



Illinois County Government Office Deploys an Email Archiving Appliance that Meets Federal Regulations



Client Background

Local governments face the same kinds of email compliance challenges as other industries, and McLean County, Illinois is no exception. McLean County provides a variety of governmental services to over 160,000+ consumers. The County's Information Technology Department provides technology services to the county government. Mclean County operates under the 50 ILCS 205/1 Local Records Act for the State of Illinois. The Act declares that there is a program for the efficient and economical management of local records concerning daily local governments to facilitate and expedite governmental operations.

The Challenge

While the IT Department backed-up County information nightly to tape and took everything offsite weekly, they soon realized that such practices failed to meet government regulations. “We want to enforce the same standards of retention as in regulations like Sarbanes Oxley,” said Craig Nelson, Director, McLean County Government Information Technologies. “Also, we wanted to eliminate the loophole of being able to delete something the same day it was received, so a system that provided automatic capture, archival capabilities, and easy retrieval, became very important to us.”

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McLean County Government Information Technology Department main server uses Exchange 2003 with Outlook and is responsible for over 700 employees accessing and using e-mail technology. On average the daily email total amounted 32,000 messages, attachments, with approximately 8,000 “junk” pieces trapped caught by the spam filter. These email boxes were maintained by one employee in the IT Department; thus, the ease of configuration and maintenance was a key feature when determining what email archiving solution would be best for their needs.

Nelson evaluated a dozen email archiving system solutions during his search; after evaluating company needs, capabilities, and price, the Intradyn™ Email Archiving Solution™ (CV1U1000) with Sony AIT-5 Tape Library (LIB162A5BB) was selected. Nelson states, “There were solutions that could do more for seven times the price, but we did not have \$90K to spend on an email archiving solution. We looked at balancing our budget with the best product available... “It was clearly the best choice.”

Solution

The Intradyn™ Email Archiving Solution™ E-mail Archiving and Retrieval Appliance with Sony’s Advanced Intelligent Tape™ (AIT) automation technology is a combined archiving and retrieval solution tailored to address demanding record retention requirements for small and medium sized businesses (SMB).

The Email Archiving Solution™ integrates hardware and software into a solution that can be attached to a company’s network to capture e-mails on a continuous basis, from virtually any e-mail system that is based on the common POP3 or IMAP standards from a virtually unlimited number of mailboxes.

Solution cont...

E-mails are stored and indexed to disk for fast search and retrieval and archived and indexed to Sony's AIT rewritable or write-once, read-many (WORM) media. AIT WORM media limits accidental erasure, data alteration, enables time and date authentication, and allows for easy off-site storage. Email Archiving Solution™ with AIT offers a cost-effective "plug-and-play" solution for SMBs that need to meet regulatory compliance demands.

Nelson explained that they're always being asked to do more with less, so finding a system that provided simplicity in configuration, operations, and maintenance was a large factor in their selection. With Email Archiving Solution™, no additional personnel resources are needed.

The system has archived over 800,000 emails in a six-month period, yet only requires one employee to operate the system and retrieve needed emails in less than 10 seconds. Email Archiving Solution™ stands out for its ease of management, according to Nelson. "We don't have to intervene with it. We just put it in place and it hums and runs."

McLean County preferred the disk to tape structure of Email Archiving Solution™ to competitive solutions that had databases that needed to be maintained. With the Email Archiving Solution™ design, the IT department doesn't have to think about email archival on a daily basis. All email content flows into the Email Archiving Solution™ disk. IT can periodically dump it to Sony AIT tape and then take the tape off-site as part of a disaster recovery and business continuity scenario. The system to date has stored six months of data and we're "only at 10% of used space on our 1TB Email Archiving Solution™ – much better than I had hoped for," said Nelson.

While email retention is important from a legal perspective, retrieval also plays an important role in the McLean County daily operations. In the last several years, the county has had a number of cases where they have been asked to produce all emails related to a particular employee in a specific time frame. Previously, they had to pull a technician off an assignment, have him get the backup tape out of storage, restore the mailbox, do a keyword search, clean the report, and package it for delivery – a half to full day process.

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Solution cont...

