IBM Information Management software

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The Evolving Art of Email Management





Managing email can be a somewhat surreal experience. As an organization, are you really able to get your hands around all the electronic dialogue that has taken place in email on a given topic to form a complete picture?

Or are you working only with pieces of information that can leave you with just an impression, or worse yet, working with an overwhelming amount of data that you are unable to sift through with any measure of confidence to arrive at a complete picture of the critical email exchange?

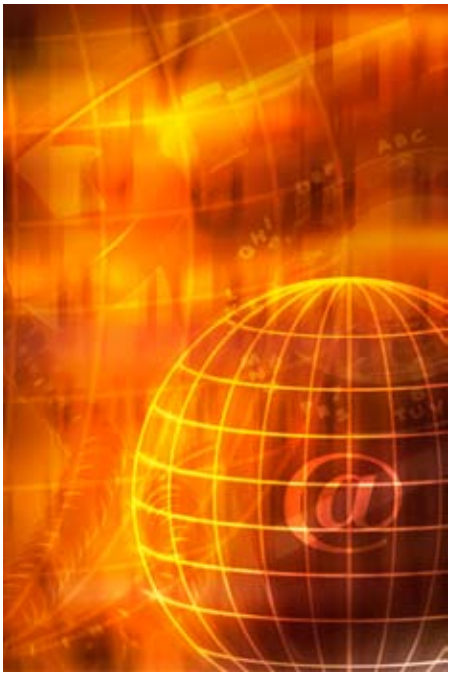
Unfortunately, given the proliferation of email in the workplace and the ever expanding world of compliance and legal requirements, this is not a question that can be put on the back burner for future ruminations.

It was just a mere four years ago, that one of the questions in the AIIM email survey was, "Which of your business interactions are likely to be carried out via email?" Stopped laughing yet? Times certainly have changed.

Today, email is pervasive across all aspects of all businesses, and it is highly business critical. As most of you are well aware, for many information workers, email is their primary business application.

Key Findings from the 2009 AIIM Survey include the following:

- On average, our respondents spend more than an hour and a half per day processing their emails, with one in five spending three or more hours of their day.
- "Sheer overload" is reported as the biggest problem with email as a business tool, followed closely by "finding and recovering past emails" and "keeping track of actions".
- Email archiving, legal discovery, ability to find, and storage volumes are the biggest current concerns within organizations, with security and spam now considered less of a concern by our respondents.
- Over half of respondents are "not confident" or only "slightly confident" that emails related to documenting commitments and obligations made by staff are recorded, complete, and retrievable.



Next Generation Email Management Technology

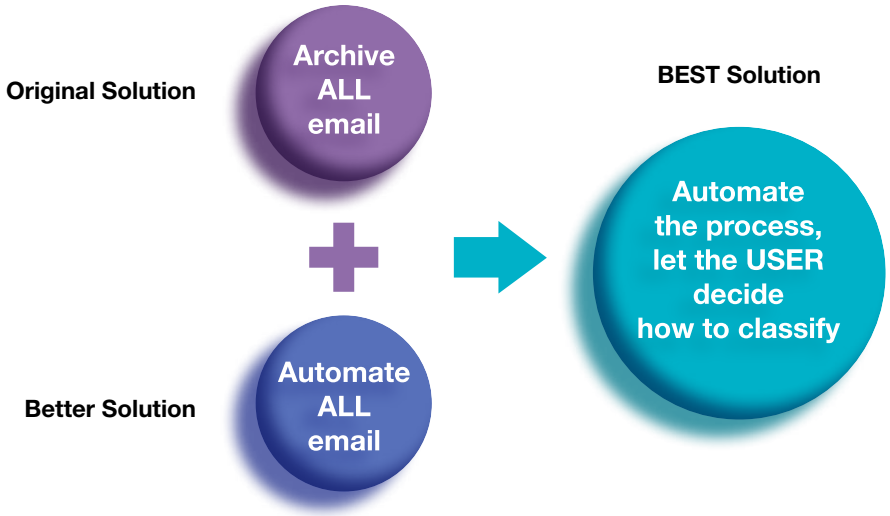
In our previous "The Art of Email Management" paper, the choice of automating email classification versus user involvement was discussed. Email classification is the foundation for email management and, therefore, is a critical decision for any email management strategy.

Due to the growing content volumes and increased compliance requirements, many companies prefer to reduce user involvement as much as possible by using a fully automated approach.

