

Why You Should be Thinking About Archiving

An Osterman Research White Paper

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Email is the most important communications medium currently used in business today. Numerous studies have demonstrated that email is more important to individual users than the telephone, fax or instant messaging. Further, the fact that the number of emails sent and received by corporate users is growing at roughly 20% every year, coupled with the fact that email stores are growing at more than 35% per year, is testament to the importance of email in helping corporate employees to communicate and conduct business.

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While email is generally viewed as a communications tool, it also has become the de facto file transport and data storage medium for most users and corporations. An email system, in essence, is an enormous database of unstructured and structured content, a database to which anyone can add simply by sending an email. A growing proportion of users employ email as their primary file storage system. When coupled with robust search capabilities, an email system can serve somewhat effectively as a personal or corporate repository of critical business information.

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However, therein lies the problem – email systems were not designed to be databases or file storage systems. Extracting relevant data from email stores using conventional techniques is cumbersome, time-consuming and expensive. Further, Osterman Research's own research finds that a significant proportion of an organization's data assets are strewn about in a wide variety of venues, including employees' personal computers, on file servers, on employees' home computers, on laptops, on handheld mobile devices and in other venues. Most organizations would find it difficult – if not impossible – to find all of the relevant data assets if they needed to do so.

This white paper discusses the importance of managing this data more effectively through the use of messaging archiving capabilities that can organize corporate data and make this data far more accessible and less expensive to manage.

Just What is Archiving, Anyway?

Calling an 'archiving' system an 'archiving' system implies that this capability is focused primarily on records management, document management and the preservation of records for very long periods of time. While that certainly is a component of what archiving systems are designed to accomplish, these systems are often used for a variety of other purposes such as legal discovery, litigation support, storage management, disaster recovery, and knowledge management.

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However, archiving can provide a variety of other capabilities to an organization, including helping to manage storage growth more effectively, satisfy e-discovery requirements, provide support for an organization's traveling employees and help with disaster recovery and business continuity initiatives.

Why 'Archiving' Mostly Isn't About Archiving

Certainly, email archiving is often about the preservation of business records stored in email systems. Organizations have a variety of statutory, legal and best practice obligations related to the preservation of important business records and archiving is ideally suited to helping an organization to fulfill these obligations.

However, archiving can provide a variety of other capabilities to an organization, as discussed later in this white paper, including helping to manage storage growth more effectively, satisfy e-discovery requirements, provide support for an organization's traveling employees and help with disaster recovery and business continuity initiatives.

What's the Difference Between Backup and Archiving?

Osterman Research has found that many organizations view their email backup system as their 'archive'. However, there are fundamental differences between backups and archives that should not be confused:

- **Backups are not real time**
Backups are designed to preserve a snapshot of information, such as the content of an email server, at a given point in time. The purpose of backing up this content is the restoration of that content in the event of a server hardware failure, an application upgrade that brings down the server, a patch that fails, etc. In the event of such a failure, the content of the backup can be copied back to the server so that the server can be restored to its last known good state.

Archiving systems, on the other hand, preserve content in real-time or near real-time mode, capturing data as it is sent and received and then transferring this data to archival storage.

- **Archiving systems preserve a complete record**
Because backups preserve a snapshot of data, they cannot capture the content generated between backups. For example, if a nightly backup runs between 1:00am and 5:00am, an email sent at 10:00am and then deleted at 3:00pm will never make it into the next night's backup. Further, if an email server crashes and content needs to be restored from a backup, all content generated between the end of the backup and the restoration of the server will be lost.

An archiving system preserves all content sent externally, received from external sources and sent internally regardless of when it was sent or received.

- **Raw vs. indexed content**
Backups preserve only raw messaging content – performing even simple searches of this content can be extremely difficult and time consuming.

An archiving system, on the other hand, indexes all content as it is transferred to archival storage, allowing subsequent and complex searches of this data to be carried out quickly and efficiently.

- **Archiving as a corporate strategy**
Backups are a tactical, short term approach to data management for restoring servers after problems occur. Archiving, on the other hand, takes a more strategic, longer term view of information and content management. In short, backups are designed to preserve **data**, while archiving is designed to preserve **information**.

