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NETGOVERN DELIVERS EMAIL ARCHIVING, RETENTION, & DISCOVERY

> " I would say that in my 20 years of doing information technology management, and implementing technology, I don't think I've ever had a vendor that performs as well as NetGovern does. The support team from top to bottom truly understands the product and is able to assist our county with overcoming email archive and discovery challenges. "

Nathan McDaniel
Director, Information Technology
Mohave County, Arizona

CLIENT OVERVIEW

Mohave County sits in the northwestern corner of the U.S. state of Arizona. Route 66, which runs through the county, is also known as the Main Street of America, or the Mother Road, and was one of the original highways in the U.S. Highway System. It was recognized in popular culture by the hit song "Get Your Kicks on Route 66." In John Steinbeck's classic American novel, The Grapes of Wrath (1939), the road, "Highway 66," was turned into a powerful symbol of escape and loss.

For the past six years, Mohave County has relied on a Microsoft Exchange 2013 collaboration system as the primary source of communication for its 1,000 user population of county employees. Mohave County first approached NetGovern in 2006 with a view to finding a cost-effective solution that would enable the county to facilitate the archiving and discovery of email so that the county would be in compliance with state laws regarding email and public records.

VITAL STATS

- Client since 2006
- 1000 county users
- Declining revenue stream
- Microsoft Exchange 2013 Collaboration System
- Numerous Public Records Requests

BUSINESS CHALLENGE

According to Nathan McDaniel, Director of the Information Technology department at Mohave County, "Our original business case was that we needed an email archiving and retention solution because public record laws were changing and government entities in the state of Arizona and throughout the nation were being tasked with retaining email and making it discoverable in the name of government openness and transparency."

One of the biggest challenges faced by Mohave County is that the county's revenue stream has been declining, and while there have been blips in the radar as far as economic growth, the county is fairly conservative and not interested in growing the government or raising taxes. So as Mohave County's operations grow and contract with the economic climate, they noticed a trend in the industry that every software vendor they use wanted a dramatic escalation on annual maintenance every year.

"If I have to pay high escalation fees on annual maintenance every year," says McDaniel, "I'd have to go out and survey the market again, find a new vendor in the industry that comes in at a lower price point than everyone else because they are trying to grow their business. We go through that cycle with other solutions all the time, so we have to constantly find new affordable solutions. That hasn't been the case with NetGovern which is why we have been able to maintain the product for so long—it works extremely well, fits in our budget, and our revenue stream."

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CRITICAL REQUIREMENTS

1. Find an affordable solution for a county government faced with a declining revenue stream.

2. Ensure reliability and compatibility with our email collaboration system.

3. Establish a long-standing trust relationship with a vendor to ensure that there are no surprises with respect to product performance, dramatic price hikes, or technical support.

PRODUCT EVOLUTION

Although Mohave County initially chose NetGovern for email archiving and retention, the county's needs evolved, and soon they realized that they also needed an eDiscovery solution. Fortunately, NetGovern Archive is constantly evolving as a product and had already incorporated eDiscovery by the time Mohave County requested the feature. According to McDaniel, "I think I may have contributed to shaping the NetGovern product as there have been some features I have suggested over the years that have eventually made their way into the product."

In particular, the Case Management feature which gives Case Managers the ability to create eDiscovery cases— and perform searches across data no matter where it resides—has optimized the way the county deals with public records requests. Says McDaniel, "I've done a of lot training across our organization with case managers and reviewers who have to respond to public records requests by identifying and producing relevant documents, and I've realized that the evolution of our business process has been strategically tied to the new features and functionalities the NetGovern product offers. We've evolved as the product has evolved. It's a fantastic relationship."

PRODUCT PERFORMANCE

From the point of view of product performance, Mohave County acknowledges that from a government perspective, NetGovern Archive optimizes the time they used to spend fulfilling public records requests. Prior to implementing NetGovern Archive, the county would manually search an individual's entire mailbox for the email and documents they needed, whereas now they are able to create complex, powerful searches across an entire dataset without having to talk to individual users. The county credits NetGovern Archive with saving a tremendous amount of time and money by allowing them to more comprehensively fulfill public records requests.

The other benefit is that they can export the data in electronic format that is very end-user friendly which saves the requestor money because typically the county would charge per page if printed data was required with some of these requests totaling 2000-3000 pages, or thousands of dollars. The only downside, according to the IT Director, is that the county has made the process of requesting public records for citizens so easy that they probably get more requests than they used to because they are able to fulfill them quickly and provide access to them

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rapidly. At the same time, eDiscovery with NetGovern is so efficient and powerful that it only takes a fraction of the time that it used to. They can now complete requests in minutes rather that the hours and days that previous requests used to take, meaning that the product has paid for itself.

PUBLIC RECORDS REQUESTS

On describing the process of a typical public record's request, when a request is made through the county manager's office, IT Director, Nathan McDaniel, receives a service request, then proceeds to interpret and build the case, creating search parameters. He then provides auditor-level access to the case to two individuals on his team so that they can review the dataset, applying relevant tags to appropriate messages, prior to sending it back to McDaniel. At the end of the process, McDaniel searches the messages that have been tagged relevant and produces the dataset. According to McDaniel, his time in the process takes 10-15 minutes.

Outside of Mohave County's process with the county manager's office, McDaniel works with several civil attorneys to whom he provides case manager access so they can build their own cases and perform their own searches when they are dealing with a civil lawsuit against the county. McDaniel has also introduced attorneys to the federated search feature of NetGovern eDiscovery when they need to search for related documents across files share, but primarily most of the requests concern email.

NetGovern eDiscovery also gives the county's Human Resources department the ability to conduct performance evaluations on employees they suspect of abusing the county's email and Skype systems by searching archived email and conversations to avoid potential disputes and unnecessary exposure for the county. For these types of investigations, McDaniel often gives directors proxy access to a user's archives and then auto-revokes the access in 30 days when the investigation is complete.

THE BOTTOM LINE

" Organizationally, I hope your organization appreciates your support team because they are unbelieveable. It's topnotch stuff that they are doing for your customers and I think ultimately they are probably the biggest reason why you guys are SO successful as a company. They are making your products work and they are making your customers happy. **"**

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