

Symantec Enterprise Vault and Exchange 2010

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Introduction

Microsoft have announced their next release of their flagship messaging platform, Exchange Server, and with this announcement have come details of the new features and functionality to be included (due to become available in November 2009). The release of this new version of Exchange Server is very important to Microsoft and some of the new features show that they are expanding the remit of this product to include functionality historically offered by 3rd party vendors such as Symantec.

Exchange Server 2010 is also very important to Symantec, as being the leading vendor in the Active Email Archiving market and frequently being the first to market with solutions to support new MS technologies; we have an obligation to our customers to fully support this release. Symantec has over 10,000 customers using Enterprise Vault for Exchange Server and so intends to provide the best integration, the best end-user experience, the best PST migration and the best product support in the market. In short, business as usual.

Plans for Exchange Server 2010 support and compatibility?

Given the importance of Exchange Server 2010 to both Symantec and Microsoft's customer base we are assigning significant engineering resource in the effort to research and implement full support and compatibility.

We already understand that there will need to be some architecture changes to various Enterprise Vault components to ensure the necessary level of support and as a result Symantec intends to provide full support for Exchange Server 2010 after Microsoft makes the product Generally Available (GA).

So what is new in Exchange Server 2010?

Feature	Explanation
Mailbox Archive	Administrators will be able to create an on-line archive for each users mailbox and users can manually move or set up rules to automatically move data into this archive and out of their primary mailbox.
Database IOPS reduction	The IOPS requirement for each Exchange DB store has been reduced by 70% (over the previous release Exchange 2007, and 90% over Exchange 2003). This means that customers can utilise much cheaper, slower disk to host Exchange stores.
Max Mailbox and Database increased	The maximum database size has been increased to 2TB and maximum mailbox size increased to 10GB.
Max number of items per folder increased	The maximum number of items that can be practically stored in a single folder in a users mailbox has been increased to approx. 100,000.
Compliance and EDiscovery	Basic compliance based searching across the Exchange organisation a multi-mailbox search application is now available. This allows Compliance Officers and Legal and Human Resources staff to search across multiple mailboxes and their associated archives for key words. If pertinent information is found then user mailboxes/archives can be placed on legal hold to prevent the user from expiring any items during the investigation.
PST Migration	The solution to PST headaches in Exchange 2010 is to utilise the on-line archive. Users can be encouraged to move their PST data directly to their archive via Outlook so that the data exists in Exchange and no longer locally on their desktop or file share.

Do I still need Enterprise Vault?

The previous section sounds pretty comprehensive for an archiving solution, right? Wrong. Let's take a look under the hood (at each point) and explain why existing customers' investment in Enterprise Vault is safe and why new customers will continue to purchase Enterprise Vault:

Mailbox Archive – The Exchange 2010 "archive" is actually just a secondary mailbox in the Information Store and as such must be stored in the same Exchange store as the users' primary mailbox. The secondary mailbox is tied directly to the users' primary mailbox which means if the primary mailbox is deleted for any reason then the secondary mailbox is automatically deleted also.

The secondary mailbox can be allowed to grow up to 30GB in size but fundamentally it is taking up storage space <u>inside</u> the Exchange Information Store. Exchange 2010 native archiving is therefore not solving the issue solved by Enterprise Vault by moving older un-used data out of Exchange. It is instead just moving the problem from the users' primary mailbox to their secondary mailbox within the same Exchange database.

Secondary mailboxes are also only available to the user when on-line and when using Outlook or OWA 2010 (There is no offline functionality). Enterprise Vault 8.0 Sp3 will introduce a new interface to the EV archive called Virtual Vault. This interface will have all the end user advantages of the Exchange 2010 secondary mailbox but with the additional benefits of Offline access to items and support for Outlook 2003, 2007 and 2010.

Database IOPS reduction –Reducing the IOPS requirement for each Exchange database is a good thing for reducing the cost of Exchange Server storage, increasing the number of users hosted per Exchange server and for increasing the flexibility behind how the product is deployed, however it comes (as with most things) with a disadvantage. There will be no longer be any single instance storage inside any Exchange Server 2010 Database.

Microsoft with Exchange 2010 are advocating storing lots more data in Exchange which is partially offset with the ability to use higher capacity and cheaper storage on which to host the databases. From a DR or HA perspective however this is increasing the risk associated with an Exchange implementation as backup and restore timings will likely increase accordingly, as well as maintenance jobs and data integrity checks. Products like Enterprise Vault have traditionally been successful in this market because they remove older data from Exchange, making backups and restores quicker and more efficient. Using native Exchange 2010 archiving will result in more data being held in the messaging environment than ever before and consequently much larger databases. Imagine trying to keep 7 years worth of Journal data on-line within the Exchange store without the benefits of Single Instance Storage.