Backup and archiving systems are complementary systems and are not replacements for one another. Best practice dictates that organizations implement and maintain both capabilities.

Current Archiving Trends

Osterman Research has found that the use of email archiving is growing. In 2006, for example, 15% of North American email users in the workplace had their email archived, but this figure will grow to more than 60% by 2010. Key drivers for the growth of email archiving include new e-discovery requirements, such as the new amendments to the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure (FRCP) that were

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implemented in December 2006; regulatory requirements for the preservation of data, and growth in email storage.

The Benefits of Archiving

Unlike many other messaging-related technologies, archiving is very versatile and can positively impact a broad range of job functions throughout an enterprise. The various benefits of archiving are:

Helping Users to Employ Knowledge More Effectively

An appropriately configured archiving system can index, preserve and present corporate data in ways that provide utility to virtually all email users in an organization. For example, an archive can provide an individual with access to all of his or her past email content, allowing rapid searches to be performed for data. Because email contains contact names, email threads about a variety of topics, promises made to clients and other relevant information, providing users with access to this content in an easy-to-use interface can offer enormous productivity benefits to individuals and the organization at large.

Solving Storage Problems and Improving Server Efficiency

Growth in storage requirements is the most serious problem discovered by Osterman Research in several surveys it has conducted with email decision-makers. An archiving system can solve the majority of these problems by automatically migrating content from email servers to archival storage. The primary benefits that archiving can provide in the context of storage management are:

- **Easier quota management**
Because an archiving system can be configured to automatically migrate content out of users' mailboxes and into archival storage, users never run into quota limitations and are thereby freed from the burden of managing their mailbox content in order to stay under the quota established for them by IT.
- **Better email server performance**
Because IT can maintain relatively strict mailbox-size quotas, the amount of 'live' storage on email servers can be reduced, resulting in faster message delivery times, faster restoration after a server crash and overall improved email server performance.

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Making Discovery More Efficient and Less Burdensome

Email is now required as part of the discovery process in three out of four legal actions. This means that virtually all organizations will, at some point, be required to extract relevant content from their email store in order to satisfy a discovery order. If organizations must rely on backup tapes to satisfy legal discovery requirements, the cost of extracting this data can be significant – once source estimated that the cost of extracting, indexing and searching data stored on backup tapes for legal discovery purposes can be in excess of \$3,000 per tape. Further, discovery using backup tapes is highly disruptive to IT staff and can take a long time to accomplish.

An increasing number of data retention requirements at the local, state, Federal and international levels are dictating that organizations preserve business records for long periods of time. While most of these requirements do not dictate the specific form of retention, the fact that a growing proportion of business records are stored in email makes it increasingly prudent to preserve these records in their native format.

Staying on the Right Side of the Law

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What Does Archiving (and Not Archiving) Cost?

Archiving is not a trivial investment for an organization: it requires time to establish corporate policies around data retention, the creation of procedures, employee training, the cost of the archiving capability itself, etc. However, when compared to the cost of not archiving, the cost of archiving is actually quite low. For example:

- A single e-discovery effort that relies on backups alone can cost an organization hundreds of thousands, if not millions, of dollars, particularly if third party forensics firms must be used to extract and produce relevant data. A single such discovery effort can more than pay for the cost of an archiving system.
- In the absence of an archiving capability that can automatically offload users' mailbox content to archival storage, the typical user will spend 30 to 60 minutes each week on mailbox management tasks. Assuming the more conservative estimate, this means that each user in a company will spend the equivalent of three workdays each year simply managing their mailboxes. Assuming a fully burdened annual salary of \$80,000 per employee,

this translates to a cost of more than \$900 in lost productivity per employee every year.

- A failure to satisfy a regulatory obligation or a legal discovery order can result in substantial fines or legal penalties, loss of reputation, damage to an organization's brand and other problems.

In short, while archiving is not a trivial expense, the cost of not archiving can be dramatically higher.

How Should You Archive?

