

Reducing the Load on Mail Servers

An ArcMail Technology Research Paper



The mail server is under fire.

As email has become the communications solution of choice for people around the world, mail servers are being overwhelmed by the number of email accounts and volumes of email, as well as spam, viruses and other attacks. As one of the most important solutions in the enterprise, the mail server requires constant monitoring and management. When the servers are slowed by large volumes of data or are hampered by attacks, mail delivery is hampered, which can impact the entire organization.

Storage of email on the mail server is a major concern for organizations. In fact, Michael Osterman, principal of Osterman Research, recently said that “Growth in email storage is the number one problem facing IT managers today. With storage needs increasing by approximately 35 percent per year, IT managers are faced with finding the best solutions to manage email volume and meet archiving requirements for compliance.”ⁱ

What is causing this dramatic increase in storage?

The main cause is the evolution of email from a communications tool to a business collaboration tool that allows people to exchange information quickly, sign contracts, approve transactions, etc. As a result, more and larger files are being exchanged through email, and are often stored in client, project or subject-specific folders.

A recent article in KM World magazine reported, “Twenty years ago, no permanent records existed that weren’t physically printed on paper, due to legal precedents. Now 60 to 70 percent of business critical data is, at some point, contained in email, so the need to manage, store, search and retrieve those electronic records is paramount. Email Management is now mission-critical.”ⁱⁱ

According to the Radicati Group, the average corporate email account receives 18 MB of mail and attachments each business day, and that figure is projected to grow to 28 MB a day by 2011.ⁱⁱⁱ

This dramatic growth is becoming a major technology resource problem, from bandwidth to storage. Backing up the large amounts of data can be costly and time consuming. Traditional backup tapes have proven to be unreliable and prone to human error. These consumable items have recurring costs as old tapes must be replaced.

For 50-year-old, Evans Fruit Company, which operates 11 ranches spread out over 7,000 acres, the email storage was becoming a significant problem. With its email server overwhelmed with the volumes of email data, Evans turned to ArcMail Technologies and the Defender Email Archive System.

“We were able to delay a mail server upgrade for several years and avoid many of the archiving headaches by implementing the Defender System,” said [contact at Evans.] “We used Defender to archive emails and transition older emails from the mail server to Defender, which not only immediately saved us storage space on the server, it allowed us to set up an automatic process that extended the life of our server and reduced maintenance.”

Evans recognized the value that a solution dedicated to email archiving can have within the enterprise. Not only does Defender save a tremendous amount of time and IT resources, it also helps to reduce costs associated with archiving the unstructured data.

For example, if a company can reduce the amount of data its archives by 80 percent, then it is logical to think it can save 80 percent of its tape costs, not to mention reducing the headaches caused when tapes fail or when employees fail to change tapes or accidentally record over important data.

Here is the simple process to reduce costs using the Defender system.

In our example, BlueJay Company has five year's worth of email on the mail server. IT administrators deploy a Defender system and import all current mail from the mail server into Defender. The administrators then set a one-year time-based retention policy on the mail server. Once the policy has been set, the administrators can remove all the email older than one-year old.

As a result:

- Mail server storage is reduced by 80 percent
- Backup time, size and tape costs are reduced by 80 percent
- Less time and costs allow for more frequent backups, which mean less of a chance for a disaster.

Beyond the storage savings and the cost savings associated with email archiving, there is some additional cost savings by investing in a Defender versus a new Exchange server.

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|-------------------------------------|-----------------|
| New Exchange server: | \$20,000 |
| 20 hours @ \$100/hr to upgrade: | \$2,000 |
| Upgrade cost | \$22,000 |
| Defender U220 cost: | \$11,999 |
| 20 hours @ \$100/hr implementation: | \$2,000 |
| Defender total cost | \$13,999 |
| Total Savings | \$ 8,000 |

Defender helps to alleviate a number of email management burdens for organizations, from the archiving to email search and restoration. As we mentioned before, the mail server is under attack from all sides. By choosing to deploy a Defender, organizations can extend the life of the mail server and reduce the costs of archiving and managing emails. Beyond simply storing the data, Defender eliminates the need for large mailbox files and chaotic PST files, archiving the information in such a way that administrators and/or end users can quickly and easily find and retrieve the information they need.

By placing the burden of storage, automated archiving, search, retrieval and restore on a Defender appliance, organizations can reduce the load on the mail server, which will have a positive impact on network resources, employee productivity, security and costs.

ⁱ http://www.wwpi.com/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=2243&Itemid=44

ⁱⁱ <http://www.kmworld.com/articles/PrintArticle.aspx?ArticleID=15409>

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