

Email Archiving - Key Drivers for UK Organisations

This White Paper will provide an insight into current archiving drivers, an overview of some of the legislation applicable to UK Companies and some of the benefits that can be delivered through properly archiving your email.

Email retention and archiving overview and key drivers

Businesses rely on email - it has become the life-blood of business communications - and yet the need to have proper email archiving platforms in place is not widely understood.

Why do we need to archive email? As well as a rising tide of legislation relating to business communications there is also the need to be able to find email topics and content fast amongst a huge quantity of email that may be stored on local servers - and platforms such as Microsoft Exchange are simply not geared up for this.

Regulatory Compliance

Probably the most important driver of email archiving requirements now and in the future is the rise of regulation - be-it international, national, or industry specific. Governmental agencies and other regulatory organisations have established requirements for email retention, accessibility, and security. In order to comply with this myriad of requirements organisations must have archiving systems in place to retain electronic communications and ensure that any requested data can be retrieved and presented in a timely manner when required.

Disaster Recovery and Business Continuity

It almost goes without saying that the long-term storage of all email communications should form part of an integrated Disaster Recovery/Business Continuity plan. With email archiving in place an organisation can continue to access vital information even if their internal platforms are unavailable.

Litigation - Legal Discovery

With most business communication - both internally and with clients and suppliers - being done via email, it has become increasingly important to be able to retrieve relevant messages in the event of legal discovery, audits, and business or personnel investigations. Email archiving ensures that evidentiary-

quality records are systematically stored, preferably off-site, in a tamper proof central repository.

Storage Management

Is your existing mail infrastructure creaking at the seams? Email archiving enables organisations to take control of the rapidly increasing volume of email by offloading email storage from their in-house mail servers. This ensures that the performance of in-house mail platforms can be maintained and, with the implementation of formal email policies, even significantly improved. Storage costs can be vastly reduced and recovery from any server outages, or disaster situations, greatly simplified.

Supporting your Email Policies

No organisations' email policy is secure from having valuable communications accidentally, or even maliciously, deleted. With a dedicated email archiving solution in place audit trails and data are always available - no matter how itchy your users' 'delete' fingers are.

Don't have a cohesive email policy in place yet? You're not alone as many organisations are exposing themselves by not having such policies in place. The following overview should get you started.

Summary of Requirements

Whilst it is impossible to pull together every piece of legislation and industry sector regulation in one place, we have pulled together the following overview of relevant laws and requirements that will apply to virtually all businesses - large and small.

Classification	Minimum Retention
General email	6 months - Retention of Communications Data Code of Practice
Emails sent and received by financial institutions	6 years + (FSA)
Companies that fall under Sarbaines Oxley requirements - generally businesses that are subsidiaries of US based companies.	5 years +

In addition to legislation and sector regulation that specifically relates to email, it is also important to remember that the nature of email content can place it under other subject specific rules and regulations with regards to relevant content and audit trails - the majority of which are outlined on the following table:

Content Type	Minimum Retention
Income Tax and NI	3 years
VAT Records	6 years
Wages and Salary	6 years
Personnel Records (accidents, health, retirement etc..)	up to 40 years
Government Data Policies	
Building Records	2 - 40 years
Personnel Records	6 months to 50 years
Accounting Records	1 - 6 years
Health and Safety	2 - 50 years
Contracts	1 - 16 years
Complaints	1 - 25 years
Press and PR	1 month - 25 years
Central Expenditure	1 - 12 years
Internal Audits	1 - 6 years

Archiving Solutions

Email archiving solutions generally fall into four categories: on-site software and hardware solutions, offsite backup as part of a general data back-up policy and dedicated in-the-cloud solutions such as MessageBunker.

On-Site Software

Pros: Relatively cheap, uses existing infrastructure. Typically around £1.70 per mailbox per month.

Cons: Support overhead, software licences, generally platform specific, additional server capacity may be required.

On-Site Dedicated Appliance

Pros: Creates impression of being in control and of data security. Nice box to look at. Typically over £10k.

Cons: High cost, high support overhead and not the most suitable platform as a Disaster Recovery/Business Continuity solution.

As part of a General Back-Up Policy

Pros: Perceived as cheap. Costs - hidden within general IT department activity.

Cons: Email discovery - or lack of it. Platforms not geared towards email.

In-The-Cloud

Pros: Cost effective, platform independent, easy and fast to deploy and provides the ideal platform to enable email platform upgrades and migrations without the worry of losing email. Platform designed around email and email attachments from the ground up - so you can search and find relevant emails, email threads and attachments extremely quickly.

Cons: Perceived security issues, reliant on the performance of your Internet connection. You don't have a box to look at.

Conclusion

Whilst the need to have email policies and email archiving platforms in place may not be at the forefront of organisations priorities, there are very good business imperatives for making this happen and a variety of solutions that can be deployed depending upon budget and in-house expertise.

Disclaimer

The content of this White Paper is intended for guidance purposes only and we recommend that you obtain advice from suitably qualified legal counsel regarding the identification and interpretation of the relevant laws and regulations that apply to your specific circumstances.

MessageBunker does not supply legal advice, or represent, or warrant that its services will ensure that a client is fully compliant with any applicable law or regulation.



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