Top Five Considerations for Choosing an Archiving Technology

Overview

Selecting an archiving solution for email and other vital business data can seem like a daunting task. By definition, archiving is a long-term proposition, so it's important to evaluate the available products thoroughly before making a decision. Keeping a few basic principles in mind can help you with that process.

Here are five recommendations from Symantec for choosing an archiving technology.

1. Think long term

Selecting an archiving solution is a critical decision. Be sure to select a product that is flexible enough to support changes in your business and computing environment. Your chosen archiving solution should be able to maintain (or even enhance) performance levels when you add users, data, and applications.

Also take a long-term perspective about solution vendors. Archiving deals with addressing complex IT and business issues. Proven customer success and a commitment to support are true tests of a vendor's ability to deliver long-term value in an archiving solution.

2. Consider manageability

IT organizations are demanding manageability from archives similar to what they get from other infrastructure applications. Secure, role-based administration and granular provisioning and reporting are the foundation of a good archiving solution. These manageability features simplify the delivery of archiving services and enable your IT staff to:

- Associate archiving requirements with corporate policies
- Ensure that each user gets the information he or she requires
- Distribute management across functional teams
- Control access privileges on an individual basis
- Monitor the health of your archiving infrastructure to increase its availability
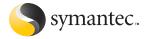
3. Focus on content intelligence

Because not all information is created equal, organizations need to manage and retain different pieces of information based on their individual value. Certain content (such as orders and contracts) may need to be maintained for years, while other data (such as personal email and newsletters) can be eliminated more quickly.

Effective information management requires the classification of data into relevant categories, along with the ability to enforce different policies for each category. Therefore, when you evaluate archiving solutions, look for flexible classification, filtering, and retention options. You may want support for both user-initiated and automated classification. You may need the ability to integrate the archiving solution with an enterprise content management (ECM) system. A good archiving system should offer intelligent filtering to delete irrelevant email before archiving and intelligent retention to keep archived email for the proper amount of time based upon classification.

4. Optimize your total cost of ownership

While email archives often provide a quick return on investment from storage savings, a good solution also provides technical and administrative functionality that helps lower the cost of administration and overall ownership of the archive. Look for a product that can:

- Reduce the administrative time spent on Microsoft® PST and Lotus NSF files, mailbox and message recovery, user complaints, and legal discovery
- Decrease storage costs

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- Reduce backup windows
- Improve storage management capabilities
- Minimize the time spent looking for and recovering information for legal requests

5. Look for best-of-breed, open solutions

Your archiving platform should be able to grow and integrate with other systems as your environment changes and expands. It must provide open application programming interfaces (APIs) and broad support for long-term storage, as well as for structured and unstructured data besides email.

A good archiving solution should:

- Be storage agnostic. Does the product work with a wide range of storage options? Does it support tiered storage to help you store each type of data in the most economical way?

- Archive more than just email. Can the product archive other unstructured content types, such as Microsoft SharePoint® libraries and instant messages?

- Support the integration of third-party products. How expandable is the archiving solution? Will it integrate with your other infrastructure elements, such as the database, SAP, ECM, and records management systems?

More information

About Symantec Enterprise Vault™

Symantec Enterprise Vault provides a software-based Intelligent Archiving platform to store, manage, and discover corporate data from email systems, file server environments, instant message platforms, and content management and collaborations systems. Because not all data is created equal, Enterprise Vault utilizes intelligent classification and retention technologies to capture, categorize, index, and store target data to enforce policies and protect corporate assets, while reducing storage costs and simplifying management. It also provides specialized applications such as Discovery Accelerator and Compliance Accelerator to mine archived data in support of legal discovery, content compliance, knowledge management, and information security initiatives.

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About Symantec

Symantec is a global leader in infrastructure software, enabling businesses and consumers to have confidence in a connected world. The company helps customers protect their infrastructure, information, and interactions by delivering software and services that address risks to security, availability, compliance, and performance. Headquartered in Cupertino, Calif., Symantec has operations in 40 countries. More information is available at www.symantec.com.

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