GroupWise Personal Archives Migration Challenges and How to Solve Them

GroupWise Personal Archives strategies from Ross Phillips

As GroupWise email systems age, organizations have discovered significant downsides to personal archives in terms of data compliance and eDiscovery. At the same time, GroupWise personal archives migration challenges present hurdles for companies hoping to upgrade to a new system. Fortunately, solutions exist to meet those challenges.

When GroupWise (then WordPerfect Office) appeared on the scene, Mike Tyson reigned as the heavyweight boxing champion. You counted yourself lucky if your computer hard drive held 40 MB of data. And, while the GroupWise database structure remains largely the same, today's average personal archive holds nearly 100 times the data of a 1986 archive.

Potentially Costly Problems

As GroupWise personal archives demonstrate an inability to meet modern business demands, organizations face the prospect of costly issues. These include:

- **Out of compliance data** – Data that can harm the organization in the event of a legal action can remain hidden in personal archives. For instance, users may store personal information that runs counter to GDPR or HIPAA regulations. Or they may store data for far longer than company policy dictates.

- **eDiscovery difficulties** – Because data in personal archives has been removed from the system, administrators cannot easily retrieve it for eDiscovery. For example, if users have chosen to store personal archives on a local device, it will prove virtually impossible for administrators to access them.

- **End user management means administration challenges** – Typically, the IT staff never touches personal archives unless a user requests help with a problem. Consequently, the responsibility for archive maintenance rests with the end users, a task most users lack the knowledge to complete effectively.

- **Lost or corrupted data** – Over time, as users add emails to their personal archives, they run the risk of reaching content limitations. Once the archive database exceeds the limits, GroupWise begins overwriting data. When this happens, data becomes corrupted or lost.

- **Insufficient storage** – Unless the IT staff has hard-coded the location of personal archives, users can store those archives wherever they choose. Local storage, in particular, presents problems because it typically involves less robust security and maintenance than the email server or other network location.

Migrate to Office 365 for Improved Performance, Compliance and eDiscovery

Organizations facing these challenges can either remove personal archives from the environment or upgrade to a more robust email system. Removing personal archives requires users to move emails from archive back into their regular mailbox. In addition to being time-consuming, this option can place significant strain on overloaded GroupWise storage.

A better option involves upgrading from GroupWise to an email system like Office 365. With scalable solutions, intuitive administration and anytime/anywhere access, Office 365 offers clear benefits. It also includes built-in tools for compliance and eDiscovery.

GroupWise Personal Archives Migration Challenges You Can Expect

While GroupWise migration to Office 365 will solve a host of issues and open up new opportunities, the process requires careful management. Know what GroupWise personal archives migration challenges may arise so that you can address them head on. With up front planning and the right tools, these challenges need not cause you to lose sleep.

The initial hurdle lies in determining exactly what personal archives exist and where they live. Because users can define the storage location, archives can exist anywhere, from network servers to local workstations. Savvy users may even have multiple personal archives. And in some instances, archives can become fragmented across multiple workstations.

Duplicates also present a problem, as archive identifiers are only guaranteed to be unique within a single GroupWise post office. For larger organizations that include more than one GroupWise post office, multiple archives can use the same identifier. Administrators need to determine the owner of each archive prior to migration.

Finally, administrators need to time the migration effectively to ensure that all data transfers with minimal disruption to the end user. Because personal archives typically take quite some time to process, administrators will need to freeze them during migration. Otherwise, users will lose any messages added to the archive during migration.

Partner with Groupwise Experts for a Full-Service Solution

Using tools designed specifically for the purpose, the experts at Messaging Architects can work through all the GroupWise personal archives migration challenges. With deep expertise in both GroupWise and Office 365, we can help you migrate smoothly and enjoy all the benefits of a modern system.