Building the Business Case
for Email Archiving

Table of Contents

Organizations of all sizes are under growing pressure to get their data under control, particularly email and other unstructured data such as social media, SharePoint interactions and others. In some ways, it's like a perfect storm of challenges:

- **Data is growing rapidly**—particularly unstructured data—putting severe pressure on infrastructure performance and storage costs. Organizations have to find and deploy innovative solutions that support data growth and lower total cost of ownership (TCO) without sacrificing application performance. In fact, most business leaders are demanding improved performance.

- **Compliance demands** are becoming more stringent, forcing organizations to apply consistent and auditable governance, retention and destruction policies to all data. Mitigating the risk of compliance failure is critical across all industries, government agencies and educational institutions.

- **E-discovery requirements** are stricter than ever, with courts requiring quick turnaround of data with complete and accurate responses to requests. Merely responding to e-discovery inquiries can be extremely expensive if you don't have the right solutions in place. Failure to meet e-discovery demands can lead to adverse courtroom decisions or forced settlements of cases, even those that would otherwise be winnable.

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These data challenges have the potential to affect the performance of every aspect of an organization and every business leader or manager. For some decision-makers, such as those in IT departments, compliance or legal, getting email and other data under control will have a direct impact on their ability to be successful in their jobs.

But other business managers also need to be strong advocates for addressing these important data management challenges. For example, if you're running a line of business or a department such as HR, you can't afford to take the risk of poor application performance or a highly visible compliance failure caused by a gap in email management.

Email archiving has become one of the most important tools for IT leaders, legal teams, compliance officers, HR departments and other line-of-business managers who are looking to reduce risk, lower TCO and improve performance related to managing email and other business-critical data.

In today's environment, organizations can no longer afford the risk of not deploying an email archiving solution— companies need one that is cost-efficient, simple to deploy and supports archiving of email and other data types. The research firm Technavio says email archiving "is becoming essential to ensuring the safety of key enterprise data," predicting that the market will grow at a compound annual rate of 15.51% through 2019. One of the important trends contributing to the market growth is "increased adoption of email archiving methods by smaller enterprises."[1]

In this article we present the business case for email archiving so that decision-makers across all areas of an organization can understand how they can benefit from deploying the right email archiving solution.

Reduce Risk

Failure to meet regulatory compliance requirements can result in fines, sanctions, adverse publicity and aspects of your operations being unavailable to customers and users. These failures can come from risks you may not even be aware exist in your organization, including failure to save emails for a required time period; failure to delete them properly; and failure to apply consistent policies to the retention and disposal of a variety of data types. An important survey on records management in 2014 reported that 60% of organizations were not regularly deleting electronic data and 25% weren't even sure of their practices. The report stated that the lack of records management in the application development lifecycle and in application decommissioning was "appalling."[2]

E-discovery is another critical area of risk for your organization. If you can't find certain emails or other files, you may lose cases or be forced to settle. Just the process of finding records can be extraordinarily expensive, particularly if you are paying lawyers an hourly fee to search through a massive amount of emails that is not easily searchable. According to one survey, 73% of e-discovery costs are spent in the document review stage. The survey noted that top data concern of respondents was the search for or collection of data from company equipment used by employees.[3]

An email archiving solution significantly reduces the risks involved in compliance and e-discovery. With the right solution you can apply consistent policies and rules to emails and other types of information so that you can easily find what you are looking for with key words or phrases. You can also use a solution that ensures that each file cannot be

1   "Cloud Functionality Will Accelerate Growth of Global Email Archiving Market by 2019, Says Technavio," Technavio, Dec. 14, 2014
2   "2013/2014 Information Governance Benchmarking Survey," Cohasset Associates, ARMA International, and AIIM, 2014
3   "Norton Rose Fulbright's Annual Litigation Trends Survey," April 15, 2014

manipulated once it is archived, except through specified retention rules and policies. Your organization can control retention and deletion of archived files so that you are not adding risk by either holding onto documents too long or deleting them too soon.

Lower TCO, Improve Performance, Simplify Operations

Using e-mail archiving to reduce the risk of compliance or e-discovery violations can significantly contribute to your organization's bottom line. Eliminating or lowering the cost of a single e-discovery event can more than pay for the cost of the entire solution, particularly when research shows that e-discovery can cost up to $30,000 per gigabyte.[4]

Beyond those potentially dramatic cost savings, using the right email archiving solution will help to reduce TCO in other ways as well. For example, you will be able to use deduplication and other techniques to reduce the amount of information you are storing, which will lower hardware costs. Beyond that, you will be able to move files off your mail server and into the archiving system. This will improve server performance while shortening backup and restore times.

If you are an application owner or LOB manager, these types of performance improvements will make your employees more productive while improving customer satisfaction and goodwill. In addition, employees will be much more self-sufficient in being able to find information that they need, rather than relying upon the IT department for help.

