How the Cloud
Has Changed Email
Archiving Forever

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Introduction

Since the 1990s, email has been a critical form of business communication. However, in just a couple short decades, not only has email volume exploded, it's also unintentionally become a widespread way to store information. The convenience to employees of an email inbox and its use as a personal file server poses challenges to organizations and their IT departments.

To solve mailbox bloat, IT directors and CIOs have turned to email archiving solutions, which have historically been difficult to manage when the number of inboxes crosses the 50 to 100 threshold. While email archiving has become critical to satisfying legal and regulatory needs, on-premises archiving solutions need considerable storage space. With growing storage requirements, archiving solutions require more money every year, as well as often increasing the amount of resources

involved to maintain them – more than what most organizations consider ideal. Beyond compliance and storage management, many organizations are looking to use the valuable data held in these information stores more actively. Yet legacy on-premises archives are holding them back.

As a result, the cloud has become not only a viable alternative to on-premises storage, but has dramatically changed the way email is archived.

This white paper will review:

- The emergence of email archiving as a business requirement
- The challenges associated with traditional on-premises solutions
- How the cloud has changed email archiving
- How organizations can benefit from it

EMAIL ARCHIVING
as a Business Need

Email is essential to business.
However, the sheer volume of it, combined with the critical information transmitted and stored in emails, means that archiving is just as necessary. According to The Radicati Group, 112.5 billion business emails are generated per day, and that number is increasing by 3% annually.

Email archives are a wealth of business information. Osterman Research found that 37% of business content is primarily stored in email systems, second only to file servers. A vast majority of all business documents generated are at some point sent or received as email attachments.

Since email is the number one platform for business communication, it may become necessary to store and archive email communications for compliance reasons, as well as to prepare the organization for potential litigation.

The amendments to international regulations such as the Data Protection Act (DPA), the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act (RIPA), and U.S.-specific rules like the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure in 2006, specifically included electronic communications under data protection rules and may possibly require information to be produced in litigation matters. Further, the Enron Corp. case solidified the importance of electronic communications in litigation when company auditors admitted to destroying paper and electronic documents. Enron, along with other high-profile financial scandals, gave way to the Sarbanes-Oxley Act that specified how records, even electronic ones, should be stored and for how long.

With email replacing other forms of communication, IT departments must be able to search archives using e-discovery capabilities that simplify finding specific emails and aggregating information. Archiving is required in some industries with regulatory mandates, such as HIPAA in healthcare and FINRA that governs financial services.

Email is so essential for both our professional and personal lives that employees are increasingly reluctant to delete emails – to the tune of 8,024 emails in the average mailbox. This leads to lags in performance, as employees search their email accounts for documents or other information. On-premises archiving was created to alleviate the problem of handling larger inboxes than the mail servers were designed to manage. Emails and attachments were pulled off the Tier 1 storage that had high availability and disaster recovery required for the

live email inboxes and then placed into cheaper storage. Unfortunately, this still led to higher overhead, as the secondary storage requirements grew at a rapid pace.

Another issue is that just offloading historical email isn't enough. The value of corporate information stored in emails – including documents, memos, orders, support requests and other communications with customers, suppliers and colleagues – shows that quickly searching and accessing this data is critical.

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THE CHALLENGES OF
Traditional Email Archiving

Organizations turned to on-premises solutions to manage the vast amount of email data, but they have quickly run into virtual brick walls. Complexity, performance issues and the staff required to maintain on-premises storage have made these solutions painful or untenable for the majority of organizations.

The rapid growth of email volume has considerably slowed down performance in on-premises solutions. Companies that are outgrowing existing hardware and other resources need to purchase more servers and hire more personnel. As an example, one large organization purchased 50 servers and requires an entire team just to maintain them – which is unsustainable and clearly demonstrates the limits of on-premises storage.

For IT departments, it becomes time-intensive to retrieve emails, de-duplicate data and extract relevant information for a litigation matter or regulatory purpose.

Queries on on-premises archives can take hours or days. Expensive on-premises solutions don't always work the way intended; these archives risk index corruption and orphaned objects, creating more difficulty during the retrieval process.

Complexity is another problem that on-premises storage creates. A new layer of infrastructure is added to the email architecture and system architecture by virtue of the hardware and software involved. This requires additional resources and staff. Additionally, only 10% of organizations provide employees access to their email archives, making it difficult for the average employee to retrieve information without going through the IT department.

