

Report: E-Mail Archiving Becoming a Must

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A new study projects that in four years, 70 percent of corporate mailboxes will be protected by archiving software—whether hosted or client-based.

Only about 14 percent of all corporate e-mail accounts are currently being backed up and archived for future access, but that number is going to shoot up to nearly 70 percent by the year 2011, according to a new storage industry study.

The Radicati Group, a Palo Alto, Calif., technology research firm, also reported April 30 that worldwide revenues for e-mail archiving vendors and service providers are expected to reach almost \$1.3 billion in 2007, and grow to more than \$6 billion by 2011.

People are sending and receiving more - and digitally heavier - e-mails now as opposed to past years, the study says. According to Radicati's research, in 2007 a typical corporate account generates about 18MB of mail and attachments per business day, or about 4.3GB of electronic data per user/per year.

This number is expected to grow to over 28MB per day (or 6.7GB per year) by 2011, Radicati said.

"Without an archiving record of all relevant messages, regulated companies can be heavily penalized," said Sara Radicati, president and CEO of The Radicati Group.

"Today, there is no good alternative to an interactive archiving solution to help companies properly store electronic messages."

This has been borne out in recent weeks in the ongoing Intel-AMD antitrust lawsuit, in which Intel was unable to come up with some 1,000 e-mails judged to be in evidence by the federal court.

Other high-profile litigation involving Oracle-SAP and the White House also have brought the topic to the attention of business owners, many of whom are now installing - or planning to install - some kind of e-mail archiving mechanism.

"These cases do make people think, but even without that, anybody who has a business realizes today that much of their business-critical information is being kept in e-mails, so they need an effective way to store and search it," Radicati said.

In-house or hosted: Which will it be?

There are two ways to deploy an archiving solution: as an in-house product, or as a hosted service. At this time, more than two-thirds of all archiving solutions are sold as on-premises products, Radicati told eWEEK.

"However, the interest in outsourced services is growing fast," Radicati said. "Before, mostly small to midsize companies with limited IT resources were interested in outsourcing; today we are seeing larger organizations following the outsourcing route as a way to better cope with quickly expanding archives, as well as to take the pressure off their IT and legal departments."

Many archiving vendors are starting to expand the capabilities of their solutions beyond archiving e-mails; more employees are using channels

other than e-mail to exchange information. Additional channels to monitor and archive today include instant messaging, Web-based e-mail, chat rooms and wireless e-mail and text messages, Radicati said.

"Instant messaging is especially popular in the banking and securities industries," Radicati told eWEEK. "It's standard now to make trading deals via instant message. And companies certainly want to keep all those communications."

More education to be done

There is still an "enormous" amount of education that needs to be done at all levels of business with regard to new and recent federal and international e-discovery regulations.

"Sadly it not even just about education," Radicati told eWEEK. "Some of these rules and regulations are written so ambiguously that it is very difficult to understand what a company is supposed to do or not do."

The Federal Rules of Civil Procedure, which went into effect last Dec. 1 as the new de facto e-discovery rule of compliance, refer to "electronic documents" rather than specific kinds of e-documents, which include instant messaging, digital video, podcasts, and photos - as well as e-mail.

The study, "E-Mail Archiving Market, 2007-2011," provides market size, four-year forecasts and regional breakouts. It also discusses legislative and technology issues of the archiving market and provides an analysis of the leading archiving vendors and service providers, Radicati said.

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