GFI case study – Environment Canterbury

Environment Canterbury is a regional council of the New Zealand government, and it is responsible for protecting the quality of air, land and water in Canterbury – the country's second-most populated region. The council of 570 employees is also responsible for protecting any communication – including email – that deals with the region's natural and physical resources.

Location: Christchurch, New Zealand

Industry: Government

No. of employees: 570

Product in use: GFI MailArchiver®

                     GFI FaxMaker®

Quick Read

Environment Canterbury is a regional council responsible for protecting the quality of air, land and water in Canterbury, New Zealand. Canterbury features the highest mountain in the country, major lakes and rivers, and fruitful farmland. It is also home to more than 565,000 people, making it the country's second-most populated region. Formed in 1989 from 33 government bodies with regional and resource management roles, Environment Canterbury today has 570 employees. Obliged to comply with the Public Records Act 2005, the council requires the ability to quickly and easily retrieve any communication (including email) that deals with decisions affecting the region's natural and physical resources. Environment Canterbury successfully implemented GFI MailArchiver and GFI FaxMaker – easy-to-use and cost-effective network solutions that enhance workforce productivity and management operations, and help meet compliance.

Challenges

Compliance is a priority across a number of industries. New Zealand's Public Records Act 2005 forced Environment Canterbury to meet stringent regulations for a wealth of material. According to the government's website, the purposes for the legislation included:

» "Ensuring that full and accurate records of the affairs of central and local government are created and maintained

» Providing for the preservation of, and public access to, records of long-term value

» To provide an appropriate framework within which public offices and local authorities create and maintain public records and local authority records

» To support the safekeeping of private records"

For those reasons, Environment Canterbury Team Leader ITC Operations Alan Warne said there has been – and continues to be – one objective for his staff: meet compliance.

"We need an email archival system which is independent of the mail server and captures all emails," said Warne, noting Environment Canterbury has used GFI products since May 2005.

Implementation

In 2013, Environment Canterbury migrated from old physical servers to a virtual environment including Windows® Server 2012, Microsoft® SQL Server 2012 and GFI MailArchiver 2012. The IT staff was forced to act when the old physical servers could not handle any more disk drives. Compounding the issue was the cost to install bigger drives: It was too expensive for the organization to afford.

"The entire migration went well, and GFI Support was quick to respond to our questions as we went through," Warne said.

"The migration took several weeks as we were moving and restoring two terabytes of database files, mounting them and indexing them," he added. "Once we got all the historic archive stores across, we stopped both environments, moved across the live store and configured the Exchange journal. It was a success!"

Since that time, emails have been archived in the new environment, and the old physical server has been decommissioned. Additionally, all components of the solution have been upgraded through several major releases of the operating system, SQL Server and GFI MailArchiver.

"There were no problems with compatibility of any component," Warne said.

A solution that complements GFI MailArchiver nicely is GFI FaxMaker, which Environment Canterbury uses at times. GFI FaxMaker is a network fax server solution with email-to-fax and fax-to-email functionality. Warne said his team is considering migrating to the cloud-based model, GFI FaxMaker Online. Given the size of the organization, it would eliminate the need to handle software upgrades.

Benefits

Warne said GFI MailArchiver enables Environment Canterbury to easily comply with the Public Records Act 2005 regulations for email "without staff needing to do anything." He said the software is essential for quickly and easily accessing the email archive during legal proceedings, and ensuring all emails stay tamper-free to meet the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act (LGOIMA) 1987.

In addition to enhanced management capability and easier ability to achieve compliance, Warne said compatibility with other systems and hardware is equally essential.

"The regular releases, which support modern Microsoft operating systems, Exchange and databases, make implementing the software very easy," Warne said.

The bulk of the benefits that GFI MailArchiver provides, Warne added, are "behind the scenes." He pointed to better business continuity in Environment Canterbury's virtual environment; simplified internal support of running with modern components; and the freedom to upgrade infrastructure (OS, SQL and Exchange).

"Since migrating, we have been able to confidently upgrade GFI MailArchiver several times," he said, adding that Environment Canterbury is currently running GFI MailArchiver 2013 R2.

Target reached

Environment Canterbury's mission was to address a compliance issue caused by a restriction on a physical server. Mission accomplished.

"Because GFI MailArchiver is supported on virtual servers, we mitigated a major risk," Warne said.

Links

Visit our product discovery pages for more information about GFI MailArchiver and GFI FaxMaker.

Start your free 30-day trial of the products. Download GFI MailArchiver and GFI FaxMaker.

www.gfi.com

March 2014

USA, CANADA AND CENTRAL AND SOUTH AMERICA

4309 Emperor Blvd, Suite 400, Durham, NC 27703, USA

Telephone: +1 (888) 243-4329

Fax: +1 (919) 379-3402

ussales@gfi.com

UK AND REPUBLIC OF IRELAND

Magna House, 18-32 London Road, Staines, Middlesex, TW18 4BP, UK

Telephone: +44 (0) 870 770 5370

Fax: +44 (0) 870 770 5377

sales@gfi.co.uk

EUROPE, MIDDLE EAST AND AFRICA

GFI House, Territorials Street, Mriehel, BKR 3000, Malta

Telephone: +356 2205 2000

Fax: +356 2138 2419

sales@gfi.com

AUSTRALIA AND NEW ZEALAND

83 King William Road, Unley 5061, South Australia

Telephone: +61 8 8273 3000

Fax: +61 8 8273 3099

sales@gfiap.com

For a full list of GFI offices/contact details worldwide, please visit http://www.gfi.com/contactus

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