

No Time Like The Present

A proactive approach to email management and archiving yields more carrots than sticks for those who choose to act now.



It doesn't seem so long ago... Email started life as a simple application that made it easy for people to exchange brief messages on their computers. It was convenient.

You didn't worry about the size of your message store or if there were any compliance issues or performance bottlenecks; you just put an email server up, and the world was wonderful. Not anymore. Today all those innocuous little email messages are flooding storage capacity, drowning server performance, and threatening to submerge data centers in a rising tide of attachments and miscellaneous communications. It is not uncommon for the volume of email in some organizations to increase by as much as 50 percent every year. And, as the tide rises, a growing number of lawyers and regulators are waiting to swoop in with discovery requests for email evidence and fines for noncompliance.

Wake-up calls are ringing with an assortment of alarms.

First, there are alarms in the IT department. Expensive disk storage is being overrun with email messages that no one has had any reason to look at in years. Backing up email has become as time-consuming as it is storage-consuming, extending the length of time it would take to restore data by a factor of four—not to mention the fact that backup tapes are 55-gallon drums of storage and make finding specific files an exercise in futility. And then there are the proverbial propagating PST files that make every IT director shiver.

A whole different set of alarms are also clanging about legal and compliance liabilities. High-profile cases involving discovery requests for electronic communications have resulted in multimillion-dollar settlements against a growing roster of corporations across a range of industries, from tobacco to energy and finance. Not just big corporations are at risk.

“Timely manner”

The Federal Rules of Civil Procedure (FRCP) provides guidelines for litigation between businesses in civil court and has devoted increasingly more legalese to “electronic discovery.” For example, the latest revision of the FRCP, which went into effect in December 2006, included the requirement that all electronic records requested in a legal discovery be provided in a “timely manner”—generally considered by the court to be 72 hours. Everyone in IT knows there is nothing “timely” in trying to retrieve specific sets of records from an email environment that has not been archived. As a result, it is a widely held opinion that corporations facing a legal discovery request involving email evidence should just consider settling out of court. It is probably worth noting that the popularity of that opinion is well-known by attorneys who make their living pursuing those exact settlements.



No matter, lots of companies are sleeping through the wake-up calls. According to a survey by the American Management Association and the ePolicy Institute, which advises companies on Internet risks, only about one-third of companies have policies for saving, purging, and managing email. That's a lot of opportunity for out-of-court settlements.

No one gets a pass on compliance issues. It is well-known that the Sarbanes-Oxley Act of 2002 imposes rules that apply to all public companies, for example, but it is also becoming increasingly apparent that Sarbanes-Oxley is being applied to private companies that do business with public companies. The Security and Exchange Commission has regulations for financial services firms, while the federal Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) has rules for hospitals and doctors, and companies that do business with them. Virtually every industry has some regulatory overseer. Discrepancies and inconsistencies between regulators make compliance that much more complicated.

At the crossroads

Given the benefits of a managed email environment over the growing chaos in many IT departments, it is puzzling why email has been allowed to run rampant in so many organizations.

On one hand, not managing email environments has the potential to become a major disaster for literally thousands of organizations treading water while a flood of email swirls around them. On the other hand, managing and archiving email are entirely affordable and workable options, with the combined advantage of solving storage and performance problems and dramatically reducing legal and compliance liabilities at the same time. The technical tools exist—for both the Exchange and Lotus/Domino environments.

So why are so many companies putting off taking control of their email?

What appears to be missing is the will to act. That, of course, is directly related to tight IT budgets, disconnects between IT, legal, HR, and executive stakeholders, and the tendency of individual users to consider email their personal filing system for every conceivable interaction—personal and professional—forever and ever.

Reasons To Upgrade

Upgrades and pending upgrades on the Exchange and Notes/Domino platforms provide everything you need to regain control of your email environment.

The good news is that email management is a much scarier problem to put off than it is to fix.

It's mostly about asking the right questions up front. "The first thing I want to know is, 'How big are your message stores, and how long does it take you to back them up?'" says Logicalis Email Management & Archiving Practice Manager Tom Bridge. "Once I know how big the store is, I know how much expensive disk space it's taking up. Then we can start to have conversations about what you're backing up. For example, when you back up your information stores, how many new messages are you backing up vs. old messages that you've already backed up? Some people have been backing up the same old messages every night for seven years. Once we establish the technical parameters, then we start to talk about what regulatory requirements you are facing and how you are currently handling them."

At this point, there are many questions that cannot be answered by the IT department alone. This is also the point IT managers tend to get a distracted look on their faces, and you can see them thinking, "Do I have time for this?"

Pieces of the Puzzle

When the subject of email management comes up, that same distracted look typically appears on the faces of the heads of the legal department and HR, and not infrequently on the faces of the CFO and CEO. Each one holds a piece of the puzzle but not enough to be able to visualize a solution.