The IT department will also benefit from improved efficiencies. Two of the key features to look for in an email archiving solution are ease of use and ease of deployment. In particular, if you are a small or midsize organization, you want to avoid the complex document management systems that are often used by the largest enterprises. They don't offer any benefits for your business in terms of meeting compliance or e-discovery requirements, and they can be extremely expensive and difficult to use/manage.

In examining the potential return on investment (ROI) of email archiving, Osterman Research several years ago broke down the benefits as follows:

- E-discovery exercise or regulatory audit
- Settling a legal action before going to trial
- Reducing downtime costs
- Providing end-user access to the archive
- Demonstrating claims made on a website
- Responding to government public records requests

Looking at a typical 500-seat organization, the research showed that, over a three-year period, having an e-mail archiving system would save the organization approximately $904,000 over not having an email archiving solution.[5] What may be most interesting about those numbers is that the savings have surely gone up significantly in the years since the report was released, spurred by the dramatic increase in email and other unstructured content as well as rising e-discovery and litigation costs.

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4   "E-Discovery Costs: Pay Now or Pay Later," Inside Counsel, May 23, 2012
5   "Quantifying the Costs and Benefits of Archiving Your Email and Other Electronic Content," An Osterman Research White Paper, October 2011

Consolidate Control

Another important factor to consider in understanding the business value of e-mail archiving is the need to consolidate governance and control of a wider variety of data types. While email is still probably the most voluminous and widely used type of data in your organization, your employees are also using many other applications, such as SharePoint, Twitter, Google Docs and Salesforce.

Wherever you sit within the organization, it is important to realize that you have to apply consistent, auditable, reliable and justifiable best-practices information governance policies to all of these information types. Ignorance is not an excuse when the government is looking for a particular piece of communications and your organization can't find it.

Certain email archiving solutions will enable you to create a central archive for a wide range of data types. This is critically important because it will allow you to apply the same levels of granular control to more than just email. This means you can be consistent in creating and enforcing retention, deletion and governance policies across a broad range of content.

You can also be consistent in using key words and phrases to identify documents of different types, thereby simplifying searches. For example, you may need a document that was created in social media but never went through email. If users or lawyers are doing an inquiry in a central archive, they will be able to find that document simply, without having to spend the time to go through multiple systems or archives.

What to Look for in a Solution

In evaluating email archiving solutions, you will discover quickly that there are many choices. At the high end, there are the large complex document management systems mentioned earlier. For any small or midsize business or government agency, these shouldn't even be under consideration because of their costs and complexity. Also, they don't really bring any added value over systems that cost much less and are much simpler to use and deploy.

At the other end of the spectrum, you have solutions from the leading email providers, such as Microsoft Office 365 Email Archiving or Google Vault. However, you will find that these solutions are not well designed for the needs of enterprises and will not offer the type of features or protections you will need for compliance or e-discovery. Relying on these types of solutions may, in fact, put you at even more risk because you will likely be applying policies haphazardly across different data types.

There are, however, fully featured and cost-efficient email archiving solutions that are designed to meet the specific needs of small and midsize businesses, government agencies and educational institutions. ArcMail is one of the pioneers in this space, offering fully featured solutions with flexible deployment models. Key benefits of ArcMail include:

- **Ease of use/ease of deployment:** An initial deployment of ArcMail takes about a half hour. Policies and retention rules can be established in minutes. Users can do advanced searches after five minutes of training.
- **Granular control:** Administrators can use a wide range of parameters to set policies, including headers, footers, content and attachments. Polices are embedded in each document, so there is no risk of human error.

- **Protection:** In ArcMail, once the data is stored it cannot be tampered with through any means other than retention rules and policies. All activities are logged for auditing purposes and the log cannot be tampered with because all activities are time-stamped.

- **Multiple data types:** ArcMail solutions support a wide range of data types beyond email, as well as multiple types of email. If you look at solutions from Microsoft and Google, for example, they only handle one flavor of email. This won't be nearly enough for most businesses today.

Conclusion

No matter where you sit in your organization, whether you are in IT, corporate management, finance, legal, HR or any other LOB, your ability to do your job successfully is more dependent than ever on the underlying technology. You must ensure that the solutions you are deploying help to maximize performance, mitigate risk, reduce complexity and improve productivity.

When it comes to email and other data types such as social media, you can't afford to leave any gaps because communication and collaboration are too critical to your overall success. Email archiving is an important technology in reducing risk, lowering costs and improving performance of digital communications.

With the right e-mail archiving solution, you can easily respond to compliance and e-discovery requirements, while reducing your storage footprint and accelerating the performance of your mail servers. You can also apply granular policy and control to achieve best practices in data management, governance, retention and destruction.

It is important, however, to make sure that you choose the right solution, one that delivers the enterprise-class features you need at a cost that doesn't cripple your budget. In fact, you should make sure that you choose a solution that will help you lower TCO. A thorough examination of affordable, enterprise-class email archiving solutions should lead you to one place: ArcMail. **Here is how ArcMail can help you.**