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THE CLOUD: CHANGING EMAIL
Archiving for the Better

Clearly, something better is needed for email archiving, and that's where cloud archives enter the picture. Cloud email archiving is a multi-tenant infrastructure that uses shared resource pools and scales up and down as needed for the organization. It is a true cloud solution, not a virtualized appliance, which can be provided with more hardware and CPU power, without increasing the cost of the solution.

There are a host of benefits to using cloud-based email archiving:

Flat cost with easy scalability: Cloud-based email archiving in a multi-tenant environment scales to the organization's needs, allotting more processing power as more data is stored. Providers offer cost models that allow organizations to predict monthly and annual costs. Per-employee pricing is not based on email volume or the number of mailboxes, which delivers a lower total cost of ownership.

Improved search performance and retrieval: Because cloud email archive providers utilize a multi-tenant environment, hardware and resources are provisioned to meet demand. This means searching cloud-based email archives does not overload infrastructure and can proceed rapidly, accessing archived email in seconds. A true distributed grid computing architecture will support an end user search SLA, using the aggregated power of all servers.

Self-service recoverability: Disaster recovery can be completed remotely, rather than requiring the IT team to physically repair on-premises servers. Users can also restore accidentally deleted emails and files without requiring the IT team to embark on a significant undertaking.

Improved data access: Much like improved employee email archive access, cloud-based email archiving allows the mobile workforce to access stored emails. This puts important business information at the fingertips of those who need it. Users can access personal archives on any device, from anywhere. Just by virtue of being cloud-based, an executive, salesperson or other mobile employee can quickly call up a presentation that had been previously emailed. This is something that can't be done with a traditional on-premises archive without a VPN.

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Better redundancy and fault tolerance: Because cloud providers include redundancy with their offerings, using cloud-based email archiving provides enterprise-grade redundancy to allow for easy recoverability. Cloud-based email archive providers use encrypted, secure servers in multiple, geographically dispersed data centers with triplicate copies for built-in redundancy.

Allows smaller companies to access powerful email archiving: The cost of on-premises email archiving, including hardware and personnel, has historically kept it out of reach of smaller companies. However, the scalable model used in cloud-based email archiving provides benefits to companies with more limited resources. Also, new benefits can be realized as search and retrieval becomes accessible to more employees from more locations.

Protects against technological and human error: With all the technology, end users and administrators involved in the process, things will go wrong and errors will be made. Whether it's a high-level executive who deleted an important email, or an admin who accidently deleted an account, having the ability to restore to a known good point in time is both expected and critical.

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Organizations that have adopted solutions like Office 365 and Google Apps for Work are already getting some of the benefits of the cloud. But just because email is in the cloud, it doesn't mean that staying on top of compliance concerns, disaster recovery and having an independent backup is less of a priority.

Changing the email infrastructure does not change the business compliance and litigation requirements, and having those archives and forensic trails will be critical in the event of a lawsuit or regulatory audit. Cloud-based email archives provide comprehensive compliance, e-discovery and litigation support, such as legal hold, case management and data export. These solutions also deliver complete archive access logging, including searches and message views.

For organizations that are migrating to cloud-based email, an independent archive allows them to migrate their legacy email archives and provide immediate access to historical email. Importantly, a third-party archive provides backup and recoverability that just isn't part of cloud-based solutions. Lastly, keeping the archive independent from the actual email service provides greater portability should a switch in providers be necessary in the future.

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Conclusion

Cloud-based email archiving does more than just provide a way to store old emails. It provides a new way to search and retrieve emails, offers reliable disaster recovery and redundancy, plus audit trails to help stay compliant. It scales with business needs and provides fast search results in seconds for employees both in and out of the office.

To learn more about Mimecast's cloud-based email archiving options, visit www.mimecast.com or call 800-660-1194.

About Mimecast

Mimecast makes business email and data safer for thousands of customers and millions of employees worldwide. Founded in 2003, the Company's next-generation cloud-based security, archiving and continuity services protect email, and deliver comprehensive email risk management in a single, fully integrated subscription service. Mimecast reduces email risk and the complexity and cost of managing the array of point solutions traditionally used to protect email and its data. For customers that have migrated to cloud services like Microsoft Office 365™, Mimecast mitigates single vendor exposure by strengthening security coverage, combating downtime and improving archiving.

Mimecast Email Security protects against malware, spam, advanced phishing and other emerging attacks, while preventing data leaks. Mimecast Mailbox Continuity enables employees to continue using email during planned and unplanned outages. Mimecast Enterprise Information Archiving unifies email, file and instant messaging data to support e-discovery and give employees fast access to their personal archive via PC, Mac and mobile apps.

To learn more, visit www.mimecast.com.