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# Selling email archiving services: A technology overview

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The problems associated with growing volumes of email messages, burgeoning email stores and the increased probability of legal discoveries impact small and medium-sized businesses (SMBs) as well as large corporations. While these challenges create new revenue opportunities, as a VAR you should address initial concerns that SMBs will have about purchasing email archiving software and then determine what software and services will help your clients down the [email archiving](#) path.

Initial SMB hesitation about adopting email archiving software will center around what happens to their emails after they are archived and how those emails can be retrieved when needed. Some SMBs may equate archiving emails with deleting emails.

You should take time to explain to clients what happens to aging emails and that they can retrieve archived emails by either clicking on a link in their Microsoft Outlook folders or selecting the mailbox that contains archived email messages.

### More on email archiving services

#### [Email Archiving Services Guide](#)

Once initial SMB concerns are assuaged, the tougher task of selecting and implementing an appropriate email archiving software product presents itself. If you're selling to SMBs that use Microsoft Exchange, you'll have a wide choice of email archiving products, which makes it difficult to make a recommendation.

One key factor in your decision should be the product's dependencies on specific third-party relational databases, such as [Microsoft SQL Server](#). Email archiving software uses these databases to store the metadata that manages messages in the email archives, but this adds cost to the upfront purchase price and complexity to the archiving product installation.

While extra products or services may sound like a golden opportunity for additional revenue, be forewarned: Email archiving software vendors may provide minimal or no technical support or online documentation for their products, so prepare to act as the first line of support for customers. Depending on how the support contract is structured, it could become very expensive to support the product, ultimately souring your client and potentially you as the provider.

However, there are alternative email archiving software products that you can present to clients in an effort to reduce their upfront costs, as well as short and long-term support demands.

One is to offer email archiving products that are not dependent on one specific database. [ZipLip's Unified Email Archival Suite](#) allows users to use a JDBC-compliant database such as [IBM DB2](#), [Oracle](#) or [Microsoft SQL Server](#). This approach may allow them to use a database with which they are already familiar and possibly avoid the need to introduce a database new to their environment.

If you have customers who are especially price-conscious, you may need a no or low-cost database option. In these circumstances, products like [Overtone Software's ManageTone for Exchange](#) use an Open Source XML database on the backend which eliminates the need for your client to procure and use a specific vendor database.

Companies like [ZipLip](#) are also changing their internal structure to better meet the support requirements of VARs and SMBs. During the sales cycle, they are now directly partnering with VARs so that they can assist in better assessing client environments. Once purchased, these same individuals then act as technical resources to help with the installation and ongoing support of the product.

**About the author:** *Jerome M. Wendt is the founder and lead analyst of The Datacenter Infrastructure Group, an independent analyst and consulting firm that helps users evaluate the different storage technologies on the market and make the right storage decision for their organization.*

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