Why preserving email is harder than it sounds...

Stephen Howard
Information Management Officer
Special Tribunal for Lebanon
The Nuremberg Military Tribunal: the mimeograph room (1948)
The Libyans of Misrata have performed a service for history
Documents can help all sides. It is vital for those caught in conflicts to grab the documentary record wherever possible

I can express no view on how genuine or useful are the documents that the Observer's Chris Stephen has seen, but this much is clear: when the citizens of Misrata made the decision not to burn the archive left to them, they were certainly serving history well.

At Nurenberg, 23 Nazis were tried - most to conviction, some to acquittal - in only nine months, despite most defendants giving evidence. The trial was this short because the prosecution had all the paper exhibits it needed.

The Einsatzgruppen Trial - of 23 SS Death Squad members who killed more than a million Jews - occupied about four months, with all defendants giving evidence. But the prosecution case lasted two days because the prosecutor, Benjamin Ferencz, had all the documents he needed. All 23 defendants were convicted.

Prosecutors of the more recent Yugoslav trials started with little access to documents and the odd unaided execution of a search warrant in Bosnia did not reveal much - many documents had been hidden. Slobodan Milosevic, the former president of Serbia, was careful, usually meeting interlocutors alone and with no visible recording of any kind. But the most important meetings of the Milosevic period - records of the supreme defence council that met between 1992 and 1998 - were stenographically and tape recorded. Until recently, the Serbs had managed to keep these records from the public, but many (not all) can now be seen. They do not present a simple picture of obvious culpability, but rather the workings of a government that was deeply into war crimes (the prosecution would have alleged) through the agency of a functioning state. They would have contributed enormously to the integrity of any verdict on Milosevic had he not died first.

This dimension too should be borne in mind. Where no or few documents exist for a prosecutor to work with, she or he may overstate the case that comes from live witnesses. This is alleged in another case before the ICC in which documents, if they come to light, may correct that overstatement. Documents can help all sides.

We now leave paper trails of emails and texts behind so complete that the intending criminal, unlike Milosevic in his private meetings, may find it ever harder to destroy all records, or to leave none behind. In their zeal to preserve the records of their plight, the citizens of Misrata may have also performed the service of alerting others caught in conflicts to come to see the post-conflict value of grabbing the documentary record when you get the chance.

Sir Geoffrey Nice QC was the lead prosecutor in the trial of Slobodan Milosevic
Digital preservation strategies

- Selecting storage media most appropriate for long-term data retention
- Converting data to standard formats to facilitate its processing on a variety of computing platforms
- Migrating data to new technology platforms when the computing environment is upgraded
- Preserving systems documentation required to process the data
- Copying or recopying the data into new storage media at regular intervals
- Taking steps to store and maintain these media properly, and the systems that support them
A hierarchy of email system needs

Email User Behaviour

Email Records Management Policy and Capability

Email Storage Capability

Email System Recovery and Availability

“Assessing the risk to email records: a case study within a UK local authority”
Stephen Howard
MSc Records Mgt
University of Wales Aberystwyth
2005
Assessing the risk to email records

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Questions</th>
<th>% YES 2005</th>
<th>% YES 2011</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Do you think your email system has the ability to make reliable email backups?</td>
<td>91%</td>
<td>84%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Do you think that your email system can perform email backup and restore operations within strict time limits?</td>
<td>73%</td>
<td>63%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Can your email system remain available for the uninterrupted periods required by the business?</td>
<td>55%</td>
<td>69%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Do you think you can accommodate your rising email data storage requirements?</td>
<td>68%</td>
<td>59%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Do you have an audited policy for managing email records?</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Do you think that your ICT infrastructure and applications permit you to capture, manage and preserve email records in practice?</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>38%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Do your users understand your policies and implement rules on email etiquette, housekeeping and records management?</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>38%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Informal survey of RECORDS MANAGEMENT-UK Jiscmail listserv members in Feb 2005 (22 responses) & Jul 2011 (32 responses) from academic, commercial, health & government sectors.
Corporate Email Infestation

Posted by Greg Buckles

What were the conclusions of the Suffolk case study?

• Purchase suitable monitoring tools
• Implement consistent service level agreements for backup and restore
• Consider dedicated backup and restore infrastructure
• Implement server quota management
• Limit the size of emails that can be sent
• Provide business continuity
• Install the latest proven anti-virus technology
• Apply mailbox limits consistently (e.g. 100MB limit)
• Turn off PST functionality
• Improve the leaver process
• Consolidate guidance and policies and audit compliance
• Provide extensive email induction programmes and user training and support
• Resist the pressure to implement third party email archiving products, given their inherent weaknesses, until proper EDRM tools are available.
• Preparatory work for EDRM implementation should be brought forward.
The conventional wisdom

• Focus on mail, not mailboxes or systems
• Email records (and the rest...)
• Policies that define appropriate business use
• Restrictions on forwarding to personal accounts or devices
• Attachments
• Who saves what? (Creator/Primary Recipient)
• Print or declare?
Are will losing our grip?
What kind of email user are you?

