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Donna Lenaghan
Director of Technology



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Miami Country Day School Takes a Proactive Approach to E-Discovery

For more than 70 years, educators at Miami Country Day School have been dedicated to a philosophy of educating the whole child, focusing on six potentials: intellectual, spiritual, social, aesthetic, physical and emotional. While this core belief has never changed throughout the private school's rich history, times have—especially in the 21st century. Today, technology is a key component of Miami Country Day School's curriculum.

But technology brings its own set of challenges. When the school was founded in 1938, it was an elementary boarding school for boys. It has grown and evolved over time to meet changing needs, and is now a coeducational, K–12 college preparatory school with 1,000 students. It must keep pace with the latest technologies while adhering to current state and federal regulations.

Email Archiving Provides Multiple Benefits

Like many industries, schools are required to follow a variety of guidelines and regulations. The advent of new technologies over the past 20 years—especially email—has given rise to even more regulations, and schools like Miami Country Day School are seeking the best way to satisfy these requirements on a shoestring budget.

E-Discovery

First and foremost, Miami Country Day School needed an archiving solution to meet e-discovery preparedness requirements that resulted from new legislation. “When it came to archiving, we knew we had to be proactive and take a leadership role,” said Donna Lenaghan, director of technology. But finding the right solution was another story. There were a number of decisions to make, including whether or not to run their own archive on premise or outsource it to a service provider that specialized in email archiving. The main goal was to avoid exposure to any potential future litigation by having a solution in place today.

Lenaghan and her technical team were impressed with Mail Archive's e-discovery features. “It eliminates a lot of questions, and we don't have to worry about it, because we know emails can't be modified,” said Dennis Cote, Miami Country Day School's IT service manager. “It's a matter of convenience. We can tag emails for legal reasons, and it gives us a real chain of custody, which we never had before. It's a lot of work to prepare for a legal case—going through machines individually, searching archives, dealing with PSTs, etc. We can avoid these time-consuming headaches with the [Mail Archive] service, because it's so much easier to search for and tag specific emails.”

Cote also embraced Mail Archive's ease of use. “The solution flows well, has nice menus and offers great search and tag features.” Plus, placing the onus on an unbiased third party (i.e., LiveOffice) made a big difference. “It's less maintenance and work for us,” Cote said.

Security (Advanced Spam-and-Virus Filtering)

A leading software-as-a-service (SaaS) email archiving provider, LiveOffice offered an affordable archiving solution that could be implemented quickly and easily—without disrupting end users. However, Miami Country Day School had another important requirement. “We are responsible for providing the best and safest network for our students and their families,” said Lenaghan. “Security is essential.” Not only do teachers and other staff use email on a daily basis, but students also receive email accounts beginning in sixth grade until they graduate. The school must ensure that spam and other inappropriate emails are blocked, in addition to preventing viruses from hitting their network. LiveOffice was able to provide an additional layer of advanced spam-and-virus protection to ensure the utmost security of the school's email communications.



Industry

Education

Location

Miami, Florida

Challenges

Lack of e-discovery preparedness, email security on a limited budget and small IT staff

Solution

LiveOffice Mail Archive with advanced spam-and-virus protection

Results

Secure and seamless email archiving, a proactive approach to e-discovery preparedness and significant time savings for IT staff

Former Solution

None

“ We were looking for brick-level backups of our Exchange Servers, and LiveOffice Mail Archive gave us two in one [archiving and backups]. ”

Dennis Cote
IT Service Manager

Disaster Recovery/Email Continuity

But LiveOffice Mail Archive provides even more value to Miami Country Day School. In addition to archiving for e-discovery, Mail Archive also serves as a comprehensive disaster recovery and email continuity solution. In the event that the school experiences significant downtime or a catastrophic loss that affects its Exchange Servers, all of its email is still safe and available through Mail Archive, which is further protected by being duplicated in geographically dispersed data centers. “We were looking for brick-level backups of our Exchange Servers, and LiveOffice Mail Archive gave us two in one [archiving and backups],” said Cote.

Mailbox Management

While e-discovery and security features were the top priorities for Miami Country Day School, its IT staff has significantly benefited from Mail Archive’s comprehensive mailbox management features. First, archiving keeps all of the school’s sent and received email messages in one place, so they can quickly and easily be searched when needed. “Searching for and restoring a single email is so much easier [with Mail Archive],” said Oliver Sepulveda, Miami Country Day School’s network engineer.

Second, it gives end users virtually unlimited storage, so there’s no need for IT to enforce strict mailbox quotas, which often pose a variety of challenges for IT. “Reducing mailbox sizes and eliminating quotas was a big consideration,” said Cote. “We were hampered by quotas for 20 years, until we migrated to Microsoft Exchange and added archiving.” Mail Archive helps IT administrators enforce mailbox quotas more confidently, because they have a single online, searchable repository on the backend.

SaaS Frees Up Limited IT Resources for Other Important Initiatives

Given that Miami Country Day School only has three full-time IT resources, maximizing their time is imperative. They currently run 14 servers and support 1,000 users. Mail Archive offered the school a number of time-saving benefits, which significantly reduced the IT management burden and allowed the technical staff to focus on more strategic initiatives, like the school’s goal of “improving teaching, learning and administration through technology.”

For starters, the solution is quick and easy to deploy. There’s no need to install and run additional applications on premise, which also eliminates the need for lengthy implementation cycles, ongoing maintenance, time-consuming upgrades (which are included with the LiveOffice service) and added support costs. “The setup for the full environment was very easy,” said Sepulveda.

Next, LiveOffice’s enterprise-class infrastructure is built for always-on availability and reliability, so the school’s IT staff does not have to spend time troubleshooting issues that may come with other archiving products, such as on-premise alternatives. If there are any issues, LiveOffice handles 100 percent of the support.

As mentioned under mailbox management, Mail Archive also enables IT staff to quickly and easily search and retrieve messages. No matter how much the archive grows, the system runs at optimal speeds, because it is backed by the necessary storage, database and indexing support.

Finally, Mail Archive includes a number of automation features to help IT staff save time. They can customize their settings to auto-create new accounts and mailboxes. The system then notifies them via email of any new additions. Administrators can also setup Policy Alerts, so they get alerted when emails match criteria they determine (e.g., inappropriate language).

While an on-premise email archiving solution wasn’t really a consideration (too much work for a small IT staff!), Miami Country Day School did consider several SaaS alternatives. Ultimately, Lenaghan concluded, “We had a problem to solve, and LiveOffice provided the most comprehensive solution.”



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For More Information

Contact our email experts and learn how we can help you meet your archiving, compliance and discovery goals.

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