

# Construction company builds stronger email foundation by switching to Mimecast

Ability to securely archive email offsite paves way for firm's migration to Exchange 2010

**To enable a planned upgrade to Exchange 2010, CG Schmidt needed to safely move years worth of email into an offsite archive – something its then-current archiving vendor was unable to do. Mimecast could handle not only the archival, but also near-instant search and retrieval, anti-spam/anti-virus (AS/AV), and continuity.**

## Context

Founded in 1920, CG Schmidt is a values-based construction management and general contracting firm based in the Milwaukee area. The firm offers a great building experience – from world-class pre-construction services to craftsmen that know the meaning of excellence. With proven experts in multiple building types, CG Schmidt's goal is to add more value to clients' facilities while minimizing the risks inherent in the building process.

The firm puts that same dedication into building a sound foundation for its business operations. When part of that foundation – its Exchange 2003 email server – showed signs of aging in late 2010, CG Schmidt's IT team took immediate action to limit the damage and move to safer ground.

## Challenge

CG Schmidt knew it needed to move to Exchange 2010 – but its bloated Exchange 2003 email store stood in the way. "We kept a lot of hay because there might be a needle we'd need someday," explains Eric Elfner, Director of IT for CG Schmidt.

## AT A GLANCE:



### Company

- CG Schmidt ([www.CGSchmidt.com](http://www.CGSchmidt.com))
- Industry: Commercial Construction
- Number of email users: 140

### Objectives

- Securely archive six years' worth of email offsite to enable upgrade to Exchange 2010
- Reduce time required to retrieve archived email
- Improve AS/AV coverage

### Results

- All historical email – including PST files – now archived with Mimecast
- Email can be retrieved five times faster from one interface
- 80 percent of incoming email identified as spam and blocked from delivery, saving bandwidth and server space
- Firm now transitioning to Exchange 2010

To that end, the firm housed six years' worth of email onsite, and only the most recent year's worth was archived offsite by a vendor the firm had selected in 2009. "We had an anti-spam/anti-virus vendor we'd used for years," recalls Elfner. "The vendor was acquired by a huge cloud-computing conglomerate, which enabled it to offer a host of new services, including archiving, and we took advantage of that. As we later discovered however, some of those new services were not really designed for enterprise use." Its archiving service, for instance, was clunky and slow, and could not ingest CG Schmidt's historical email. That left many years' worth of email marooned on the firm's Exchange 2003 server, and also meant that when the IT staff needed to retrieve archived email, they had to look in multiple places: the archive service, its own Exchange databases, and hundreds of old PST files on users' systems.

Support from the vendor, post-acquisition, was also lacking, says Elfner. "Their customer support was based on the model of users supporting each other," he explains. "When we needed an answer that required a person, it took several days and then we only got an offshore, entry-level support person. Escalations could take many more days. They just weren't set up to handle enterprise support." to limit the damage and move to safer ground.

### Solution

Elfner decided that email was too important to CG Schmidt to be left to chance. So he decided to shore up the firm's email foundation. Elfner's research quickly lead him to Mimecast, which offered a comprehensive suite of solutions that would fulfill several needs and provide tremendous value to CG Schmidt. Mimecast offers not only archiving and AS/AV but also continuity, all in one package.

In December 2010, CG Schmidt began its transition to Mimecast. The process, says Elfner, was seamless. "Implementing our previous tool was like pulling teeth – we were totally on our own," he recalls. "The vendor did not even have an Implementation Team. They provided a white paper to guide us and said, 'Good luck.' By contrast, the Mimecast rollout went very smoothly – it was almost a non-event. Their process is very organized and we had a Mimecast rep holding our hand every step of the way."

Importantly, Mimecast also handled the ingestion of all CG Schmidt's onsite email from Exchange databases and PST files. "Once we exported all of our existing mail, it was a quick and smooth process for Mimecast to ingest it all and integrate it into our archive. Now all of our email is in one place," says Elfner.

**"Anyone who's looking for robust e-mail anti-virus/ anti-spam and a complete archiving solution owes it to themselves to look at Mimecast."**

- Eric Elfner  
Director of IT  
CG Schmidt

### Benefits

Enabled CG Schmidt to move to Exchange 2010

With its historical email safely archived offsite, CG Schmidt was finally able to purge its onsite email store, removing the final barrier to its move to Exchange 2010. "We were stuck on an old platform, and if it had died we would have had a big problem," says Elfner. "Moving to 2010 will bring all sorts of benefits to our users. We'll see faster and better performance across our infrastructure."

Lowered onsite storage requirements

CG Schmidt had been steadily adding disks to storage to keep up, Elfner reports. "We all agreed it was getting out of control – we needed to make a change," he says. Mimecast eliminates that need. In fact, the firm's onsite email store has been reduced from 400 GB to 300 GB already, and Elfner anticipates reducing it further. "Our goal is to have just 2 GB of storage onsite for each email user, without users feeling as if we've taken anything away from them," says Elfner. "With Mimecast, we're actually able to keep more mail for longer than we ever have, but it's archived at Mimecast rather than on our own servers."

Email can be retrieved 5x faster

Now, when CG Schmidt users need to retrieve email, they can search all archived email themselves using one search interface, in just seconds. While Elfner reports that they don't need to search the archives that often, "When we do need to find something, it's always urgent. Conducting searches using Mimecast is at least five times faster and easier than our previous process, because Mimecast's indexing and search is much better than Outlook's. In fact, often IT doesn't need to get involved at all."

### Improved AS/AV coverage

Mimecast now blocks as spam more than 80 percent of inbound email from ever reaching CG Schmidt's email server. "Not only is the coverage much better from an end-user perspective, but Mimecast is also protecting our Exchange resources," says Elfner. "Less junk on the server and on our network means better overall performance for our users."

### Gained business continuity and disaster recovery

Email is one of CG Schmidt's most critical business applications, says Elfner, adding, "While email continuity wasn't on our original wish list, it's a huge comfort knowing that it's there if we need it, and it also helped improve the overall value Mimecast provides to CG Schmidt." Elfner and his team also appreciate some of the subtler aspects of Mimecast, such as the ability to tie global signatures to all emails rather than using Outlook signatures, the administration tools, and BlackBerry integration.

### Ability to enforce CG Schmidt's email retention policy

While CG Schmidt always had an email retention policy in place, its email infrastructure didn't truly give it the means to enforce that policy. With Mimecast, CG Schmidt has the ability to automatically archive 20 years' worth of email, and Elfner says they can now comply with the firm's policy easily with little or no intervention from IT just by building its parameters into Mimecast.

### Outstanding support from Mimecast saves time for CG Schmidt IT team

Elfner's colleague ChaChi Gallo, Network Administrator for CG Schmidt, reports that Mimecast's support has been outstanding. "A support rep is always available to answer any questions that we have - I never have to hunt down or wait for anyone," says Gallo. "In addition, the reps all have in-depth knowledge of the product, so we don't get shuffled around. It saves us a lot of time and headaches."

Mimecast makes business email and data safer for thousands of customers and millions of employees worldwide. Founded in 2003, the Company's next-generation cloud-based security, archiving and continuity services protect email and deliver comprehensive email risk management.

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