



CUSTOMER SUCCESS STORY

HW WOOD LIMITED

MessageLabs



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Eva Humphrey,
Divisional Director of IT,
HW Wood Limited

Insurance Brokers and Risk management specialists needed an archiving solution that met industry regulations around security and retention and an email continuity solution that would keep them communicating if email failed.

HW Wood Limited is based in the heart of London’s financial centre. The company’s business is insurance and risk management, with a full range of insurance services available to commercial organisations. Dependent on records and process, the company decided to minimise its own risk by implementing a business continuity solution that securely retained messages and would ensure ongoing access to email.

THE SITUATION

A robust business recovery plan—especially important in higher-risk locations such as the City of London—needs to store historical email in a secure archive and provide seamless access to current inboxes.

HW Wood is regulated by the Financial Services Authority (FSA), the body that ensures that standards of probity are enforced throughout the financial community in Britain. Detailed record-keeping requirements are part of the comprehensive regulatory framework that the FSA has put in place.

Until MessageLabs Email Archiving was deployed, individual account managers maintained their own records. This meant inconsistent backup, storage, and retention, and made it difficult to meet the FSA’s requirements.

Additionally, if its email system suffered a breakdown, restoring access required getting into the building, which wouldn’t always be guaranteed in its location. And if the email stoppage was the result of a server failure or maintenance, the company had a small window in which to restore service without disrupting the business.

HW Wood turned to MessageLabs Email Archiving and Email Continuity to resolve the compliance and business recovery issues.

THE SOLUTION A SEARCHABLE ARCHIVE

HW Wood already used MessageLabs Web and Email Security Services, which made the decision to consider MessageLabs Email Archiving easier.

“MessageLabs was an early front-runner for our business,” explained Eva Humphrey, Divisional Director of IT.

“Alternatives just didn’t come up with the goods in terms of either flexibility or matching our business continuity requirements. Storing on local servers was a typical restriction which we couldn’t work around with other systems.”

HW Wood was reassured by the dual offsite storage locations and full redundancy of the service. Going forward, HW Wood knows that its data will always be accessible, even if in extreme cases something were to happen to the primary data centre hosted by MessageLabs.

An important feature of the service is the ability to search and retrieve any email transaction thread. This made HW Wood confident that it would meet the compliance requirements of the FSA now and into the future.

“Due to inevitable fact that the FSA compliance requirements for electronic communication will become more stringent in future, it was vital that the service could quickly and easily find any email communication,” Humphrey added.

As with any new system, there were a couple of initial problems, but these were resolved quickly and the whole system was in full implementation and archiving within three weeks.

“We knew that MessageLabs would give us excellent support, and we were not disappointed. Support was first class. The initial glitches were resolved remotely by MessageLabs and were painless to fix. The MessageLabs people really knew what they were doing.”

BUSINESS CONTINUITY IN 60 SECONDS

Once HW Wood had the archiving solution in place, it looked for a solution to make sure that its email would always be available. “We needed to know that we could access our in-boxes, even if we couldn’t get in the building,” explains Humphrey. “We had figured out that we couldn’t have email down for more than 30 minutes without causing an issue for the business.” The MessageLabs Email Continuity solution provides users with the ability to see, send, and receive messages within 60 seconds of being activated. And once access is restored, all in-box activity—with complete forensic information—is reflected in the primary system.

MessageLabs Email Continuity ensures that there are no disruptions if an internal server fails or requires maintenance. It provides Humphrey’s team with the time that they need to service planned outages and resolve unplanned ones, knowing that the rest of the business can continue doing their jobs with virtually no interruption.

THE BENEFITS

Benefits were immediate, resulting in time and cost savings. Management was completely confident that all email was safely and securely stored and could be searched, retrieved, and accessed whenever required.

Compliance: compliance remains of fundamental importance. The company’s processes are ahead of mandatory requirements and HW Wood feels comfortable being able to meet future compliance regulations.

Transparency: access privileges now mean that mailboxes are no longer locked up when staff have to be away on business or are sick. Processes were introduced to ensure that in the event of absences from the office, continuity can be maintained with clients and underwriters.

Supervision: staff can be supervised more effectively yet in a more hands-off manner. Emails in the archive can be reviewed at any time to go over a specific issue relating to a client or to check on possible misuse.

Empowered staff: users work more efficiently. They have access to their own archives, meaning they can find emails and attachments without having to ask for assistance. Crucially, many staff members have found it easy to locate and follow communication threads with clients and other staff, giving them powerful information management.

Email backup management: with emails now stored by MessageLabs, the time consuming tasks of email back up and restore have gone away completely. Applying a standard storage and retention policy eliminates the risk that some crucial emails may have not found their way into the back up process.

Near-instant recovery: regardless of the cause, the business knows that an email outage won’t slow the business down. The continuity solution can be activated from anywhere in seconds.

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SOLUTION AT A GLANCE

Solution:

- MessageLabs Email Archiving and Email Continuity

Technology Challenges:

- Inability to easily and rapidly find specific emails
- Limited time and IT resources for growing email backup process
- Needed to be on-site to restore system

Business Requirements:

- A robust email retention and storage solution
- Regulatory compliance and testing
- Transparent communications for everyone who is party to a transaction
- Offsite storage of email archives
- Continuous access to email

Business Value and Technical Benefits:

- Quick and easy deployment as a hosted service
- Predictable cost structure
- No capital expenditure for hardware or software
- Service complements existing infrastructure



Confidence in a connected world.