



**twm** solicitors

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– Alan Barrett**

## TWM Solicitors LLP

*South of England based law firm, TWM solicitors recognises that email communications integrity is fundamental to their business reputation.*

TWM is a progressive and growing Firm which has a heritage that stretches back 200 years. The Firm operates from seven locations in the South of England and offers a comprehensive range of legal services to a growing number of personal and business clients.

Standards of service are vitally important, and central to any case is the way in which communications and instructions have evolved. To enable fast and easy access to email records – now the preferred means of communication for many clients – the Firm looked to MessageLabs Archiving Service for support.

### THE SITUATION

The Civil Procedure Rules, governing procedure for High and Country Courts in England & Wales require transparency and disclosure in the event of any dispute which comes before the Court. As in other commercial fields, email is a critical part of the process by which clients issue instructions, are informed of developments or are offered advice; it also features heavily in communications between opposing lawyers. As such, email has to be kept, filed and made accessible should it be needed. As best practice, TWM also adopts the policy of file retention for a period of 10 years from when a matter is completed.

Lawyers are used to dealing with paper records; it is part of their stock in trade. However, email is a relatively recent phenomenon and its emergence as a mainstream communications medium has meant that it has to be dealt with using the same thoroughness and consistency as other records.

TWM also realise that having policy rules and guidelines is only one part of the equation. To put any email user policy into place, and have employees adhere to it, requires technical facilities too. There would be no point in establishing a policy which could be interpreted differently by users.

Storage of all this digital information is also important. With email volumes growing rapidly, backup and restore systems needed to be efficient as well as comprehensive.

Finally, there is the issue of system integrity. Should email services and records not be available for any substantial amount of time, there might be fundamental damage to the business and to its reputation, clearly something which TWM are very keen to guard against.

Alan Barrett, Head of IT at TWM, explained the significance of such a problem: “This is a multimillion pound business employing a lot of highly skilled people. Email is a vital part of the support service that they quite rightly expect to have available and current.”

TWM already had systems in place to ensure compliance, but with the business (and use of email) expanding it was clear that storage would become a central issue. In addition to which the amount of time required to backup email would become untenable.

### THE SOLUTION

Archiving was implemented in October 2006, as the next logical step in developing an existing business relationship. As existing users of the MessageLabs Email Security Service, TWM knew the simplicity of the MessageLabs outsourced solution and knew that the ease of use and effectiveness of the existing provision was liked by solicitors and support staff alike.

“The need to run our archiving process in a business-critical environment indicated to us that we needed a specialist service to make sure email was always safely stored and easily accessible,” Alan Barrett added.

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## THE BENEFITS

The MessageLabs Archiving Service is already showing immediate benefits, delivering a clear framework for ongoing access to information for both business continuity and compliance.

**Continuity of service** - email is no longer locked up by individual users and, with a new access policy in place, email can be searched and inspected by other authorized staff - even when key individuals are away. Security is reinforced too, as emails are archived regardless of users purging or deleting messages from their own mailboxes.

**Compliance** - concerns about how to handle compliance requirements have now evaporated. There are powerful retrieval options available from within the MessageLabs Archiving Service, which are being used on a daily basis. It would be a simple matter to extend those to the scale of data required under any Law Society or Civil Court requirement.

**Email Management** – with emails now stored by MessageLabs, the time consuming task of email back up and restore has gone completely, as has the risk that some crucial emails might have not found their way into the back-up process. The requirement for future capacity planning is now removed. There is also the reassurance that email can be restored quickly should disaster strike.

**Empowered staff** – users have access to their own archives and can access records without having to ask for assistance. Many staff members have found that search is a helpful management tool to easily locate and follow communication threads with clients and other staff.

"This is a big benefit for the Firm all round as it will help ongoing compliance and will also enable us to offer the highest standards of service to all our clients." Alan Barrett noted. "I now have the peace of mind that, should a disaster strike, our email records will be quickly available to ensure there is no damage to our business reputation."

## Solution at a Glance

### Business Drivers

- Meet compliance regulations and tests
- Provide a robust business continuity solution for email
- Establish a policy framework to ensure transparency and integrity of email records
- Productivity of IT staff for backup and restore processes of emails

### Technology Drivers

- Requirement to easily and rapidly find specific emails
- Need to enforce a best practice use policy for email management
- Limited time and resources to dedicate to growing email backup process
- Requirement for offsite email continuity solution

### Solution

- MessageLabs Archiving Service

### Size of Organisation

- Number of employees - 200

### Business Value and Technical Benefits

- Rapid and simple retrieval of email communication to meet compliance regulations
- Continuity of access to all email communication records
- Ability to create and monitor acceptable use policies
- Increased productivity of IT staff through significantly reduced backup and restore duties
- Secure and reliable email archives
- Managed service can be switched on immediately
- Predictable cost structure
- No hardware or software, compliments existing infrastructure