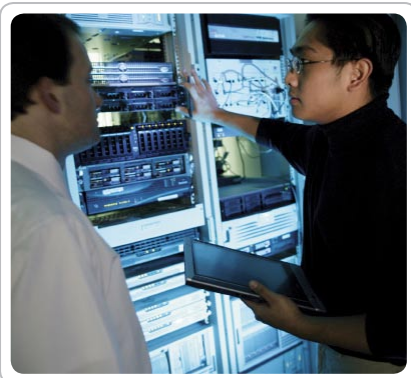


International Computerware (ICI)

Empowering a mobile workforce with universal, seamless access to e-mail and improved server performance



Business overview

International Computerware, Inc. (ICI) provides information technology solutions and consulting worldwide. Founded in 1981 and headquartered in Marlborough, Massachusetts, ICI serves small and large enterprises across a wide range of industries and government organizations. The company's solutions and services portfolio includes storage infrastructure architecture, design, implementation, and support; backup, recovery, and archive design and implementation; data and application classification; virtual infrastructure planning and deployment; and more.

Challenges

The majority of ICI's employees and contractors are highly mobile—working from client sites, at home, or on the road. “Everyone is a mobile user; at any point in time, our office is mostly empty,” says Gary Reardon, principal infrastructure solutions architect at ICI America. “Some have laptops, others have iPhones or Blackberry devices. And because the majority of our internal and external communication is via e-mail, they all—users of Microsoft Outlook as well as Microsoft Entourage for Mac—want access to past e-mails.”

Need for easy access to past e-mails

But allowing all users to keep all e-mail correspondence in their inboxes was becoming an IT nightmare. To enable access to past and present e-mails, ICI had set no mailbox limits, which severely bogged down the company's Microsoft Exchange server. “Users were constantly complaining about speed; it took some of them 15 minutes to start up their Outlook clients,” says Reardon. “In addition, we had no way to enforce any kind of retention policies, nor could we easily access—let alone search for—information stored in individual mailboxes.”

EMC solution

To enable e-mail archiving for all of its users as well as to further enhance the performance of its e-mail server, ICI implemented EMC SourceOne™ Email Management for Microsoft Exchange, a next-generation e-mail archiving solution that proactively manages Microsoft Exchange information regardless of the e-mail client. E-mail for all of ICI's Outlook users, as well as its Entourage for Mac users, can be managed consistently and archived according to retention policies, which are set up easily using the centralized EMC SourceOne Email Management console.

To reduce total cost of ownership, ICI implemented EMC SourceOne Email Management in a VMware® virtualized environment. ICI also archives EMC SourceOne Email Management e-mail data to lower cost tier EMC Centera® content-addressed storage. For disaster recovery purposes, the archived data is replicated to a second EMC Centera unit in ICI's data center. “With EMC SourceOne Email Management and EMC Centera, we have comprehensive information lifecycle management,” says Jamie Shepard,

Benefits

- Increases productivity of mobile workforce by enabling anytime, anywhere access to e-mails
- Improves performance of production e-mail server by 87 percent
- Reduces e-mail server storage by 50 percent
- Provides greater security and central manageability of e-mails for compliance and litigation purposes

executive vice president of technology solutions at ICI. EMC SourceOne Email Management also provides ICI flexibility to configure retention policies as needed, as well as the ability to discover e-mails and/or attachments as outlined in the new Massachusetts law requiring all businesses to protect and provide e-mail for litigation.

EMC SourceOne Email Management offers flexibility as to how policies and activities are configured to meet each customer's unique requirements. For instance, using the management console, ICI implemented a scheduled message collection policy that archives copies of all e-mail messages and associated attachments from users' inboxes after they have been in an inbox five days. ICI also uses EMC SourceOne Email Management to manage mailbox size and reduce volume on its Exchange server.

Because e-mail attachments account for 72 percent of ICI's e-mail storage volume, ICI implemented a "shortcut" policy for all attachments older than 50 or 90 days, depending on the user. When EMC SourceOne shortcuts an e-mail attachment, the attachment is replaced on the Exchange server with a small pointer that links to the full content.

Since ICI's mobile workforce is so diverse, the company deployed shortcut resolution for its users in two different ways. ICI's Microsoft Outlook users access shortcut content through EMC SourceOne Offline Access, a local cache on the user's desktop. When they click on the pointer, the full content of the e-mail attachment is pulled directly from the cache, enabling access even when the user is disconnected from the company network. ICI's mobile device users and Entourage for Mac users access the full content via universal URL. When they click on the shortcut pointer, they are directed to a URL where, upon authentication, the full content is automatically displayed. In either case, users simply click on a pointer in their inbox to see the full content of the e-mail attachment.