In an all-automated approach, a company must use broader rules in an effort to capture all records. As a result, much more content is retained than truly needs to be, thus increasing storage and, potentially, eDiscovery costs. The possibility also exists that an automated system might miss a record that could, with user involvement, have otherwise been declared, because users often know best how email should be managed.

On the other end of the spectrum is an all-manual approach, which users often see as being too time consuming and which slips to the bottom of the days, weeks, or months things to do.

As email management technology continues to evolve, many organizations have found that the best choice for email classification is the blend of both manual and automatic classification to reduce the time users spend managing email.





By automating the classification process with a high degree of accuracy, while also giving users the ability to declare and classify what they know to be records, companies can very effectively manage email records. At the same time, companies can keep the impact on their users to a minimum. This represents a win-win for all—technology reducing the amount of email a user must make decisions about and lowering corporate risk by accurately categorizing important information and deleting the trivial.

Such an amalgam of the two approaches is now possible with the latest suggestive classification technology that can combine human knowledge, work patterns, and automation. This technology allows organizations to learn from each individual how they work and the types of documents they interact with most frequently, so that the system can provide a unique experience for each user, while capitalizing on the knowledge base built across the organization.

Introducing Integro Email Manager's SmartAssist

With recent advances in technology and based on real-world email management experiences, Integro has created SmartAssist, as an enhancement to the Integro Email Manager solution, which revolutionizes the user classification process by applying suggestive classification technology.

Companies need to know that they can have an efficient and effective technology to manage their email, and can customize that technology to the way they do business. They need to know that their employees will work with and even welcome the email management system.

Research has shown that users adapt to and use new technology more easily when it looks and works similarly to their experience with the technology (email) they are currently using. This was the design principle for the Integro Email Manager product, built on the IBM Enterprise Content Management (ECM) suite of products, and continues to be improved with the addition of the new SmartAssist enhancement.

SmartAssist adapts to the way users work within their specific business activities that involve email. No longer is user-driven classification a burden, but rather it becomes a productivity tool to help revolutionize user mailbox management.



With SmartAssist, Integro Email Manager now performs these tasks:

- Learns from the way users work by looking at work, file naming and email patterns and suggesting file classification
- Creates an Expert Knowledge Base from the information gathered, customized to each company's experience
- Continually retrains the Expert Knowledge Base to improve accuracy by processing feedback from the users' classification selection actions

Not only does SmartAssist continually process the feedback from users, it adapts to changes and new ways the users work by evaluating their experiences.

Because SmartAssist is proactive rather than reactive, it provides the user with guidance on how to prioritize messages based on content analytics. After processing, the auto-sort feature enhances the email experience by moving those determined to be the most important to the top of the screen.

These emails are then displayed in easy-to to-read subscreens that are sorted by pre-determined categories (potential record, record, business essential, optional read). Categories can be set by companies based on their internal business terminology to facilitate adoption of the new email experience. To simplify identification of the status of messages, SmartAssist adds a column to the existing email screen for classification icons.

For most organizations, the best solution available today is the one that leverages the best of technology and keeps the user involved and informed. SmartAssist is designed to be adaptive, taking into account the user experience and unique ways the company works by using the conditionality of the features to accommodate to the user experience.

History has proven that technology works best when the help of the users using the technology is enlisted, and Integro Email Manager with SmartAssist does just that.

For more information on how you can capitalize on the evolving art of email management using suggestive classification technology, please contact:

Scott Burt
President
Phone: 888-575-9300
Email: sburt@integro.com

About Integro

Integro is an enterprise content management consultancy that designs andimplements email, records, and document management solutions based on the IBM platform. Integro has helped companies throughout North America implement solutions to address today's most pressing email challenges, including eDiscovery, compliance, storage, and more.

For more information, visit:
www.integro.com

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About IBM ECM

IBM's Enterprise Content Management software enables the world's top companies to make better decisions, faster. As a market leader in content, process and compliance software, IBM ECM delivers a broad set of mission-critical solutions that help solve today's most difficult business challenges: managing unstructured content, optimizing business processes and helping satisfy complex compliance requirements through an integrated information infrastructure. More than 13,000 global companies, organizations and governments rely on IBM ECM to improve performance and remain competitive through innovation.

IBM Corporation
3565 Harbor Boulevard
Costa Mesa, CA 92626-1420 · USA

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