



Archiving and Security

Clinton City Schools Simplify Email Management & Reduce IT Overhead with Messaging Architects' Email Archiving and Security Solutions

Background

Clinton City Schools is a public education system in the Southeast Region of North Carolina that serves students from ages 3 through 21 in pre-kindergarten through grade 12. Founded in 1852, Clinton is the oldest and largest town in the county and was named in honor of General Richard Clinton, who donated a five-acre lot on which the first courthouse was built. An essential characteristic of the community is the positive influence that comes from the education provided to youth by the dedicated staff of Clinton City Schools.

The Challenge: Successfully Supporting 3600 Users with an IT Team of 3

While it is not a very large school district, Clinton City Schools is an elite district when it comes to using technology in the educational process. Practically every classroom is interactive, smart technologies are deployed throughout the schools, and desktop computers are available to all students.

By selecting best-of-breed technologies that simplify IT management and staff overhead, a lean and mean IT department consisting of 3 engineers is able to successfully support 3600 end users for all their technical needs: from whiteboard and projection support to video surveillance and security management; from VOIP and telephony to network and desktop support; from email and switches to storage and file servers. All IT services are provided in-house; the school district has no contracts with external integrators.

Given the very limited human resources, when researching technologies the Clinton City Schools IT department always looks for solutions that require minimum administration and management.

Eddie Parker, Director of Technology, explains:

"Since we have both a tight budget and limited human resources, it is crucial that we select those technologies that meet our needs and do not require much administration. Novell and Messaging Architects products have these qualities. These are investments we made years ago and the return we've had on them has been great."

Clinton City Schools district has been a Messaging Architects client since 2005, using both M+Guardian and M+Archive to get the most out of its GroupWise collaboration system.

Addressing eDiscovery requests quickly and cost-effectively with M+Archive

Clinton City Schools uses M+Archive to enforce an email retention policy that preserves all schools' email correspondence for a period of seven years. Archiving is done nightly and the policy covers 100% retention.

M+Archive has been instrumental in enabling Clinton City Schools to address eDiscovery requests quickly and painlessly. Using the robust search capabilities of M+Archive, producing relevant email data across multiple users can be achieved in a matter of minutes rather than days. **"In fact, without M+Archive I don't think it is feasible we'd be able to produce the information related to discovery or open records requests,"** concedes Parker.

M+Archive has also allowed the IT staff to provide departing and retiring school staff with a copy of their email archive. **"This is another huge benefit,"** continues Parker. **"When the school superintendent retired recently, he wanted to take all his email with him. Fulfilling his request wasn't a problem. I exported his account to a DVD and he was extremely satisfied. Before M+Archive, there was no way I could provide this service to my end users."**

Overview

Considered indispensable best-in-class technologies, M+Archive and M+Guardian enable the Clinton City Schools IT Department to mitigate the email risks of their collaboration system, simplify email management, reduce eDiscovery costs, and meet email retention requirements - while receiving exceptional support and client care.

Critical Requirements

- Protect the School email system from inbound threats with minimum administration
- Meet email retention, eDiscovery and compliance mandates
- Find a cost-effective solution that will not become obsolete in a future change of email platform

Outcome

"I like Messaging Architects' products because they help me by making my job easier and I trust them. Those are the products we tend to fall in love with and the products I never hesitate to renew. Beyond that, I want to express my appreciation of what a great job the Support team is doing. Whenever it's time for a product upgrade, I get a call from them and they take care of the upgrade, thus freeing up my time for other projects."

Eddie Parker, Director of Technology

Clinton City Schools

 Messaging Architects.

When asked if he can quantify the savings M+Archive has brought to Clinton City Schools, Parker confirms it emphatically. **"Absolutely! The most obvious savings are in man-hours. Thanks to the blazing fast search and retrieval I don't have to spend endless man-hours for doing discovery, and they are way more expensive than the investment we made in the solution. Without a doubt, our archiving technology has become indispensable for managing email efficiently."**

Parker sees additional benefits in the fact that end users are able to control their own archives in the M+Archive central repository. **"The benefits are twofold: first, we have reduced IT overhead by shifting the archive management tasks to the users; secondly, I am saving considerably on primary storage hardware while keeping my Post office clean and efficient."**

Keeping email traffic flowing securely with M+Guardian

On the other end of the Clinton City Schools' email system is M+Guardian, the secure email gateway that ensures only legitimate email enters the system and avoids the unnecessary overhead of archiving useless information.

Similar to most educational institutions, spam relentlessly pounds Clinton City Schools. M+Guardian protects the school system from all email-borne threats. Clinton City Schools has a clustered M+Guardian configuration to guarantee redundancy and uninterrupted email continuity.

"As an example, in the short month of February M+Guardian blocked over 1.5 million messages. That's a lot of unwanted email. Frankly, the product works so well, I don't do daily monitoring any more," adds Parker.

M+Guardian is also instrumental in enabling Parker to perform maintenance on his GroupWise system without worries that email will be lost.

"Before M+Guardian, performing maintenance or an upgrade on GroupWise involved the risk of losing some email while the system was down," he remembers. **"With M+Guardian I don't have to deal with this problem. I know that the email is queued up by the M+Guardian box and it will be dispatched accordingly once the system is back up and running. There is no more stress that crucial email may be lost during system maintenance."**

The Bottom Line:

"Messaging Architects products: They are awesome and I trust them" Parker's litmus test when deciding on any technology is simple and straightforward: it has to be able to do what it was designed for without requiring unnecessary efforts and man-hours from the IT team.

"Even if it's a cool technology, if it's going to require intense management and an investment of man-hours, I don't want it because it means that it will make my job more complex and harder. That's why I like Messaging Architects' products: they help me by making my job easier. Those are the products we tend to fall in love with and the products I never hesitate to renew."

In addition to the technology aspect of the solutions, Eddie Parker emphasizes the quality of client care he has received from Messaging Architects.

"The products have been outstanding and I trust them," he says. **"Beyond that, I want to express my appreciation of what a great job the Support team is doing. Whenever it's time for a product upgrade, I get a call from them and they take care of the upgrade, thus freeing up my time for other projects."**

Besides simplifying email management and reducing man-hours, the standards-based platform-independent architecture of M+Guardian and M+Archive may bring potential savings for Clinton City Schools in the future.

"Even though right now we're standardized on Novell - from Netware to ZenWorks to GroupWise - things change. With the Messaging Architects products, I've future-proofed my investment. The way I see it, the M+ products work to protect my messaging system regardless of the platform I am on - today it may be GroupWise, tomorrow it may be something else. I have brought up this fact to my administration and they fully support my decision in selecting Messaging Architects' email archiving and security software."

