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Legal eagle improves evidence integrity

It was the largest merger between law firms in Singapore's legal history, but Rodyk & Davidson's IT team of six professionals could only remember rolling up their sleeves to tackle the massive archiving and e-discovery challenges faced by its 300 employees.

It was excited to discover that investing US\$50,000 could save US\$15,000 in storage costs over the next three years due to a 40% reduction in email storage; and a projected US\$20,000 savings in IT time over the same time because of self-service e-mail recoveries, revealed its IT manager Alvin Aw.

Thus, the investment was made in Symantec's Enterprise Vault solutions, which had features including Discovery Accelerator, Microsoft Exchange Journaling and Offline Vault.

Minimal disruption

In its line of work, Rodyk & Davidson is under extreme pressure to maintain the integrity of all forms of evidence. That includes data contained in e-mail and documents. It recognized the urgency of implementing a solution to control an e-mail repository that was doubling in size every year.

To transform the firm's runaway storage costs of e-mail from a liability into a competitive edge, Rodyk & Davidson required an effective archival solution that could minimize and manage the exponential growth of e-mail data, while retaining message integrity and accuracy.

In addition, Rodyk & Davidson wanted to minimize IT's role in helping employees search and retrieve information, and reduce the amount of time spent doing so.

Aw estimated that on average, the IT team would receive two requests a month to retrieve mail, and each request would take about 12 hours to fulfill. On top of that, searches of paper-based records often took weeks.

Aw is pleased that the Symantec Enterprise Vault deployment which began in March last year and completed in July 2007 was quick and fuss-free.

"With Symantec's Enterprise Vault, we are a step closer to integrated archiving and e-discovery between both email and document management systems," he said.

Rosy results

The Symantec solution has since allowed Rodyk & Davidson to reduce its e-mail storage requirements by approximately 40%, from nearly 250 to 160GB. That produced storage allocation savings of approximately US\$4,000.

E-mail backup has been reduced from 12 hours to six. And e-Discovery improved e-mail search by 99% to five minutes, instead of eight hours. "The backup operations no longer crossed into business hours, eliminating problems such as a logjam at the server or a denial-of-access to a particular file," said Aw. And as end users were empowered to perform their own e-mail retrievals and discoveries, that saves Rodyk & Davidson nearly 300 hours in IT staff time annually.

Top 3 innovations of the project

- Email storage reduced by 40%
- Email backup time reduced by 50%
- 300 hours in IT staff time saved annually