

Attorneys Invoke Mobile Client Privileges for Email Archives

Fast search and mobile apps boost efficiency and productivity at Harris, Finley & Bogle, P.C.

While some firms are driven by regulatory compliance, the Fort Worth, Texas-based law firm, Harris, Finley & Bogle, P.C. (HFB), started archiving email for other reasons. Even though the State of Texas does impose a seven-year retention requirement for paper records, no such rules govern electronic information.

HFB attorneys and their staffers require email archiving for one vital reason: productivity.

Attorneys & Counselors

HFB specializes in general civil and business law, serving an expanding client base that includes banks, oil and gas companies, and other going concerns, in addition to private individuals. The firm enjoys a healthy clientele from the Dallas-Fort Worth area, but has also taken on a growing workload from clients with a national presence.

Business Change Outpaces Tech Refresh Cycles

It wasn't very long ago, recalls HFB's IT Director, Betsy Horn, when everything seemed to go wrong at once. "In 2012, our Novell Groupwise network and email server stopped working with the applications we relied on for our practice," recalls Horn. "It was clear we needed to do a big upgrade."

Working with an IT consultant, HFB migrated to Windows networking and Exchange Server. To balance the attorneys access to historical email, calendars, and tasks from Groupwise without blowing up Exchange inbox sizes, the IT organization migrated its Groupwise archives and configured a one-year retention policy on its Exchange 2010 server's native archive. Soon afterward, email volumes went off the rails. As people acquired a taste for email's immediacy and versatility, the medium morphed from a convenience into a lifeline business platform. Just as suddenly, issues arose that no one could have foreseen.

AT A GLANCE:



Company

- Harris, Finley & Bogle, P.C. (www.hfblaw.com)
- Industry: Legal Services
- Email platform: Exchange 2010
- Mimecast customer since 2013

Goals

- Simplify administrator and attorney access to emails
- Streamline mailbox management
- Ensure around-the-clock access to email archives, irrespective of the health of the email server

Results

- 66% increased end-user capacity for managing growing workloads and delivering service excellence, through fast end-user search from Outlook and easy-to-use mobile apps
- 66% reduction in IT administration time, through intuitive management of archiving, security, and mailbox continuity services
- Complete, 100% availability to email archives and always-on email continuity, even during email server downtime

“Storage problems...” says Horn, “... it cost a significant amount of time and money to ensure our new EMC SAN could keep up with the increased storage demands.” New archiving challenges arose as well. “With Exchange Server, our attorneys needed to access their archives through a web browser,” recalls Horn, “and that really annoyed them.” Even worse, the attorneys found Exchange Server’s search function unreliable, getting inconsistent results from search to search.

A Go-To Solution for Email Challenges

Ironically, HFB’s archiving woes weren’t the focus when Horn discovered Mimecast. “I was intent on replacing our spam control service,” she explains. “After researching some alternatives, we found that Mimecast offered the right solution at the right price.” HFB eventually signed on for the complete Mimecast SaaS suite: Cloud Archiving, Targeted Threat Protection, Large File Send (LFS), and Mailbox Continuity. Since email had become the primary means of client communication in the law firm, and because of Mimecast’s reliability, Mimecast became the “go to” solution for many email challenges.

Nevertheless, the firm took a cautious approach to their complete archive migration, the pains caused by the move to Exchange still fresh on everyone’s minds. “We actually ran our two archives, Mimecast and Exchange, in parallel” says Horn. “We wanted to make sure our attorneys were happy with the solution.” After about 18 months of this arrangement, browser logins to the Exchange archive had completely stopped. “That’s when we knew to let our Exchange archive go. Mimecast has been our archiving solution ever since.”

Benefits

Fast archive search anywhere, at any time

HFB attorneys have broad discretion in managing their workflows and meeting the needs of their clients. Mimecast apps for Android, iPhone, Windows Phone and BlackBerry help them tailor their email experience to their liking.

With Mimecast’s free mobile apps and seven-second search SLA, HFB attorneys conduct business irrespective of location or device.

By Horn’s personal estimates, the combined features of the Mimecast plugin for Outlook, and the mobile apps reduce the time required for common tasks by a factor of 50 to 75 percent.

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Unified, intuitive administration of Archiving, Security and Mailbox Continuity

The ability for everyone at HFB to work at peak efficiency is crucial to the firm’s success. Nowhere is this more evident than in IT, where Horn serves as the sole manager and administrator. As such, she owns email administration, networking, and application support. Fortunately, Mimecast archiving has relieved her of the need to manage software updates, monitor and add storage capacity, or troubleshoot. By her estimates, the amount of time she spends on email administration has dropped from 12 hours to under 4 hours per month, on average.

The attorneys, too, appreciate the service’s intuitive interface. Many delegate Mimecast operations to their assistants to help maximize efficient use of billable hours. “End-user management is easy-easy,” says Horn, “easy to set up and easy to use.”

Always-on availability

Keeping up with the relentless pace of hearings, depositions, filings, and appeals is mission-critical; unplanned outages can cause delays and irreparable damage. For this reason, the 100% availability service level agreement (SLA) Mimecast offers is essential to the law firm’s success.

“Whenever our Exchange Server goes down, the apps keep the lawyers connected,” says Horn. “So do Mimecast’s Mailbox Continuity service and the LFS add-on. Plus, LFS keeps everything in the archive, where our attorneys can find it later.”

Mimecast’s security, archiving and continuity cloud services make business email safer. The Company protects the email of over 20,000 customers and millions of employees worldwide.



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