

ARCHIVING COMES OF AGE

COMPANIES NEED A BALANCE OF EMAIL ARCHIVING, EDISCOVERY AND RETENTION MANAGEMENT, WITH NO SINGLE ONE OF THESE DICTATING CONSTRAINTS ON ANOTHER

In the last issue of Storage magazine, we looked at how an effective email archiving strategy can derive tangible cost savings for any business, while delivering best practice and compliance. Compression and single instancing were covered: great features of the higher class archiving solutions that can help deliver a real ROI (return on investment).

"However, one has to be careful of putting the technology in front of the business needs," states Dave Hunt, CEO of information archiving vendor C2C. "Compliance officers, legal and HR need to get access to data, whether it has been archived or not. Constraining them to searching only archived data is not supporting their needs."

With the rising costs of eDiscovery, IT managers are feeling the pressure to deliver results to the business, but are realising that, with the amount of data, they can neither rely on having archived everything, nor do they always want to. It is simply not practical to believe that all data has been ingested into an archive. New data, either in common or obscure locations, such as a laptop, is always being found and legal, HR or compliance cannot wait until this data is brought into the archive.

"In reality, many companies also need to identify, preserve and manage data from live and archived sources. Sadly, there are far fewer solutions in the marketplace that allow true eDiscovery and retention management throughout an organisation," he adds. "Put simply, wherever data resides, albeit archived or unarchived (eg, in the mailbox, public folder, PST file, email archive or a windows file store), the

company compliance officer still needs to act quickly in response to an investigation request, rather than depend on IT to preserve every piece of data in the system."

To facilitate, corporate lawyers are now often wearing a second hat, that of compliance officers. While they view 'compliance' as a bottom-line cost, eDiscovery preparedness is looked at as a preventive measure, with the potential for massive savings in the future. "For example, a Fortune 2000 company deals with, on average, 127 significant legal matters or litigation cases a year, for which 'eDiscovery' accounts for between 60-80% of the cost. Here, eDiscovery includes the capture, management and collection of the data for forensic analysis and early case assessment.

"The average cost to the business to fully unearth and investigate a case is approximately £1 million. If the 'eDiscovery' component is 60% of the total (ie, £600,000), a saving of 10% through improving capture, retention and discovery could result in a saving of £60,000 per case. This equates to £7.33 million across all cases being handled for one company alone."

Companies need a balance of email archiving, eDiscovery and retention management, Hunt argues, with no one of these dictating constraints on another. "In many companies, it would be ideal to archive everything and guarantee it is all there, but it is simply not practical to achieve. In others, the need to remove specific data prior to archiving is essential. This balance of archiving, retention and eDiscovery is where the modern IT department is looking for solutions."

Email archiving is very much coming of age, he concludes. "Now companies need to embrace a total information management policy across the infrastructure using integrated solutions, beyond single stage email archiving in support of compliance and internal policy enforcement for use by HR and legal, while providing savings to the IT department in their overstretched budgets."

Dave Hunt: technology mustn't come before business needs