One of the most important roles Logicalis plays for its email management customers, according to Bridge, is to get the individuals with their different pieces of the puzzle together around the table to assemble the whole picture.

"Probably the most important thing we do is to encourage customers to expand the scope of what they mean by email management," says Bridge. "It's more than a technical issue. It's more than a legal or compliance issue. It's more than an operational or management issue. It affects all of those areas within an organization, and all of those stakeholders have to participate in developing a comprehensive email management and archiving strategy."

Trade-offs

Often some negotiations have to take place. For example, Bridge recalls that when Logicalis was developing an in-house email management policy, broad gaps existed between what legal wanted and what users wanted. Logicalis legal counsel Robert Maxwell favored deleting all email as soon as practical to reduce legal liability. Many sales reps, however, use their email to file contracts and other communications with customers that could date back years. They count on being able to dig out old invoices and spreadsheets from their stored email. Deleting their email would deprive them of an important selling resource.

In the end, Logicalis settled on a three-year retention policy as part of a management and archiving strategy that clearly identified what kinds of electronic communication needed to be saved and what needed to be deleted. The policy also laid the foundation for a broader electronic document management plan. Once email management is put into the context of an organization's overall success, several benefits begin to appear, any one of which could justify the entire cost of technically implementing an email management solution.

Logicalis estimates, for example, that in the year following its implementation of a formal email management and archiving policy, it racked up savings of more than \$900,000. Most of the savings came from increased user productivity, decreased operational support, reduced backup requirements, and reduced losses from failed backups and stale restores.

In addition to the direct benefits that come largely from operations, there are a host of indirect benefits that come from improved search functionality.



Powerful information

“When something gets archived, it also gets indexed so you can conduct a keyword search and get rich information that is just not available if you go to Outlook and type ‘find,’” Bridge says. “Instead of just being information that is stored somewhere, once email files are fully indexed, I could say, for example, I want to know project plans that we’ve put together for the last six months and actually get a list of project plans that are in the system. I don’t have to know the name of the subject in the email, or who it went to, or who it was from...that’s very powerful information you can harness.”

“It’s through the indexing function of an email archiving solution that you go beyond email systems to file systems and databases and the much broader category of electronic document management,” Bridge adds. In many ways, managing and archiving email are just the tip of the opportunity iceberg, regardless of your email platform. Logicalis Consulting Services Manager Jamie Geiken, for example, works exclusively in the Notes/Domino environment, but he has a similar message: “If there is one message I would like customers to understand,” he says, “it is that archiving is one small piece of an electronic document management requirement. The long-term issue isn’t how to get email off somewhere by itself, but how to manage email in a way that it becomes possible to integrate

it into all electronic records. Ideally, a user will want to pull a report that shows not only how many emails have been exchanged with a given customer but also how many invoices and other kinds of documents have been exchanged.”

Logicalis Solutions Architect and Tivoli Storage Manager Specialist Bill Mansfield agrees: “Email is the poster child for management and archiving right now, but it is only one of many issues that need to be considered in a larger electronic document management strategy.”

Building a comprehensive email management and archiving strategy doesn’t mean you have to take the next step and integrate email with all electronic documents. But you could, and it would be a whole lot easier for having rationalized email to begin with.

Window of Opportunity

Organizations that haven’t yet taken control of their email environment have a window of opportunity open for them today, Bridge says. Major upgrades in both Exchange 2007 and Lotus provide all the tools necessary to control email in a way that converts it from a looming threat to a powerful resource. (See Reasons to Upgrade on page 6.)

But for those organizations that don’t act soon, all it would take to abruptly slam shut that window of opportunity is a lawyer filing a discovery request. If that happens, the time and money that might have been available to manage and archive email on your terms will be forfeited to crisis control on someone else’s terms.

A proactive email management and archiving strategy offers a broad array of options that can reduce legal and compliance liabilities and provide a rich assortment of benefits at the same time. Given the choice, why choose to wait until email is transformed from a major opportunity into a major crisis? Timing, as they say, is everything.

Exchange Up

Exchange Server 2007 raises the bar for email management in the Windows environment.

After helping scores of companies upgrade to Exchange Server 2007, Logicalis technicians have come to the conclusion that “Microsoft got this one right the first time.” If you run Windows and haven’t already upgraded, here are the key reasons why you should consider upgrading now.

Break the 4GB Barrier

It is widely accepted that the 4GB memory limitation with past versions of Exchange is a major performance and scalability limitation. Exchange Server 2007, a native 64-bit application, addresses virtually limitless amounts of memory (well over several exabytes), meaning enhanced performance and scalability. You can now support more mailboxes per server and accommodate users’ demands for larger mailboxes and more storage.

