

Mimecast a home run for Cleveland Indians

Cloud-based email management service saves MLB team 120 hours of IT staff time annually

Looking to eliminate PST files, the Cleveland Indians decided to implement an email archiving solution. After a false start with an on-premise, server-based tool, the Indians implemented Mimecast for cloud-based email archiving, continuity and anti-spam/anti-virus. The results were considered a home run.

Context

Established as one of the first American League team franchises in 1901, the Cleveland Indians (then the Cleveland Blues) have won seven AL Central titles, the most in the division, and two World Series championships.

Email is the Cleveland Indians' most important business application, tied in to nearly every aspect of the business from stadium operations to ticket sales. When growing email volume and PST files threatened the stability of the team's email infrastructure and staff productivity, its IT group decided to implement a new archiving solution.

Challenge

With an IT operations staff of just six, the Cleveland Indians enforced strict limits on email inbox sizes in order to keep backups simple and storage costs low. Users could create PST files to archive email outside of their inboxes, but needed to maintain those files on their own. Retrieving email from PST files was difficult, and users started making good business cases for increasing the size of their inboxes. The IT team decided it was time to invest in an email archiving solution.

Solution

Initially, the Indians purchased an on-premise, server-based archiving product. Unfortunately, it was difficult to implement, requiring three servers, numerous new policies and a lot of training for users. The implementation lagged long enough that a new version of the software was

AT A GLANCE:



Company

- Cleveland Indians (www.clevelandindians.com)
- Industry: Professional sports
- Number of Email Users: 380

Objectives

- Implement email archiving solution to eliminate the need for PST files
- Replace aging anti-spam/anti-virus appliance
- Add email continuity to ensure 100 percent email uptime

Results

- PST files no longer required
- Archived email easily retrieved by users\Email available all the time, no matter what
- Better AS/AV coverage
- Retired five servers
- Saved approximately 120 hours of IT staff time annually

imminent, so the IT team paused the rollout to wait for that version. As a result, "The first product we bought essentially sat on a shelf for two years due to timing and staffing constraints," recalls Network Manager Whitney Kuzmaul. In the meantime, the Indians' email archiving woes continued, as the IT staff worked on more pressing issues.

In November 2010 things came to a head. The Indians' email gateway solution was coming up for renewal, and the pressure was on Kuszmaul and his team to either complete the rollout of the on-premise archiving product, or make a drastic change. Kuszmaul had been contemplating switching out the never-implemented tool for a cloud-based service from Mimecast, which would handle not only email archiving but also anti-spam/anti-virus and email continuity. The team, which also manages the network for Indians affiliate SportsTime Ohio, had implemented Mimecast for SportsTime, and decided it would be a better fit for the Indians than the tool it had originally purchased. Ultimately, Kuszmaul made the difficult decision of cancelling the contract with his original vendor and bringing in Mimecast. "It wasn't easy, but we realized we were not on the right path, and we needed to correct it," he recalls.

The Mimecast implementation was painless, says Kuszmaul. "Mimecast achieved in 10 hours what we couldn't get done with our previous vendor in two years," he says. "We were amazed at how easy it was, and wish we'd done it sooner."

Benefits

No more PST files to manage - Having an automated email archiving tool in place means users no longer need PST files. "Users hated PST files as much as the IT team did," says Kuszmaul. "Now they don't have to worry about where their email is - everything is in Mimecast."

Email can be easily retrieved by users in seconds - Finding emails in PST files used to take a minimum of an hour, more if there were multiple files to exhume and manually review - now users can retrieve email on their own in seconds using Mimecast's web-based interface. Mimecast also provides users with more insight into their email, Kuszmaul says: if a message didn't get delivered, they can see where it is and why. As a result, users understand email a little better and are less likely to contact IT staff for help.

Meeting SLA of 100 percent email uptime - Fortunately, the Indians have not had any unplanned downtime since implementing Mimecast. But they have had two planned instances of downtime, and in both cases users were able to access their email via Mimecast services.

"If there were an unplanned outage, Mimecast would be a lifesaver," notes Kuszmaul. "If we had to evacuate our building for any reason, it would take us up to 48 hours to setup e-mail at our off-site datacenter. Mimecast would pay for itself in just one such episode. No matter what, we'd have email - it's out there in the cloud. It gives us peace of mind."

Better AS/AV coverage - Mimecast provides Indians users with better AS/AV coverage while removing the burden of policy updates from its IT staff. "We used to have to keep an eye on updates and perform maintenance on our previous AS/AV server," recalls Kuszmaul. "None of that is necessary now that we have Mimecast. And we've noticed an appreciable decline in the amount of spam reaching our users."

Time savings for IT staff - According to Kuszmaul, his team used to spend approximately 50 hours annually retrieving email from PST files. In addition, maintaining the five servers previously required for archiving and anti-spam/anti-virus would have taken 70 hours annually. Mimecast has eliminated the need for all that, essentially helping the Indians gain an additional three weeks of an IT employee's time.

By contrast, says Kuszmaul, they don't have to spend any time managing Mimecast. "In fact," he says, "I can count on one hand the number of times I've had to log in and change something in the system. Mimecast handles everything beautifully."

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- Whitney Kuszmaul,
Network Manager,
Cleveland Indians

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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