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Inquiry Spotlight: Archiving, Q4 2008

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Forrester clients report that data storage is doubling every 12 to 18 months. Not only is data growth exploding, but companies also need to figure out how to retain this data for regulatory compliance or legal discovery purposes. As a result, more and more infrastructure and operations professionals are evaluating archiving offerings and services to alleviate the pain. Unfortunately, archiving is complicated, with many different factors to consider and dozens of different hardware, software, and service combinations. Between January and September 2008, Forrester answered 106 end user inquiries on archiving, including questions on eDiscovery, retention, message archiving, and using archiving to cope with the data growth explosion. The high volume of inquiries on archiving demonstrates that many companies wrestle with defining their archiving policies, building the business case for specialized offerings, and selecting and implementing either the right archiving software and hardware or the right online service.

FIRMS UNDERSTAND THE IMPORTANCE OF ARCHIVING BUT STRUGGLE TO IMPLEMENT IT

According to Forrester's Enterprise And SMB Hardware Survey, North America And Europe, Q3 2007, archiving and data retention was the number one storage priority for 2008 (see Figure 1). Despite this, adoption of archiving among enterprises and SMBs has remained fairly flat, at around 30%.¹ Why? From the large number of inquiries Forrester receives on archiving, it seems that many organizations are unable to define their archiving policies or develop a cohesive archiving strategy. The most common archiving inquiry was on specific offerings to address message, database, and file archiving, followed closely by questions on compliance and eDiscovery, and finally by overall questions about how archiving can help reduce storage costs and achieve other operational efficiencies (see Figure 2). It's clear that IT professionals understand the importance of archiving but aren't always sure where to begin.

Your Peers Are Asking: "What Are Message Archiving Options And Best Practices?"

In the first three quarters of 2008, 54% of all inquiries on archiving focused on specific offerings to address file, message, or database archiving. Message archiving was one of the most common concerns, making up 37% of all archiving inquiries.

- **What you need to know:** Every organization has different message archiving policies and requirements. The differences are driven by the primary motivation for message archiving: regulatory compliance, eDiscovery, or gaining operational efficiencies such as controlling storage costs and improving the performance of the mail server. If you plan to implement an archive

yourself, it's helpful to think of its two components: the archiving software and the archive storage. You set your policies for retention, deletion, and holds in the software, but you must also invest in a scalable storage infrastructure where the archived emails will physically be stored. Disk, tape, and optical (or a combination of the three) can be compliant storage — storage that is write-once read-many (WORM). Whether you need compliant storage depends on how highly regulated or litigious your industry is and how important it is for you to prove to a government agency or judge the absolute immutability of the data.

You also have the option of using archiving software-as-a-service (SaaS). With SaaS offerings you pay a subscription of about \$3 to \$5 per user per month to archive your email to a service provider. You don't have to make any capital investments in software or storage infrastructure or manage the end-to-end archiving solution. You do have to be comfortable with the security of your sensitive data in a multi-tenancy architecture as well as the longevity of the service provider. Remember that in some cases you'll need to retain data with them for seven or more years. You'll also need to verify or negotiate other service-level agreements such as service availability and data backup.

- **What you should do about it:** Forrester has four key recommendations when developing your message archiving strategy: 1) Determine the size of your email environment and the amount of archive storage you require in order to “rightsize” your archive infrastructure; 2) develop your retention policies and functional requirements by walking through eDiscovery scenarios ahead of time; 3) consider archiving other applications besides just email; and 4) consider how much staff you will require to manage the archive for the long term. Walking through these steps will help you develop your overall strategy, your retention policies, whether you will implement archiving yourself or use SaaS, and the specific set of functional requirements you need from the offering.

Your Peers Are Asking: “How Do Other Organizations Define Their Archiving Policies?”