“By shortcutting and archiving e-mail attachments with EMC SourceOne Email Management, we have decreased e-mail storage by 50 percent. Yet users can still easily access their old e-mail. In fact, they can get the e-mail faster because server speed is so much faster now.”

Gary Reardon, Principal Infrastructure Solutions Architect, ICI Americas

Anywhere, anytime access to e-mail and easy archive searching

Shortcutting content with EMC SourceOne Email Management benefits both ICI end users and IT administrators. Users have seamless access to older e-mail attachments, but their mailboxes on the Exchange server are a fraction of their original size. If users or IT administrators need to access e-mails that are no longer on the Exchange server—if a user deleted them from an inbox, for example—they can still search for them in the EMC SourceOne Email Management archive.

To search through archived e-mail, authorized ICI users simply enter search queries via the secure, web-based EMC SourceOne Email Management search client. Query results are visible immediately in accordance with users' authorization levels. Users can also take action—including reply, print, and forward the archived message or attachment—but they cannot alter the original copy in the archive, which remains protected according to the retention policies set in the archive.

“Thanks to EMC SourceOne Email Management, all of our users can easily and securely access the e-mails they need, past and present, from any device with web access,” says Reardon. “That’s a huge benefit for them and for IT as well.

Faster e-mail server response time, reduced e-mail storage and backup time

“By shortcutting e-mail attachments with EMC SourceOne Email Management, we have decreased production tier e-mail storage by 50 percent,” says Reardon. “Yet users can still easily access their old e-mail. In fact, they can get the e-mail faster because server speed is so much faster now.”

For ICI users, starting the Outlook client now takes a maximum of two minutes—usually much less. That’s 87 percent faster than before EMC SourceOne Email Management was implemented. Server performance is expected to improve even more when ICI uses EMC SourceOne Email Management to automatically delete e-mail, such as all e-mail in junk or spam folders older than 15 days. In addition, the time to back up the Exchange server has been reduced by 50 percent—from five hours to less than one hour using B2D and de-duplication target-based backup solutions by EMC Data Domain and EMC Networker® Exchange Module.

Archiving and access transparent to users

Employees have been very receptive to EMC SourceOne Email Management because, with the exception of installing the Offline Access client, it is virtually transparent to them. “For the users who objected strongly to removing their e-mail attachments from their desktops, we installed the SourceOne Offline Access local cache and told them that sometime in the future we would be archiving and shortcutting old e-mails,” explains Reardon. “Then we started shortcutting and archiving. They weren’t even aware it was happening. E-mails were no longer on their machines, but they never even noticed.”

Improving workgroup productivity with user-directed archives

Functional groups within ICI—such as engineering, sales, and product management—have taken advantage of the user-directed archive functionality in EMC SourceOne Email Management to enable users within each community to more easily and securely share and manage community-related e-mails and attachments together, in a common folder within the archive. Users simply drag and drop individual e-mails from their inboxes into a predefined EMC SourceOne Email Management folder that appears in their inboxes. All content in the folder is automatically archived according to retention policies set by an IT administrator in the EMC SourceOne Email Management console. These policies can be the same as the organization’s general policies or different.

“Keeping shared information in a user-directed archive has multiple benefits,” explains Reardon. “It improves workgroup productivity; every authorized user who needs the information has easy access to it. It also shrinks desktop e-mail storage since users no longer need to store a copy on their own desktops. In addition, community folders can be assigned their own retention rules and an IT administrator can manage them remotely.”

Reardon particularly likes the fact that user-directed archives can ingest .PST files. Users simply drag local .PST files into a folder where they can be centrally managed and retained according to set retention policies, significantly reducing security risk. “With EMC SourceOne Email Management, we expect to eventually do away with .PST files altogether. But, in the near term, it is nice to know we have an easy way to securely archive them,” says Reardon.

Summary

Thanks to EMC SourceOne Email Management, ICI’s extremely mobile workforce can easily and securely access and search current and archived e-mail anytime, anywhere, from any web-based device. In addition to making employees and contractors more productive, EMC SourceOne Email Management has decreased production e-mail storage by 50 percent, improved server performance by 87 percent, and reduced e-mail backup time by 50 percent. Centrally managed and transparent to users, e-mail archived using EMC SourceOne Email Management is also much easier to manage for compliance and litigation readiness.



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