New Options for High Availability

New data replication capabilities in Exchange Server 2007 drive increased availability at a lower cost. Local Continuous Replication delivers database redundancy with rapid recovery, minimizing the frequency of full tape backups. With Cluster Continuous Replication in combination with Microsoft Cluster Service (MSCS), active/passive clusters provide both database and service redundancy without requiring expensive shared storage, even when clusters span geographic locations.

Modular Role-Based Architecture

Exchange Server 2007 has a modern, modular architecture based on server roles. The server role concept affords new scalability because roles can be distributed to separate servers to enhance performance, scalability, and redundancy.

Comprehensive Protection from Spam, Viruses, and Phishing Attacks

Exchange Server 2007 provides integrated antivirus, antispam, and antiphishing technologies to halt the latest threats before they impact your business and employees. In addition, Forefront for Exchange Server protects Exchange servers from viruses and worms by utilizing multiple antivirus engines simultaneously. To protect from evolving threats, filters are kept up to date with frequent and automatic updates.

New Tools to Boost Administrator Productivity

Exchange Server 2007 helps administrators save time and reduce effort with advanced management tools. A new command line interface gives administrators complete, fine-grain control over Exchange objects, as well as the power to easily automate all types of operations with scripts. In addition, the graphical management console has been completely updated with a more intuitive user interface, improved discoverability, and a toolbox work center that integrates diagnostics, monitoring, and troubleshooting tools including the Exchange Best Practices Analyzer and the Exchange Troubleshooting Assistant.

Take Advantage of Powerful Web Access

Outlook Web Access (OWA) 2007 provides a rich, Outlook 2007-like experience in a browser. OWA enhancements in 2007 include a new Scheduling Assistant to help employees efficiently book meetings, fast server-side search, integrated unified messaging, and new features to access documents and attachments more easily from outside the office. With two-factor authentication support and attachment viewing in HTML format, OWA also offers enhanced security compared with previous versions.

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Empower Employees with Unified Messaging

With new unified messaging in Exchange Server 2007, employees can receive their email, voicemail, and faxes through a single inbox that can be accessed from anywhere. Employees can manage all of their messages in one place just as they manage email today. With Exchange Server 2007, you can deliver these features while lowering cost and complexity through consolidation of your voicemail infrastructure.

Enterprise-Class Mobile Messaging That's Better Than Ever

Exchange makes enterprise-class mobile messaging a reality by offering industry-leading scalability, native integration with compatible devices for lower total cost of ownership, and a variety of device options to suit today's business needs. Mobility features in Exchange Server 2007 raise the bar on user experience and deliver improved manageability. Desktop features are now available on mobile devices.

Better Blue

The latest Notes client is a seamless step forward for existing Notes users, designed to work with various desktop operating systems including Windows, Mac OS, and Linux.

On the server side, Domino 8 will be supported on both 32- and X64-bit Windows platforms, X86 Linux, Sun Solaris, System P, System i5, and System Z. The Notes 8 client is a server-managed client based on the open Eclipse platform, which can communicate with servers other than Domino. Similarly, the new client-side panel allows a variety of collaborative plug-in applications to be accessed from the client.

The integrated instant-messaging capability in the Notes 8 client offers the functions of the Sametime 7.5 IM client. Notes 8 integrates with the new Lotus Quickr team software, allowing users to store email attachments in one of the many Quickr repositories. The email messages can then be sent with a link to the attachment rather than sending the full attachment out to multiple people.

The Domino 8 server will have several enhancements in the areas of administration, domain monitoring, provisioning client options, performance, inbox maintenance, security, directory, and support for DB2 v9 on selective platforms.

Activity-Centric Collaboration

Lotus Notes 8 introduces activity-centric collaboration to Lotus Notes users. A concept direct from IBM Research, activity-centric collaboration lets users organize, navigate, manage, and share information, email, calendar entries, documents, and e-meetings for a particular activity or project.

People involved in a product rollout, acquisition, RFP, or other collaborative effort will be able to manage all the various information affiliated with the project, including email threads, chat logs, documents, meeting minutes, Web content, and voice messages, all in one place.

Composite Applications

Composite applications, or "mashups," are an assembly of end-user facing programs that provide specific functions and access to information from multiple sources. For example, it could include a Lotus Notes database, a Java application, the Web, a .Net, or a customer relationship management application. These reusable components can be mixed and matched in multiple composite applications, allowing developers to create a wide variety of applications with a small set of services, without writing code. The various components can also send information to one another so that when views are changed or data is entered or edited in one application, the corresponding views and information in the other applications also change.

Composite applications improve individual and organizational effectiveness by bringing the tools that enable interaction and collaboration into the context of the business processes and line-of-business applications employees use every day. They also enable you to leverage and extend your existing assets with increasing degrees of flexibility and agility.