Questions on compliance, eDiscovery, and overall archiving/retention policies accounted for 50% of all inquiries on archiving. Questions ranged from, “What are the data retention requirements as they relate to HIPAA and SOX?” to “Is WORM legally required for eDiscovery?” There were also a number of inquiries related to secure data deletion or data erasure. We often talk about the need to retain data for compliance or discovery, but once a particular retention period expires, it's also important to ensure that the data is permanently deleted. This is especially true if you intend to return any leased IT infrastructure or dispose of IT infrastructure.⁵

- **What you need to know:** Whether you're archiving for the purposes of regulatory compliance, eDiscovery, or achieving certain operational efficiencies, you can't define data retention policies in isolation. It requires a cross-functional team that includes legal, finance, human resources,

information and knowledge management, and I&O professionals. There are some regulations, like Sarbanes-Oxley for financial accounting and reporting records, SEC Rule 17a for electronic communication between broker-dealers and customers, and HIPAA for patient healthcare records, that have clear data retention requirements. Developing policies related to eDiscovery is more complex. These policies must balance guidelines for electronic discovery clearly set out in the Federal Rules of Civil Procedures (FRCP) with risk and cost. Policies related to saving money on storage must balance the need to archive as much data as possible onto lower-cost storage mediums with fast access. For example, from a cost perspective, the more that you can archive data to tape the better, but it will take a long time to provide end users access to archived data as well as impede the ability to quickly comply with an audit or discovery request.

- **What you should do about it:** IT professionals must choose representatives from legal, IT, and other departments to form a permanent team responsible for the preservation and retention of important corporate information. IT professionals are ultimately responsible for selecting the right archiving software and hardware combination or SaaS and implementing and managing it, but only the cross-functional team can define the retention policies and the functional requirements such as index, search, legal holds, data immutability, and fast access that you need to evaluate offerings. In addition, regardless of the solution you select, you can't just set your policies and forget them. You'll need to periodically revisit these policies to reflect changing regulatory requirements or organizational rules.

Your Peers Are Asking: "Can Archiving Help To Reduce The Cost Of Storage?"

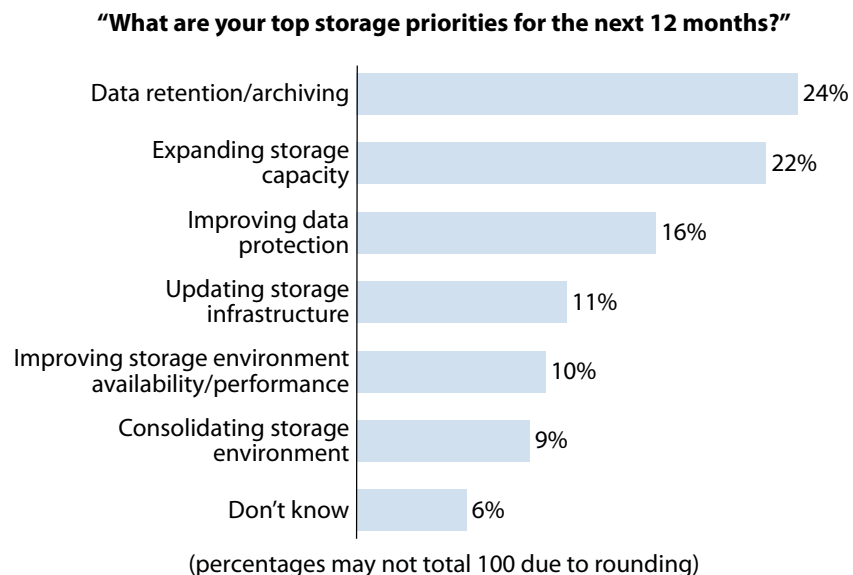
Not surprisingly, in times of economic turmoil IT professionals want to reduce their capital acquisitions in storage and reclaim existing storage. Thirty-five percent of inquiries on archiving were about information life-cycle management, tiered storage strategies, and overall cost savings and operational efficiencies.

- **What you need to know:** Information life-cycle management (ILM) is a strategy by which data is migrated or archived to a less expensive tier of storage as it ages and its value declines. Corporate-wide ILM never turned out to be a reality, because it required the deployment of separate point products for email, file, database, and other content archiving. What the storage vendors referred to as "storage tiers" actually turned out to be completely independent storage systems from different product families. While you might have saved a lot of money on the initial acquisition cost of these storage systems, it also resulted in a lot of management complexity.

- **What you should do about it:** Don't rule out the benefits of archiving or tiered storage just yet. Many organizations are choosing to create storage tiers within a single storage system by leveraging lower-cost disk options such as SATA. In fact, some storage vendors such as 3PAR and Compellent offer automated tiering. Based on frequency access, data is automatically migrated from expensive Fibre Channel drives to high-capacity, low-cost SATA drives. This is done at the block level, so you don't need to work with a cross-functional team to understand data use and business classification of the data.