There are three basic approaches to deploying an archiving capability:

- **On-premise servers and software**

This is the traditional method for deploying various email capabilities, including archiving systems. There are a number of vendors that offer archiving software with a range of flexible platform choices.

Using on-premise servers and software is a good fit for many organizations, but it requires on-site IT expertise capable of installing, configuring and managing the software and hardware, applying patches and software updates, adding storage on a periodic basis, etc. There must be a disaster recovery/ redundancy capability in place, since most decision-makers view losing email during downtime incidents as worse than the downtime itself. As a result, an on-premise solution must be highly reliable and provide as close to 100% uptime as possible.

- **Appliances**

A newer approach to archiving involves using dedicated, rack-mounted appliances that plug into an organization's network and can be configured to archive email content. Many of these solutions include integrated storage, simplifying the task of deploying and managing these systems. However, this method also requires some level of on-site IT expertise to setup and manage the appliance within an organization's network. Here, too, a disaster recovery capability must be in place to ensure extremely high uptime and storage must be added periodically as archives grow.

- **Managed services**

This approach involves simply using a third party to intercept email data, index it and store it in a remote

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data center. There are a growing number of vendors that offer hosted archiving solutions with varying degrees of capabilities. This method minimizes IT involvement in the setup and data management process and, because of the redundancy in most managed providers' facilities, offers extremely high levels of uptime.

Why Managed Services Make Sense

Managed services are a good choice for many organizations, particularly those that do not consider archiving to be their core competency. Among the benefits offered by a managed archiving service are:

Instead of having to periodically purchase more servers, software, appliances, storage or other capabilities, a managed service allows decision makers to predict the long range cost of ownership more accurately.

- **Rapid deployment**
A managed archiving service can be deployed very quickly, typically within a few days or less. Even plug-and-play archiving appliances require some level of setup and configuration.
- **Virtually no up-front cost**
Unlike on-premise solutions, managed archiving services require virtually no up-front costs.
- **Potentially lower operating costs**
A managed service can actually be less expensive than on-premise solutions in many cases, particularly for organizations that do not have or want dedicated staff that can be devoted to managing archiving capabilities.
- **More predictable operating costs**
Because managed services are provided on a per-user, per-gigabyte cost, the cost of a managed archiving service is very predictable. Instead of having to periodically purchase more servers, software, appliances, storage or other capabilities, a managed service allows decision makers to predict the long range cost of ownership more accurately.
- **Extremely high security**
Managed archiving services almost always offer very high levels of security and protection for archived data, including 24x7 staffing, multiple levels of controlled access to the archived data, backup generators, redundant telecommunications links and other security capabilities.

The Spam Soap Approach to Archiving

Spam Soap Message Archiving, powered by MessageWatcher®, can easily and effectively help businesses to protect their data and comply with electronic security regulations like the Sarbanes-Oxley Act, HIPPA, and the new Federal Rules of Civil Procedure (FRCP). The fully-managed service also helps to protect businesses from workplace compliance issues, including harassment, discrimination and illegal activity.

The fully-managed Spam Soap Message Archiving service is available in two packages to meet the needs of your business:

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- Spam Soap Archive Compliance includes email storage and retention, as well as Spam Soap Archive Surveillance, for a comprehensive compliance solution.
- Spam Soap Archive Storage is available for businesses that require a storage-only solution.

With Spam Soap Message Archiving in place your business can:

- Minimize the cost and risk associated with non-compliance, loss of proprietary information and inappropriate employee emails.
- Simplify email surveillance and archiving with a scalable, easy-to-use managed service solution.
- Boost your bottom line with an affordable alternative to in-house solutions that can drive up labor and IT costs related to compliance and email management.

Summary

Archiving is an increasingly important technology for organizations to deploy despite the fact that many organizations have not yet done so. Archiving allows an organization to comply with regulatory requirements for data retention, to satisfy legal discovery and legal hold orders, to improve storage management, to provide more information to employees and to do so at lower cost and with less disruption to IT and other staff.

Although there are a variety of good ways to implement an email archiving capability, a managed service is the best fit for many organizations, particularly for small and mid-sized businesses that do not have IT staff that can be dedicated to managing yet another system.

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