With Email Archiving Solution™, Nelson or a colleague can gather and ship the requested email information out with all parameters, including attachments, in five minutes. Since installation there have been five events in which emails had to be retrieved; in total this just took 30 minutes instead of the 20-30 hours it had taken prior to the use of the Email Archiving Solution™.

One of the unexpected advantages McLean County discovered in the Email Archiving Solution™ system was its ability to support their email policy that prohibits obscene words and language. “We can do a ‘random sample’ searching for text words that are in violation,” said Nelson, “and enforce our email policy without the need to target and select specific employees.” Sony’s AIT-5 library plays an integral part of the Email Archiving Solution™, giving the company 6.4TB native; 16.64TB compressed (using 2.6:1 ADLC) storage capacity. Per AIT-5 tape media the storage capacity is 400GB native, 1.04TB compressed (using 2:6:1 ADLC) giving McLean County the capacity to archive years of data.

The Write-once-read-many (WORM) capabilities of AIT were a factor in their decision to deploy Email Archiving Solution™. The added layers of protection made the Email Archiving Solution™ very attractive. According to Nelson, he can now “testify that my staff does not have the ability to alter or change content of any electronic materials;” since access is limited to two employees, there is a built-in Audit Log that prevents the two employees from searching without the knowledge of the other and the tracking record cannot be altered.

Conclusion

Sony AIT Tape Storage is essential to McLean County’s email compliance services and has given IT seamless management and control over email and retrieval. Having an email archival system that incorporates tape also lets McLean County implement disaster recovery email retention practices that coincide with their off-site retention policy. With the Intradyn’s™ Email Archiving Solution™ and Sony AIT solution, McLean County purchased and implemented a system that worked immediately without the need for the IT Department to be concerned with managing email archival on a daily basis.

All email content flows in to the Email Archiving Solution™ disk. IT can periodically dump it to Sony AIT tape and then taken off-site as company policy states must be done. The system to date has stored six months of data and we’re “only at 10% of used space on our 1TB Email Archiving Solution™ – much better than I had hoped for,” said Nelson. While email retention is important from a legal perspective, retrieval also plays an important role in the McLean County daily operations.

In the last several years, the county has had a number of cases particular emails were needed. McLean was able to get what they needed without using a large amount of labor hours to gain access and to find the emails. Additionally, the County has been able to gain the safeguards of using audit tracking and the inability to alter any information. Moreover, McLean was able to gain the benefits of the extra safe guards while meeting email archiving standards. They were able to do this without major expense or difficult installation.

No one can say Schmidt is indecisive. After watching a demo of the Email Archiving Solution™ in her office and seeing it as the perfect answer for solving the company's email archiving needs, she made an on-the-spot decision to acquire the appliance. Perkins Capital chose the Email Archiving Solution™ "Mini" or standalone model with 120 GB disk capacity.

About the Email Archiving Solution™

The Email Archiving Solution™ Email Archiving & Retrieval Appliance is an affordable, all-in-one device designed for small and midsized firms to comply with email archiving regulations. It's an integrated hardware/software solution that captures all of a company's emails on a continuous basis from a virtually unlimited number of mailboxes.

Benefits:

- Simple installation and immediate use
- No integration downtime or expense
- Content search capabilities up to one million emails per second
- Keyword, subject line, and body Searches of archived emails
- Available in standalone models with 120 and 250 GBytes of raw disk space
- Internal Sony AIT tape drive to archive all email onto non-alterable WORM (write-once, read-many)tape cartridges
- Microsoft Exchange and IMAP or POP3 compatible
- Indexed Auto-save capabilities
- Immediate retrieval

Available in:

- 1U rack-mount models that are used in conjunction with a 1U or 2U rack-mount Sony AIT Tape Library
- 250, 500, or 800 GBytes of raw disk space capacity

About Intradyn™

Founded in 2001, Intradyn™ is the market leader in appliance-based solutions for next-generation disk-based archiving appliance. Today, Intradyn is a recognized leader in the e-discovery and archiving markets, producing leading edge products for businesses of all sizes. Intradyn™ is headquartered in Eagan, Minnesota, with solutions throughout North America, Europe and Asia.

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