

Case Study



Fast, effective, relief for email headaches

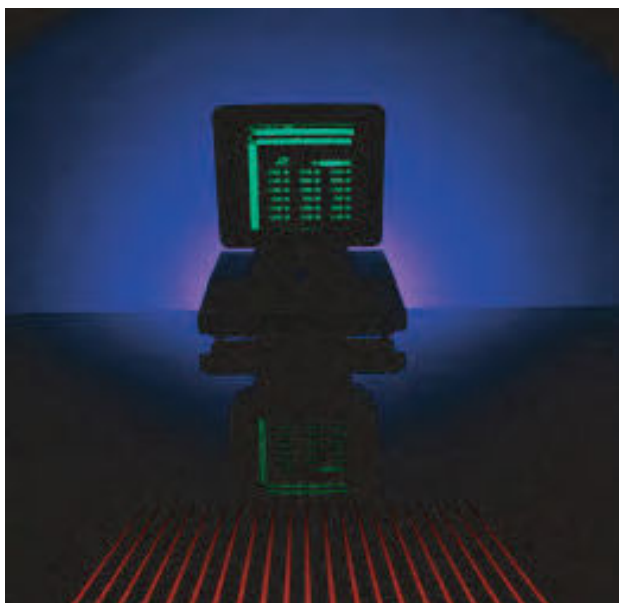
In a world where marketing spin nearly always oversells a product's potential it is rare to find technology that delivers exactly what is promised. *John Isitt* meets a world-weary IT manager who has heard it all before.

When dealing with technology Paul Morgan is a cynic. 'Technology for technology's sake' is given short shrift, which makes his love-in with Cryoserver – the solution for email compliance, archiving and retrieval – all the more significant.

With group responsibility for IT at William Ransom & Son plc, a fast growing natural product healthcare and pharmaceutical company, Morgan has found that Cryoserver has saved him money and time, as well as helping him meet his taxing commitments to the industry regulator.

Email and electronic data in general is an issue that cannot be ignored by any business operating in the UK or the international market.

"Until recently email was not taken seriously," admits Morgan. "It was just another form of communications, the same as phone calls or dropping a post-it note onto a colleague's desk," he says.



"Although we had excellent procedures in place for controlling the distribution and the storage of [paper] documents and the number of years we kept them," says Morgan. "We had nothing like that for emails."

"Just on email recovery I now save myself a whole day a"

"Once email really took off, it got to the stage where I was throwing money at storage solutions – extra space, extra tape drives, extra capacity," says Morgan. "In terms of return on investment it was becoming counter productive for me to spend money on storage facilities when really I should have been concentrating on the day-to-day running of the business and keeping everybody up and running."

In September 2003 Morgan discovered Cryoserver. "I'd already looked at several mail storage systems from other companies," remembers Morgan. "Cryoserver in my view holds the trump card of being forensically compliant." Any information pulled from it has higher evidential weight in a court of law.

"Whereas I was more interested in getting emails stored and compressed all in one box," he explains, "my financial director was interested in forensic compliance and legal requirements. The fact that board members and senior management are responsible for the integrity of their data, and what happens to that data."

One month later Morgan and his FD had Cryoserver installed into Ransoms, where it has been quietly storing, encrypting and compressing emails ever since.

"Compared to other storage systems - Cryoserver holds the trump card of being forensically compliant."

Direct benefits

"Bar the initial integration with our mail system it hasn't needed any configuration. It just sits there and gets on with it, storing your mail for as long as you need it," Morgan says. "From an IT point of view, it's almost zero management."

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"Just on email recovery I now save myself a whole day a month," calculates Morgan. "Before, I'd have to trawl through back up tapes and various storage mediums to find where an email had ended up. And once I'd actually found it I'd have to retrieve it, restore it and pass it onto



the user.

"That kind of process typically takes between an hour and five or six hours – nearly a whole day – depending on how specifically the users knows dates and times."

"From an IT point of view, I have saved more than the Cryoserver cost me in storage alone. Simple as that," states Morgan. It's a one-box solution that sits on the network and behaves itself. If needed, it is there. If not it just carries on."

"I have saved more than the Cryoserver cost me in storage alone. Simple as that."

Complying with the regulators

William Ransom & Son plc is the UK's oldest independent pharmaceutical company and operates in one of the toughest regulatory environments in the world. In addition to having to meet various international pharmaceutical standards, such as the Food and Drugs Administration (FDA) in the USA, Ransom is governed by the UK's Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA).

"The MHRA demands that we keep all records of any kind, that we generate or are sent to us, whether printed or electronic," explains Morgan. "We have to keep everything for seven years. Minimum."

In the MHRA's last audit on Ransom they investigated how Morgan stored the group's emails. Morgan showed them the Cryoserver and explained how it works. In return he received an immediate pass on email compliance.