When it comes to archiving, look for offerings that support multiple content types, including email, file, and SharePoint, and focus on building a scalable storage archive that can serve as the repository for all archiving content. The archive should rely mostly on a storage system that incorporates high-capacity, low-cost disk technology and is networked with Ethernet, but it could also incorporate some tape for data that needs to be retained for years.⁶

Figure 1 Data Retention/Archiving Is The Top Storage Priority



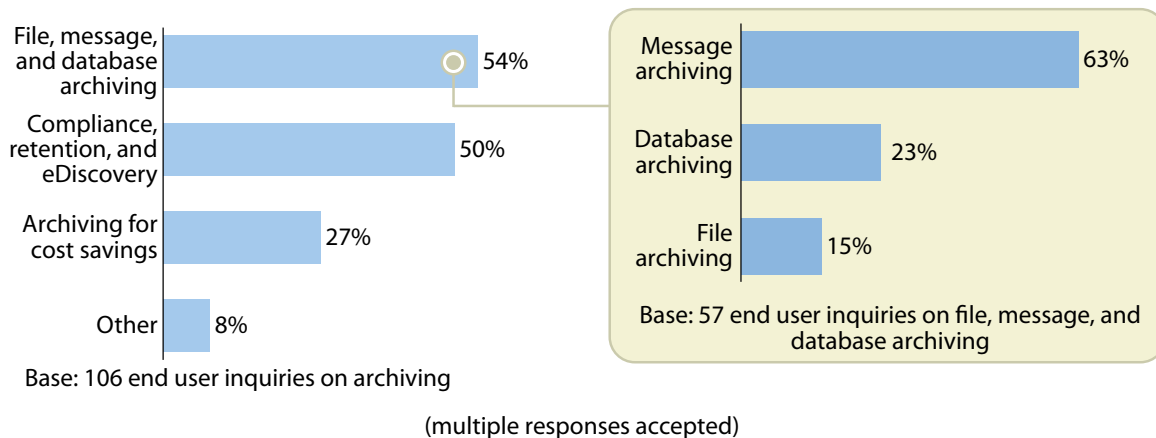
Base: 440 storage systems decision-makers at North American and European enterprises and SMBs

Source: Enterprise And SMB Hardware Survey, North America And Europe, Q3 2007

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Source: Forrester Research, Inc.

Figure 2 File, Message, And Database Archiving Leads End User Inquiries So Far In 2008



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Source: Forrester Research, Inc.

ENDNOTES

- ¹ Source: Forrester's Enterprise And SMB Hardware Survey, Q3 2007 and Forrester's Business Technographics® May 2006 North American And European Enterprise Infrastructure And Data Center Survey.
- ² In Forrester's 85-criteria evaluation of message archiving software vendors, we found that Autonomy ZANTAZ and Symantec have a tenuous lead over large vendors such as CA, EMC, IBM, and Open Text with broad enterprise content management (ECM) and storage portfolios. See the February 14, 2008, "[The Forrester Wave™: Message Archiving Software, Q1 2008](#)" report.
- ³ In Forrester's 71-criteria evaluation of message archiving hosted services vendors, we found that Autonomy ZANTAZ leads the pack with strong search functionality and vision for its services. See the February 7, 2008, "[The Forrester Wave™: Message Archiving Hosted Services, Q1 2008](#)" report.
- ⁴ We talked with archiving users as well as leading vendors and professional services organizations to narrow down the essential best practices in this field. Smart companies use four key strategies to succeed with email archiving: They rightsize the infrastructure; walk through eDiscovery scenarios ahead of time; consider archiving other data types besides just email; and staff and manage the archive for the long term. See the October 17, 2008, "[Best Practices: Email Archiving](#)" report.
- ⁵ For more information on compliance storage and archiving, see the October 24, 2008, "[Q&A: Compliance Storage Demystified](#)" report.
- ⁶ Enterprises continue to focus on individual point products to solve storage challenges. As storage budgets skyrocket, enterprises need to take a more holistic approach to their storage environment by developing a comprehensive storage strategy and shifting their focus to storage processes and management tools — not just technology. See the September 25, 2006, "[The Next-Generation Storage Organization](#)" report.

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