- No filers
- Frequent filers
- Spring cleaners
- Prioritizers
- Archivers
- Folderless cleaners
- Cleaners
- Keepers
- Pilers
Why are email users unhappy?

Optional Question – Email Components

4c. For additional feedback and using a scale of 1-5 where 1 is "Very Dissatisfied" and 5 is "Very Satisfied", how satisfied are you with each of the following email components and please rate their importance to your work (optional).

- Email satisfaction has dropped by 3.1%.
- Ease of use and Storage are the most important features.
- Storage, Archiving and Integration are the features with the highest dissatisfaction.

December 2010     Rating Email  2008:74.2%  2009:75.7%  2010:72.6%
Saving email as .PST
From: "Max Morton" <max.morton@cwc.ac.uk>
To: "Howard, Stephen" <showard@westminster.gov.uk>
Subject: Re: NVQ Assessment

Message-Id: <B0000023165@holly.cwc.ac.uk>
From: "Max Morton" <max.morton@cwc.ac.uk>
To: "Howard, Stephen" <showard@westminster.gov.uk>
Subject: Re: NVQ Assessment

Date: Tue, 12 May 1998 16:52:21 +0100
X-MSMail-Priority: Normal
X-Priority: 3
X-Mailer: Microsoft Internet Mail 4.70.1161
MIME-Version: 1.0
Content-Type: text/plain; charset=ISO-8859-1
Content-Transfer-Encoding: 7bit
WESTMINSTER CITY COUNCIL

Please refer to the disclaimer beneath this message

-----------------------------

looks good! Have you read the Owners Manual yet? I could find our list in the index on Jiscmail, have you?

Stephen Howard
Corporate Records Manager
Westminster City Council
16th floor, 66 Victoria Street, SW1E 6QF
tel: 0207 641 6060 mobex: 03186 fax: 0207 641 2833

-----Original Message-----
From: James Lappin [mailto:j.lappin@WELLCOME.AC.UK]
Sent: 21 January 2003 14:21
To: RECORDS-MANAGEMENT-UK@JISCMAIL.AC.UK
Subject: Test message

Here goes:

Westminster City Council switchboard:
+44 20 7641 6000
Saving email via departmental mailbox registers
Saving email as .msg
Saving email as .PDF
Saving email as .PDF
Saving email as .PDF portfolio

From: Stephen Howard
To: Marianna Jalkanen;
Subject: FW: Return flight home
Date: 29 May 2009 18:00:22

Dear Marianna,

In Andrea's absence, can you please look into this payment please? I forwarded the claim and boarding pass to HR soon after the flight.

Adult: £193.00
Taxes and fees: £78.90
Failure to convert email to PDF/A

From: Max Morton
To: Howard, Stephen
Subject: Re: NVQ Assessment
Date: 12 May 1998 17:58:16

Dear Stephen

Congratulations! I knew that you would do well, they will give you the post.

I am not sure how many sessions we have had, I will have to check, but you are meant to have as many as are needed to complete your portfolio and have it assessed by me and by an internal assessor at the College and by the external assessor after that, without having to pay any more. It would certainly suit the College if we could have your portfolio ready within say two months.

When do you want to meet? Friday afternoon (15th) would be the earliest.

Max
Where are we now?

• Despite the strategies being known and systems deployed to manage the recordkeeping risks associated with email, there is significant reluctance on the part of government employees to routinely save their business related emails into their local EDRMS...

  Digital recordkeeping: are we at a tipping point? Kate Cumming and Cassie Findley (RMJ, Vol. 20. No.3, 2010)

• …even where departments have implemented an EDRMS there are always significant emails that do not make it onto the records folder. This is owing to the sheer volume of emails that individual receive, and to a lack of perceived benefit to the individual of moving email to a records folder.

  What will be the next records management orthodoxy? James Lappin (RMJ, Vol. 20. No.3, 2010)
Automated solutions subject to records management controls

• Print to paper unsatisfactory
• Rising ESI Costs of searching backup tapes
• Problem of reliably saving to folders
• Judges increasingly critical of user-based approach
• Preservation in native format
• Approach support by NARA bulletin
• Reliance upon information search tools
Conclusion

• Email is a simple tool used for complex activities and processes
• The volume and diverse nature of mail overwhelms end-user solutions
• Need to reconsider system approach
• Automated email archiving would appear to be the “least worst solution”
• Migration to PDF/A and XML must be made easier for organisations
How not to do it...

Reporters load boxes of Sarah Palin's emails
http://blogs.telegraph.co.uk/news/tobyharnden/100091820/american-way-sarah-palin-email-frenzy-backfires-on-her-media-antagonists/
Thank you
Stephen Howard
Information Management Officer
Special Tribunal for Lebanon
howard4@un.org
www.stl-tsl.org/