

IBM, Microsoft Make Email Archiving Announcements

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Heavyweights **Microsoft** and **IBM** have made recent announcements in the email archiving/management market space meaning that managing and searching email has officially become a serious business. To this point the market has been characterized by a plethora of small, aggressive companies like **ZipLip, Zantaz, Fortiva and Postini**, and larger storage-oriented firms like **EMC** and **Plasmon**. Organizations' email volumes are massive and growing, adding to the storage burden that organizations face: according to Forrester Research, enterprise data is growing as much as 150% annually with some companies seeing a doubling of data or more each year.

IBM is releasing CommonStore eMail Archiving Preload which is aimed at small-mid size businesses (SMB) and positioned to help resellers more easily install an email archiving solution. Smaller customers often have a limited I/T staff and budget so the new solution will help them comply with regulatory and governance demands while supporting litigation readiness.

The IBM CommonStore eMail Archiving Preload works with Exchange and LotusNotes to provide email search, storage, and management functionality. Built on an AMD Opteron powered blade server, it has preloaded, pretested IBM CommonStore and Content Manager Enterprise Edition software on a high performance, low power System x platform powered by next-generation AMD processors.

CommonStore provides the Tivoli Storage Manager and the WebSphere Application Server to complete the email archive management requirements. IBM states that its new software, E-Mail Search for CommonStore, will benefit any SMB that has rapidly growing email archives and a need to retrieve an archived item on request. The solution provides email archiving and retrieval while removing the load on native messaging servers. It can place emails on hold to prevent any time-based disposition of them as set by the sender.

Pete Peterson, vice president of Tech Data Systems Product Marketing, an IBM Business Partner, said, "The IBM E-Mail Archiving Solution helps resellers quickly deploy and to capitalize on growing demand for more efficient e-mail storage and management among their small and mid-sized customers."

Microsoft is introducing unified messaging support in Microsoft Exchange Server 2007, which marks the start of the third wave of unified messaging technology: interoperable, server-based tools that integrate with desktop and mobile clients to give information workers access to voice, fax, and e-mail data from wherever they are and allows users to use the telephone to manage their email, calendar, and personal contacts. Microsoft believes the solution will reduce costs and save users time in locating information because they will have just one inbox with "anywhere access" from a variety of mobile devices.

According to Keith McCall, CTO of Azaleos, the biggest problem with Exchange is that it is not SQL-based, but still based on the decade-old JET database, which does sequential reads and random writes. Because a search query has to read through data in sequential order, but the data it's looking for has been written in multiple places on a disk at random, searches for information within Exchange can be costly in system resources and time-consuming. He commented, "With a 4K block size, that's quite a few writes to be searching for."

Ray Mohrman, technical product manager of Exchange for Microsoft, said customers have been increasingly bringing the idea of a move to SQL as the basis for the Exchange database to his attention frequently, "We've heard a lot of requests from customers for improvements to the core of Exchange, and a lot of them want a switch to SQL," he said. But "when it came to Exchange 2007, what people were really looking for in Exchange was increased stability and higher availability," Mohrman said. "We found we could deliver those capabilities and do so sooner by adding features to this newest release rather than overhauling the database."

Mohrman added, however, that the next move for Exchange could be a move to a SQL platform. "With some of the features we've already added, we're in a better position to move to the SQL server," he said. "We've integrated more of SQL Server's text search engines. We're continuing to look toward that option for the Exchange store."

"It doesn't matter whether they change the database," said Andrew Lockhart, director of marketing for Postini, another email outsourcing service provider. "The broader issue is unrelated to how the database is designed - it's that end users don't want to throw away any email anymore."