Further Reading

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Want more information on implementing an archive strategy? Read a case study on how Logicalis helped the KnowledgeWorks Foundation: www.us.logicalis.com/Knowledgeworks



Many corporations think they have policies when what they really have are procedures.

Productivity Tools

IBM Lotus Notes 8 will also include a set of office productivity tools that support the Open Document Format (ODF) standard. These productivity tools include word processing, spreadsheet, and presentation capabilities. Lotus Notes users will be able to create, manage, edit, and import documents in ODF. The IBM productivity tools can also import and edit Microsoft Office documents and export those documents to ODF for sharing with ODF-compliant applications and solutions.

For customers, ODF provides the ability to access, use, and maintain documents over the long term without concern about end-of-life uncertainties or ongoing software licensing and royalty fees. By using ODF-compliant tools, customers are not locked into one particular vendor for their productivity tools.

Policy Parameters

This set of best practices will help your organization stay on course with its electronic communications policy.

In the process of working with a wide range of organizations, Logicalis has identified a set of best practices that ensure an electronic communications policy is both comprehensive and executable.

If you don't have an electronic communications policy, these best practices will help you build one. If you do have a policy, what follows can help you evaluate it.

An electronic communications policy needs to come before technology.

Technology has to execute the policy, not the other way around. If all you solve are the technical issues associated with electronic documents, including email, you still leave yourself open to compliance and legal liabilities. You also miss out on many of the "no cost" steps that can be taken to decrease the risk of legal liability or regulatory compliance that don't involve technology.

Involve all the stakeholders in the development of policy.

Because an electronic communications policy is a corporate issue—not just a technical issue, several groups of stakeholders need to participate in its

development, including human resources, legal, records management, IT, and compliance officers. It can be very helpful to have an outside agency act as mediator between these groups.

Define what a business record is... and what it is not.

If your policy states that employees can conduct business through instant messages, for example, then you have to archive them with the same diligence you archive email messages. If your policy states that email can be used only for business purposes, then your employees are going to have to find another way to schedule lunch with their friends. In general, business records have to be kept around, while non-business records should be destroyed or taken off the system. The difference is significant.

Establish etiquette for all forms of electronic communications.

Your policy should address not only the content but also the tone of email messages sent among employees and between employees and customers. Employees need to know what you consider inappropriate.

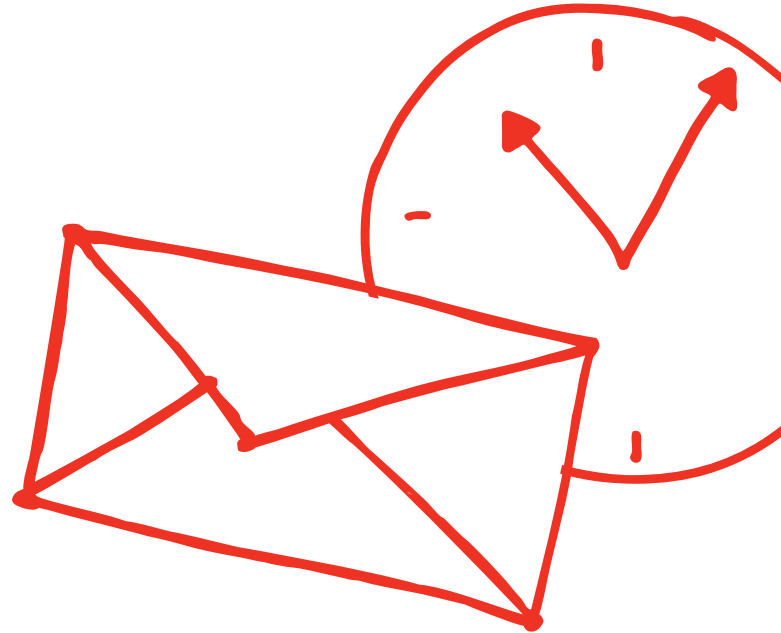
An electronic communications policy should reflect HR policy.

In many ways, corporate HR departments are the grandmasters of policy. Having gone through the sexual harassment and wrongful termination legal wars of the past decade, many HR departments have paid dearly for the lessons learned about the reach of legal liability. Leverage that experience in your electronic communications policy.

It's not a policy unless it can be enforced and establishes clear consequences for violations.

Many corporations think they have policies when what they really have are procedures. Procedures outline how to accomplish given tasks. Policies are laws; you need to be able to show that you can enforce them and that there are clear consequences for violation. If a court has any reason to doubt your policy is enforced, it is apt to require you to hand over everything...just in case.

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What can we do for your organization?

Contact Logicalis to learn how we can help.

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The Logicalis Group has annualized revenues of \$1 billion, from operations in the UK, US, Germany, South America and Asia Pacific, and is fast establishing itself as one of the leading IT and Communications solution integrators, specializing in the areas of advanced technologies and services.

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