Thousands of organizations already trust Iron Mountain with their business records. The company delivers other technologies as a service including backup and compliant e-mail archiving for financial services firms. The services are backed by several capabilities that give customers peace of mind, ensuring that their data is well protected. For instance, physical (armed guards, keycard access, etc.) and technology (firewalls, VPNs, etc.) security safeguards are in place at both of the company's two underground data centers.

How Iron Mountain Stacks Up

Without going into the technical details—a job best left for an Iron Mountain representative—ESG believes it is important to highlight some of the unique benefits that the company's e-mail archive service, the Total Email Management Suite *powered by Mimecast*, brings to the market. First, Iron Mountain already has experience running mission critical compliant e-mail archives and other cloud-based storage services. This means Iron Mountain has standard operating procedures—from on-boarding a customer to training its customers' employees on how to search an archive—already in place and under constant optimization.

Iron Mountain is probably the largest keeper of backup tapes in the world, thanks to its business continuity service offerings. When it comes time to migrate information from tapes to the e-mail

archive, there is a good chance that Iron Mountain is familiar with the tape format and data types (there are lots of old versions of messaging applications and associated data on backup tapes), which makes the process go faster. There is also the possibility that the tape is already stored with Iron Mountain, facilitating easier migrations.

Iron Mountain's Total Email Management Suite includes antivirus and anti-spam solutions; however, it is the company's electronic discovery services that may be most vital to an organization that goes through frequently regulatory or legal investigations. Stratify, an Iron Mountain company, delivers electronic discovery and analysis as a cloud-based service. If customers archive their e-mails with Iron Mountain and get a discovery request, they can use Total Email Management Suite to collect relevant information and move it into Stratify for detailed processing and review. The more people that handle electronic evidence, the greater the chance for modification or deletion (referred to as spoliation). By keeping all the information under Iron Mountain's control, there is no worry about complex chain-of-custody operations.

These are just a few of the reasons why organizations may take a closer look at Iron Mountain's cloud-based e-mail archive service. As always, ESG recommends that customers perform their own due diligence including speaking to references.

Conclusion

First it was viruses, then spam, and now a host of other issues are wreaking havoc on e-mail environments. Consider the following: e-mails alone (not including attachments) make up over 20% of corporate data,³ 80% of electronic discovery events involve e-mail and attachments,⁴ and messaging will drive more storage and server spending over the next twelve months than any other business application.⁵ E-mail archiving can help organizations address all of these challenges, but companies may not be able to afford the upfront capital investment or may not have the resources to run the archive over the long-term.

Cloud-based e-mail archive services eliminate the need for e-mail archive infrastructure purchases and shifts the day-to-day operations of the environment to a service provider. For those that do not believe they can trust a third party with their messages or that these providers can consistently meet service levels, there is a viable option. Providers such as Iron Mountain, who have a history in delivering technology as a cloud-based service and are consistently chosen as a custodian for vital business data, eliminate these concerns.

When customers have two options to archive messages—on-premises or credible cloud-based solutions—the e-mail archive question morphs from *if* to *how*. This is not the first time organizations have had to make this transformation with message management solutions—and it is unclear if it will be last. One thing that is clear is that e-mail archiving offers far too many compelling benefits such as cutting storage costs, improving data protection, and facilitating more efficient electronic discovery for companies of any size to ignore.

³ Source: ESG Research Report, *Medium-Size Business Server & Storage Priorities*, June 2008.

⁴ Source: ESG Research Report, *Electronic Discovery Requirements Escalate*, November 2007.

⁵ Source: ESG Research Report, *Medium-Size Business Server & Storage Priorities*, June 2008.



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