Enterprise Vault offers the advantage of safely removing data from the entire Exchange environment (globally across many servers if necessary) and applying object level deduplication to all archived data. This means that archived data is stored in a highly optimised format; compressed and deduplicated. Enterprise Vault can also take advantage of storage devices offering their own levels of de-duplication such as CAS storage, and NetApp and DataDomain/EMC de-duplication storage. This is not possible with when using Exchange Server 2010 alone.

Max Mailbox and Database increased – The increase in the maximum database and mailbox size allows more users to be hosted per database and for those users to have much larger mailboxes. However this increase in on-line content introduces difficulties as regards Disaster Recovery and general day to day maintenance. It results in much more data needing to be backed up and therefore to be restored. Replication between Exchange servers as part of the new Database Availability Group concept is not the same as a backup.

Enterprise Vault offers the same solution to this problem that it always has, and comes down to the fundamental reason why Enterprise Vault even exists; remove the bulk of data from Exchange while keeping users in touch with the ability to access their data seamlessly via shortcuts and search applications. This leads us onto the next point.

Max number of items per folder increased – Having and using shortcuts to archived content in a users mailbox brings many advantages as regards archive usability and overall size of the mailbox. This increase in maximum number of items supported per folder advocates that shortcutting is a genuine solution to reducing mailbox size. With the advent of the Enterprise Vault, Virtual Vault feature (currently due in EV 8.0 Sp3) however, customers will have a choice: use shortcuts in users mailboxes like they always have, as shortcuts represent a tactile way of keeping in touch with archived items, do not use shortcuts at all and take advantage of the Virtual Vault interface which offers the same functionality as the Exchange 2010 secondary mailbox but with additional advantages of EV (see previous point), or a combination of the two; Virtual Vault plus shortcuts.

In short Exchange Server + Enterprise Vault = the best and most seamless end user experience.

Compliance and EDiscovery – Exchange Server 2010 offers basic searching across multiple primary and secondary mailboxes however to ensure a full and defensible eDiscovery strategy customers will need more than can be offered natively in Exchange.

Exchange Server 2010 does not offer indexing of Public Folder information and therefore this information cannot be searched. There are also limitations with the information it can index, within users mailboxes; the indexing engine can only actually index 15-20 attachment file types which means important information could be missed during a search. Separate searches against File, SharePoint and other content sources would likely also need to be done to complete the compliance request.

Enterprise Vault Discovery and Compliance Accelerator products provide full, feature rich and integrated environments from which to conduct Compliance or EDiscovery searches.

PST Migration – Microsoft's message of moving as much data as possible into Exchange Server 2010 has limitations that make this unfeasible for most customers. PST proliferation in many customers can be huge with large quantities of data living in this format. Moving this data into Exchange will solve the PST headache, but with lack of de-duplication within the Exchange 2010 stores, and with practical limits on the size of mailboxes and online archives, even within Exchange 2010, this is not the final solution.

A typical 20,000 user organization might easily have as much as 20TB of PST data. If all of this were to be copied into Exchange the impact on storage would be considerable. Enterprise Vault provides a feature rich suite of PST migration options which can help customers migrate their PST content with minimal or even no end user interaction. PST files, by their nature, also contain a lot of duplicate messages and attachments; Enterprise Vault will apply the same deduplication technology to this data, as it does with Mailbox, Journal and Public Folder archived data, as it is migrated to ensure that content is only stored once on disk. That 20TB of PST data stored on file servers could easily be reduced by as much as 50%. Most importantly this content does not get migrated into the Exchange stores but rather directly into Enterprise Vault.

Finally...

... and perhaps most importantly Enterprise Vault offers a broad archiving platform across many different content sources and types. Its place as an archiving platform is very different from Exchange Server 2010 that offers a point solution for a archiving from a single application. For that reason deploying Enterprise Vault becomes more of a strategic decision. In the words of a customer:

"Application-by-application solutions are nice for shops that only have limited needs, but the need to archive stuff is only going to grow, and as it does, the overhead of managing will quickly dictate a unified solution. Imagine trying to do backup and restore on a per-application basis *all the time*. (Been there, done that, it sucks.)"

About Symantec

Symantec is a global leader in providing security, storage and systems management solutions to help businesses and consumers secure and manage their information. Headquartered in Cupertino, Calif., Symantec has operations in 40 countries. More information is available at www.symantec.com.

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