

## ***Email Archival – How This Can Become Your Competitive Advantage***

### **Introduction**

As the digital age pervades both our personal and business lives, compliance measures are beginning to follow. Messaging is receiving increased scrutiny. Recent measures now hold employers accountable to produce specific data (i.e. emails, instant messages, attachments) from several years back, upon request. Effective archival and retrieval technologies are now becoming paramount to meeting compliance. New regulations usually require change and expense, without a contribution to the bottom line. However, here is a way that archival compliance can become a strategic advantage for you.

### **Considerations of Our Current Environment**

Here are some facts to consider about how we manage our data, and then let's review how compliance can become a complementary asset.

- Email is now moving a significant portion of a company's data. The communications and attachments are often intellectual property or IP (i.e. contracts, marketing plans, employment agreements and product designs, etc.). It is estimated that 70% of a company's IP is within the email system, so we should consider this our vault.
- Clearly, email volume is growing. Server and storage performance is continually requiring more resource. Staffs are reluctant to delete email, or attachments, in case they may need a document later, resulting in growing user accounts.
- Disruption of the email service is now crippling to a company. One day of downtime has a striking effect on lost productivity and direct cost.
- Routine incremental backups of the email system, typically nightly, leave wide gaps of exposure for missing, deleted or altered emails. An email database restoration becomes lengthy and fragmented with lingering recoil of missing data and synchronization.
- All email that runs through a company's system belongs to the company, and equally the company is responsible for the content. The message – there is no 'personal email' and we need to know what is crossing your network from a liability perspective.

### **How Compliance Can Become An Advantage**

The mandate to store and retrieve email and instant messages is alive, but here are seven benefits you can realize up deployment.

- **Expedient capture** – with an archival system ALL emails and IM messages are captured, and written, unaltered, to a different system, within the minute they are

received or sent. As the archival device is exclusive to message capture and retention, there is no resource contention on the email system.

- **Instant Messaging is Now Equal to Email** – do you have a usage and retention policy on your Instant Messaging? Typically not, but you should. In litigation this is also requested and can be even more damaging due to the informal and unedited style of composition. A quality archival system will store Instant Messages on the same system as the emails. Content would be accessible the same as email during queries.
- **Scheduled Email Purging** - Policy and procedures can be implemented for regular systematic deletion of emails on user accounts (i.e. delete all after 90 days). This will assure your email server / storage performance. Users will continue to have access to the archived messages for retrieval and review from the archive system, but without the ability to alter.
- **Periodic Internal Audits** – The archival technology provides robust search tools to locate data. Specific terms, dates and expressions can be queried. Routine message reviews should be performed to assure that company policies and data protection are intact. This is far better to be in a proactive mode.
- **Know How You Stand** - If your company is subpoenaed for information, within minutes you can know how you will fare in litigation. Do you have a smoking gun or reason to request a dismissal?
- **Rapid Recovery in Case of Disruption** - In cases of business continuity or recovery, restoring an email server from nightly incremental backups can be lengthy and sketchy. An archival system assures rapid recovery and full accountability within minutes.
- **Get the Word Out to Employees** - A company's communication to their employees of new policies will have an overseer effect. Once they have the awareness of the tools and detection capabilities to be implemented, most violations cease and your risk decreases.

## Final Thoughts

Weigh the alternatives and you will begin to see how this particular bit of compliance could be beneficial to your operations, and deliver competitive advantage.

Compliance requires us to take action. Don't rationalize that nightly backups will be adequate. This could be a risk that costs your company in image, litigation and dollars. It will also continue to add cost to your current operation to maintain inadequate coverage. Implement a comprehensive archival system and you can manage your email environment effectively and strategically.

We are frequently asked about outsourcing the email archival function as an option. Keep in mind that if outsourced, **you are still the responsible party in any litigation regardless** of how your outsourced solution performs. To house the technology in-house today is not burdensome and often times produce a quick ROI vs. outsourcing. Contact us for further discussion and actual case studies of many companies who successfully brought this under their roof.

We work with companies of all sizes to assure their archival is in compliance. Our solutions are state of the art, quick to implement, cost effective and provide the comfort to know your data is secure and in compliance. You have the responsibility for your company's email, with the right archival system you can now also have the control to assure compliance and protect your company's assets.

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Dan Schutte is the owner of [Enclave Data Solutions](#), specializing in messaging security, content filtering, anti-spam software, data archival and compliance. Visit our website to read actual Case Studies of how companies have successfully protected their data networks and met compliance requirements. Free trials and downloads are available on all of our products to show you directly how vulnerable your environment may be.

Does your company have a formal written policy in place for your IM? Request our **free** Word template **'Policy on Email Usage and Retention'** that you can customize to your environment in less than thirty minutes. This could become a notable first step to addressing IM vulnerabilities in your workplace. Contact [info@enclavedata.com](mailto:info@enclavedata.com) for a copy.

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