

CITY OF SURPRISE, ARIZONA

City keeps pace with rapid growth through smooth progression to next-generation email management and archiving



ESSENTIALS

Challenges

- Fulfilling public records requests involved a time and labor-intensive tape-based process
- Individual users' mailboxes were growing exponentially

Solutions

- EMC EmailXtender
- EMC SourceOne

Key benefits

- Time to fulfill public records requests from days to seconds
- Significant performance improvements through elimination of PSTs and automatic archiving of user mailboxes
- Automatic compliance with city archival and retention policies
- Three-way partnership with technology vendor and consultant enables migration in record time

BUSINESS OVERVIEW

Surprise, Arizona, is a city of 115,000 residents, and is located 45 minutes northwest of downtown Phoenix. A popular destination for retirees, Surprise is now the second fastest-growing municipality in the greater Phoenix metropolitan area.

CHALLENGES

As a government entity, the City of Surprise must comply with state laws requiring it to meet requests for public records, including email messages, in a timely fashion. Previously, fulfilling public records requests was a time and labor-intensive process by which IT personnel would have to restore email messages from tape media—a procedure that could take days depending on the scope of the request.

The city also needed a better means of managing the size of individual users' mailboxes, which had grown exponentially.

“Our email culture was similar to that of many organizations in that our employees were treating their email boxes like their personal filing cabinets, and no one was comfortable with deleting anything,” says Manny Mejia, IT network administrator for City of Surprise. “We were experiencing real performance issues on our network as a result.”

PHASE ONE: EMC EMAILXTENDER

To address these issues, the city originally sought an email management solution that would provide an automated means of archiving user emails as well as a faster, more reliable, and accurate method of searching for and retrieving archived messages. First to be implemented was EMC® EmailXtender®, which has provided automatic, realtime archiving of all email from Microsoft® Exchange servers since 2006. With important functionality such as deduplication of emails to be archived, EmailXtender had served the city well by providing a centralized search utility for expediting formerly time-consuming email retrieval processes, and by supporting the city's policies for email archiving and retention.

CITY'S GROWTH PUSHES THE ENVELOPE

In the last decade, Surprise has almost quadrupled its population—and the city government has grown accordingly. The city's Microsoft Exchange 2003-based email system has expanded from 500 users in 2003 to just under a thousand mailboxes today. To stay in alignment with current technology, the city launched a project to migrate to Exchange 2010. As EmailXtender was approaching its end of life, the city needed to move to a new email management and archiving solution that would run in the new Exchange environment.



EMC SOLUTION

For the Exchange migration, the City of Surprise turned to WAVE Technology Solutions Group, an Irvine, California-based technology firm specializing in EMC solutions. WAVE recommended that the city migrate its email archiving capabilities from EmailXtender to its logical successor, EMC SourceOne™ Email Management for Microsoft Exchange. SourceOne is an email archiving solution that reduces operational costs while enforcing email record-keeping policies in compliance with internal governance as well as industry and government regulations.

“Compared to the other solutions we evaluated, we were very impressed with SourceOne’s ease of use—and we were already well-familiar with EMC’s superior customer support,” says Mejia.

AUTOMATIC POLICY COMPLIANCE

In the new configuration, all incoming emails and replies are automatically journaled by SourceOne and then archived to an EMC CLARiiON® CX4 240 storage system, where they are saved indefinitely according to the City of Surprise’s retention policy.

In addition, SourceOne automatically deletes emails from users’ mailboxes after 60 days after verifying that the data has been archived. Although SourceOne provides easy tools for searching for and retrieving archived emails, rank-and-file users do not have access to the search capabilities per city policy. IT and legal staff, however, do have the ability to search emails as needed to meet e-discovery needs and public records requests.

EMAIL RETRIEVALS REDUCED FROM DAYS TO MINUTES

SourceOne has improved on EmailXtender’s search and retrieval capabilities to help the City of Surprise respond to public records requests more efficiently. Fulfilling a typical request, which once required an IT manager dedicated to the task for many days, now takes only seconds using SourceOne’s Web-based interface to perform quick, easy keyword searches. The system’s robust search capabilities offer improved flexibility in searching, and will return comprehensive results even with information that is more vague.

“With SourceOne, we’re able to be more responsive to our citizens who require access to public information, while freeing up our IT staff to focus on other tasks,” says Mejia.

IMPROVED PERFORMANCE TO SUPPORT RAPID GROWTH

With the adoption of EMC’s email management solutions, the City of Surprise removed all PST files from user mailboxes and disabled the creation of PSTs going forward. With the realtime automatic archiving of user mailboxes and the elimination of PST files, the city has experienced significant improvements in network performance.

“With the type of growth we have experienced in the last decade, our user mailboxes and Exchange server would have brought our network to its knees without some form of automatic email archiving,” states Mejia. “With EmailXtender and now SourceOne, we have been able to manage this growth and continue running under our current environments without sacrificing performance.”

A SOLID PARTNERSHIP

In addition to EMC’s solid track record of success working with the City of Surprise, another key factor in the migration to Exchange 2010 and SourceOne was the city’s partnership with WAVE Technology Solutions Group.

“This was our first engagement with WAVE, and I was very impressed with our WAVE consultants’ professionalism and quality of work,” says Mejia. “WAVE is one of only a handful of consultants on the West Coast that are certified for this type of project, which

involves the migration of data from one software and hardware environment to another. WAVE and EMC made sure the project was as seamless and trouble-free as possible; in fact, we were able to completely migrate 1.5 TB of data in only 15 days, about half the time originally estimated.”

SUMMARY

By migrating to EMC SourceOne running in the Microsoft Outlook 2010 environment, the City of Surprise has embraced the latest generation of advanced email management and archiving technology.

“With SourceOne, mailbox and email management is much more efficient,” concludes Mejia. “Not only are we able to keep our mailbox and database growth under control, but our legal department and security officers have a powerful tool for performing email searches rapidly and efficiently.”

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MANNY MEJIA
IT NETWORK ADMINISTRATOR

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To learn more about how EMC products, services, and solutions can help solve your business and IT challenges, contact your local representative or authorized reseller—or visit us at www.EMC.com.

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