

Currie & Brown Secures Office 365 Migration with Mimecast

Context

Currie & Brown is one of the world’s leading physical assets management and construction consultancies with around 700 employees spanning North America, Central America, Europe, the Middle East, India and the Far East. Email is a crucial component of communications for Currie & Brown and the firm’s Group IT Manager, Chris Balmbro, was looking for a high quality solution for the firm’s email management which could not be achieved with Office 365 alone.

Challenge

Currie & Brown had historically used Novell’s GroupWise on-premise email software. “The infrastructure at that time just couldn’t cope with the demands of the firm particularly between the UK hub and its international offices. A new solution was sought” explained Balmbro. “We didn’t want the CapEx cost of an on-premise solution, so it was decided a cloud offering was the sensible way to go and we opted for Office 365 E1 in the first instance.”

Office 365 E1 offered Currie & Brown the consistency of performance the firm was looking for and a reliable infrastructure. However, there were still a few challenges that Balmbro needed to address, namely, easy access to historical GroupWise email, improving anti-spam and anti-malware, long-term email archiving and additional resilience.

Solution

Having known Mimecast through a previous company, Balmbro was familiar with the benefits of the service. Looking at the challenges he needed to address, he knew that Mimecast would offer the solution he was looking for.

“The most pressing issue was the fact that the legacy GroupWise data had not been migrated, so if users needed to access historical email from that period, they had to go into the old GroupWise mail boxes to retrieve them which was obviously highly time consuming. We couldn’t upgrade certain legacy infrastructure and so, effectively, we were

AT A GLANCE:



Company

- Currie&Brown (www.curriebrown.com)
- Industry: Finance, Banking, Financial Advising, Accounting
- Number of Email Users: 700

sitting on a huge chunk of potentially valuable data with no seamless way of providing end users with access. Users were always having to come up with ‘work-arounds’ to access this information.”

Deploying Mimecast’s Unified Email Management (UEM) Enterprise solution for his 700 users meant Balmbro could not only migrate all of this legacy data into the Mimecast archive, offering users immediate access to historical email, but also give them aggregated discovery across historical and current sent/received data from Office 365 in the Mimecast archive too.

In addition, Mimecast provided tighter control on the volume of spam reaching users’ inboxes. “Moving from an on-premise solution, such as GroupWise, to a cloud solution, such as Office 365, there is naturally a level of loss in the volume of protective layers. This was another reason we opted to add in Mimecast’s service to give that element of control back and to eradicate spam.”

To enable Currie & Brown to provide access to the latest version of Microsoft Office the company invested in Office 365 Plan E4 in 2014. “But we still relied on Mimecast to a great extent,” explained Balmbro, “particularly to build in extra resilience. We had lots of subsidiary requirements, such as stationery, which we could solve with Mimecast.”

Benefits

“The main benefit for me has been the archiving capability and the time it’s saving our employees. Mimecast has got the GroupWise historical email data off premise and done away with all that complexity. No longer do they have to invent ‘workarounds’ in order to find historical email from our Novell days,” explained Balmbro. “Mimecast has provided us with an independent, immutable, back up archive which allows for restore should there be any issue with data leakage.”

In addition, Balmbro explained that the Mimecast archive search function is a powerful tool within Currie & Brown. “People forget emails and the metadata about emails. They think they remember details about the message and then, when the search doesn’t give them what they’re looking for, they begin to question the search function within email rather than their memory! With Mimecast they can search their archive for every email they’ve ever sent or received and we get a review log of search actions and message views. This is particularly useful for our mobile users who have access to this level of search from whatever device they’re using. The native Office 365 ActiveSync finite retention policy can be a hindrance if users want to archive search across a broader timeframe so the Mimecast Mobile Services simply allow users to search their entire live or historical data set as the search is not limited to the device in question.”

Mimecast’s ‘bottomless inbox’ approach to archiving also provided Currie & Brown’s users with the impetus to store their email in a more efficient manner, secure in the knowledge they would not lose access to any email, even deleted items. Balmbro is also testing the Mimecast Sync Engine in conjunction with Office 365 with a view to not only providing users with an archive view of data in a familiar ‘structure’ as well as the ability to ‘search’, but also to cater for the ever increasing mailbox sizes and the inherent degradation that can follow in Outlook performance. “For a potential 40GB OST to sit and download when users jump to different machines can become a very painful user experience so using MSE for mailbox management in Office 365 just makes sense as mailboxes are and will keep growing.”

From a security perspective, Balmbro reported that, since deploying Mimecast, the AS/AV problem has gone away. “The problem was solved right from day one of Mimecast,” he added. In terms of continuity, “It was just reassuring to have that added layer. We haven’t had any issues with Office 365, but of course it could happen. Having Mimecast just gives us that added reassurance on all aspects of email management,” explained Balmbro. “We’ve also been able to reduce spend on internal storage and compute – both immediately and in future - by moving away from onpremise archive solutions,” added Balmbro.

“For me, it was a combination of several strategically important areas that added up to make Mimecast compelling,” concluded Balmbro. “Cloud services are important for firms like ours and when I look at our future-proofing the business, I absolutely see Mimecast as a key part of that planning. We are already beginning to look at file transfer with Mimecast’s LFS as a serious option to reduce the utilization of DropBox within Currie & Brown while also keeping users within an email medium catering for Office 365’s file attachment limitations.” “It’s an ongoing journey with Mimecast but I definitely would - and have - recommended them to anyone who asks.”

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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