"[Having Cryoserver in place] shows that, as an IT manager working in a company that is part of regulated industry, I am taking steps to ensure that my data is stored, configured and encrypted in such a way that it is compliant with and exceeds any MHRA specification," explains Morgan.

In addition to the external auditor, Morgan also has to meet the company's internal standards. "Every three months we run a test restore of a sample amount of data in the presence of one of our quality officers to prove that it works," he explains. Who to believe What does a human resources officer do when a distressed manager comes to her and accuses one of his team of sending abusive emails, but then tells her that he has no evidence as he has deleted the offending email?

In the case of the head of human resources at Ransom, she was able to interrogate Cryoserver and within seconds retrieve the original email and conclusively deal with the case.

"From an IT point of view, it's almost zero management."

"It was a potentially inflammatory situation that was nipped in the bud by the Cryoserver," explains Morgan. "Once presented with evidence, the offending party put their hands up and said, 'In that case I'm sorry'. And the situation went away."

"It's not the most exciting story, but that's the point," judges Morgan. "All the exciting stories are when there are payouts of millions of pounds, unfair dismissals, a company's name in the papers or brand being dragged through the mill. We didn't have any of that."

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Cryoserver makes it possible for anyone working for Ransom to prove a negative. Because it saves all emails, without allowing anyone to delete or tamper with them, it means that if the email is not in Cryoserver, then it never existed.

"I can see Cryoserver being of benefit in terms of contract disputes," believes Morgan. "Cryoserver would be called upon to produce evidence between 'he said, she said' and the particular terms of a contract."

"Every three months we run a test restore of a sample amount of data in the presence of one of our quality officers to prove that it works"

Staff account

With its objective of becoming the UK's leading natural product-based consumer healthcare business, William Ransom & Son plc is growing fast. It is achieving this through internal productivity and an active strategy of acquisitions. Health Perception, the UK's leading manufacturer of glucosamine, is its latest addition having been bought in September 2004.

"I don't have to worry quite so much about huge influxes of data as I know I have a repository for it," Morgan says. "Because I have that repository we could take on a company of 500 people [more than double the current size of Ransom], because Cryoserver would still store all their emails."

Two months after bringing Health Perceptions into the group, Ransom migrated from a very simple SMTP/POP3 email system (Equinet NetPilot) to Lotus Notes. Because Cryoserver works across all email systems, it was able to operate on both of Ransom's email platforms seamlessly, ensuring no email data was lost during the transfer.

Easy to use, Cryoserver has been quickly adopted by individual users throughout Ransom for two main reasons. Firstly, users can retrieve all of their emails quickly and simply – even the ones they have accidentally deleted.

Secondly, the system is transparent. Everyone knows that all emails sent or received using Ransom accounts are saved permanently – without the option of anyone deleting or tampering with them – and can be retrieved at any time.

Furthermore, the system safeguards personal privacy and data protection by ensuring that 'Data Guardians' are alerted should any of the few 'Privileged Users' access the

system to search other people's emails, in a disciplinary case for example.



Earlier this year, Cartesis – a business performance software group – asked large companies whether the regulatory environment was a costly distraction or a goad to better governance.

"Cryoserver is a fairly specific solution. It does exactly what it says on the tin."

Some 40% said that the increasing regulation detracted from their performance, but nearly 30% said it boosted results. Morgan neatly encapsulates this split. He recognises that working in a regulated environment benefits Ransom, but that from an IT point of view, "It's a hell of a lot of work."

"I've found that Cryoserver has taken away an element of [that work], because once auditors see that we have such a system for email traffic and see it's a fully enclosed solution they're happy with it," he explains. "It's one less thing I have to fill out paper work for."

"Cryoserver is a fairly specific solution. It handles email traffic in and out," Morgan concludes. "It does exactly what it says on the tin." From a technology cynic's point of view, this is high praise indeed.

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In a nutshell...

William Ransom & Son plc

- Oldest independent pharmaceutical company in the UK.
- Operates in one of the toughest regulatory environments, working with the likes of the US' Food and Drugs Administration (FDA) and the UK's Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA).
- Principal manufacturing activities are the production of liquid pharmaceuticals and the extraction of plant material for the healthcare, food, beverage and cosmetic industries.
- Grown considerably through the acquisition of consumer healthcare brands.

Cryoserver

- Complies with today's email retention requirements. Speeds up email investigations while increasing employees' privacy and confidentiality.
- Decreases liability and increases productivity by making users think twice before they press 'send'.
- Provides forensic evidence for court actions – reliable evidence.
- Preserves knowledge in the organisation in a secure, searchable repository.
- Delivers significant cost savings (for example, it fulfils Freedom of Information and Subject Access Requests under the Data Protection Act quickly and easily).



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