

Mimecast provides Lagan Group with Email Safety Net for Office 365

Context

The Lagan Group has evolved from a successful quarrying company formed during the 1960s to become a diversified and leading Group of independent and privately-owned construction, manufacturing and civil engineering companies in Ireland and the UK.

Information Systems Manager for the Lagan Group, Jim Fennell, is responsible for managing the IT infrastructure to support 450 IT users spanning 52 sites. When asked about the importance of email, Fennell describes it as being the linchpin of effective internal communication across all locations, as well as with Lagan's customers and partners. "Email is a pivotal business tool to the organization and even one hour without it causes major disruption" he explained.

Situation

The Lagan Group initially became a Mimecast customer when Fennell sought a greater uptime guarantee as well as a more integrated email archiving solution. "We had previously suffered a couple of outages and, frankly, email downtime is simply not an option for us, so Mimecast's 100% continuity SLA was extremely appealing. Plus, we needed a fully compliant, searchable archive."

When termination of support for Exchange 2003 began to draw closer, Fennell turned his attention to future-proofing his IT infrastructure. "We were running servers on-site and, when I analysed the costs of managing and maintaining this hardware coupled with the cost of storage, versus moving to a cloud-based service, the decision was obvious. Of the cloud offerings we assessed, Microsoft's Office 365 ticked the boxes for us and, over a period of 5 years, it made far more commercial sense to go with Office 365 than stick with an on-premise solution," explained Fennell.

Solution

For the Lagan Group, though, even a few minutes of email downtime is unacceptable and, while Office 365 provided a 99.9% uptime guarantee, Fennell needed a High Availability (HA) solution that would reduce the chances of downtime to as close to zero as possible. Without that insurance, the commercial risk of downtime was too great.

AT A GLANCE:

Company

- Lagan Cement Group
- Industry: Construction
- Number of email users: 450

Objectives

- High availability and integrated archiving for O365
- Future proofing IT Infrastructure by moving to the cloud
- Supporting enterprise mobility

Benefits

- Downtime concerns eliminated with Mimecast & Office 365
- Near real-time search of personal archive – from any device
- Significant increase in end-user productivity
- Peace of mind enabling focus on IT strategy

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Fennell opted, therefore, to upgrade to Mimecast’s Unified Email Management (UEM) Enterprise solution that, working alongside Office 365, providing his users with an enterprise grade, perpetual cloud email archive – from any device - as well as the 100% continuity SLA.

Fennell explains his decision: “Because of the Lagan Group’s reliance on email, I needed the additional insurance that Mimecast was able to offer. Adding Mimecast to our Office 365 environment enabled us to provide the company with as close to a risk-free approach to email management as you can get.”

Benefits

“Mimecast was our first experience of using a cloud service - pre-Office 365 - and all I can say is that we, as a company, now have enormous faith in cloud services,” said Fennell.

“All downtime concerns have been eliminated with Mimecast operating in conjunction with Office 365,” he continued.

“All services will suffer downtime at some point – it’s inevitable – so Mimecast’s HA solution for Office 365 has provided us with the safety net I was looking for. To know that, should there be a problem, our users still have access to all their email - historical or current – is a big relief,” explained Fennell.

“On the archiving front, we can now perform e-discovery requests across the archive within minutes. This would simply not have been possible without Mimecast. It’s also having a huge impact on end-user productivity; just a couple of days ago a member of staff told me that he reckons he’s saving up to 40 minutes per day by not having to sort or delete his mails, and just has to perform a simple search to retrieve a particular email.”

In addition to Lagan’s desk workers performing e-discovery requests, Fennell also needed to find a solution for its mobile workers - a significant number due to the nature of its business – who needed access to their online personal archive from their mobile device. He explained: “While ActiveSync enabled these mobile employees to search a certain amount data in their online mailbox; it didn’t give them access to their online personal archive which holds more historical data. In addition, ActiveSync search is limited to keyword only, which isn’t always easy when you’re using a smartphone and you have tens of thousands of emails to search through.

“Mimecast Mobile Access provided us with a more granular search experience, with access to every email.”

Continued Fennell: “My only challenge now is in getting staff to re-evaluate how they approach retrieving emails. There is still a mindset that everything needs to go into a named folder, but when you have 40-50,000+ emails and you only need to find one; that process doesn’t help. So I’m telling people they just need to know what they’re looking for and search for it, rather than them remembering where they saved it.”

On the security front, the Lagan Group is running two secure gateways and Fennell believes Mimecast has offered him a ‘belt and braces’ approach to security over Office 365. He has been particularly impressed with the AS/AV prevention. I have no security issues with viruses or spam.”

“I have never looked back since using Mimecast, really!” continued Fennell. “Just knowing that Lagan’s email would be hosted securely with Mimecast left me free to focus on more strategic projects and the service became, if you like, an insurance policy for me. My stress levels have reduced considerably after we took the decision to go with Mimecast!”

“Having a relatively small IT team, we outsource where value to the business is proved, but for this approach to be successful, you have to have complete trust in your supplier. Mimecast is not a supplier to us, it’s a partner. It’s a core part of our business process.

“I think we have the best solution for anyone considering Office 365 and looking to minimise risks,” concluded Fennell.

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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