

# NuStar Energy Taking a Systematic Approach to Email Management

OpenText Email Management for Microsoft Exchange helps NuStar reduce the cost and risk of mismanaged corporate email

**N**uStar Energy L.P. was established in 2007 after separating from its parent company, Valero Energy. NuStar is one of the largest independent liquids terminal and pipeline operators in the United States and employs over 1,900 people.

## Unchecked growth of email

At the time of the separation from Valero, NuStar® had no formal Records and Information Management policies or limits on mailbox sizes. In a two-year period the company had experienced a 1,500 percent growth in email volume. As a result, NuStar was having difficulty maintaining its email environment. Server capacity was constantly being increased and system performance suffered.

The Legal department was also impacted by the unmanaged email. Every email on the company system was potentially discoverable, even though much of it was redundant, obsolete or transitory information with little to no business value. The costs incurred throughout the eDiscovery processes can be directly correlated to the volume of information (particularly email) in an organization.

Faced with these challenges, NuStar decided to establish a Records and Information Management (RIM) program

with RIM policies to support the defensible and consistent deletion of company information, including emails.

## RIM policy compliant and practical

NuStar introduced their RIM program by implementing an email management solution to address the organization's key requirements: reducing cost and risk. "Email was our biggest pain point," states Clint Wentworth, Records and Information Manager at NuStar Energy. "There were no email policies. Some people put everything in a PST file. Sometimes they'd store that PST on their hard drives, on a shared drive, or on a thumb drive. Sometimes they'd put it in all three locations. It was all over the place in terms of our email."

NuStar needed to find a way to simplify email management for the end users, while addressing the pressures on IT and the legal department.

## INDUSTRY

Energy

## CUSTOMER

NuStar Energy L.P.

## CHALLENGES

- Dramatic growth in email; "keep everything forever" mentality
- Inadequate email storage
- Lack of disposition rules drive up legal costs and risks

## SOLUTIONS

- OpenText Content Server
- OpenText Records Management
- OpenText Archive
- OpenText Email Management for Microsoft Exchange

## BENEFITS

- Compliance with company policies and practices
- Decreased litigation costs
- An increase in electronic storage space

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CLINT WENTWORTH, RECORDS AND INFORMATION MANAGER AT NUSTAR ENERGY

"We had several objectives and goals," says Wentworth. "We wanted to reduce the amount of email that we had and the amount of email that we kept on a regular basis. That leads directly to electronic discovery. The more data that is kept, the greater are the costs incurred. We also needed a way to apply our records retention schedule to email. We wanted to implement the "three-zone" model of classifying email messages. We needed a system that could archive, stub and de-duplicate email files to save on storage. We needed to be able to place items on legal hold. We also want to extend the same records management functionality to all of our other files including those on file shares, Microsoft® SharePoint® and physical objects."

### **Establishing control over email**

After spending several months capturing their requirements and consulting with Gartner and other Information Management consultants, NuStar assessed several Enterprise Content Management (ECM) vendors before selecting the OpenText ECM Suite including Content Server, OpenText Archive, OpenText Email Management for Microsoft Exchange and OpenText Records Management, to establish control over their email records. The interactive classification capabilities of Email Management and support for the "three-zone" email management model, was a critical factor in their decision to go with OpenText.

Another factor in their decision to go with the OpenText solution was how well it complemented the Microsoft Office suite.

"We wanted folks to say, 'hey, that's not so bad; I can do this. This is easy, it makes sense; I can work this into my way of

organizing email.' That was really our approach the whole time. We did not want to create unnecessary burden on our employees. The end user was in mind the whole time," says Wentworth. "We wanted the most user friendly, most intuitive method possible for managing records and email, and that's what the OpenText solution offers us."

### **Simplifying email management**

NuStar's "three-zone" approach to classifying email allows the end-user to determine how long an email will be kept based on how they classify it. Zone 1 is for transitory emails. The majority of email sent and received fall into this category. These messages have no long term value to the company, and most have little to no business value. These emails are not classified by the end user and will be automatically deleted after 120 days.

Zone 2 is for emails classified as Workspace. These emails are for general work related records with a short retention period and will be kept up to two years at which point they will be automatically deleted. Examples of Workspace emails include current project information, training materials, meeting notes, media materials, annual department planning activities, etc. These emails have value to the end user, but do not correspond to a long term retention classification on the company records retention schedule.

Zone 3, designated as business records, is for emails that need to be kept longer than two years and will be classified using a specific record classification from NuStar's records retention schedule. The retention of these emails is managed by OpenText Records Management in accordance with the RIM policy and the records retention schedule.

NuStar uses the Interactive Classification method, which means classifying an email is as easy as dragging it to a folder that the user has already classified or by "right-click classifying" selected emails.

"Everyone organizes email differently. Users are not required to use a pre-defined folder structure for record declaration. They assign record classifications to their folders based on the content of the folders, and they can use their existing folder structure or create a new one. Items dragged to a folder are automatically classified with the classification of that folder. Users can also classify items without using folders. This approach supports users that are filers – people who organize their mailbox using folders – as well as pilers – people who leave all of their mail in the inbox instead of folders – and it does not require them to change their own personal organization style," explains Wentworth.

The solution extends records management and archive functionality to the NuStar email content, where there was none before. "We can now retain and dispose of email records of like kind uniformly across the organization. We can now put an in-place legal hold on emails in our email system without having to create snapshots or collect data. All of our classified emails are archived and stubbed; this has provided an average net result of 30% storage saving per mailbox across the enterprise," notes Wentworth.

When a message is extracted from a folder, it is always replaced with a shortcut (or "stub"), which looks and functions just like the original email message. The shortcut preserves the normal email experience for the end user by ensuring ready access to that email as if it were still in the user's Inbox.

**"In 10 years, when we're double the size, we won't need to look back and think, 'I wish we'd gotten this under control then'..."**

CLINT WENTWORTH,  
RECORDS AND INFORMATION  
MANAGER AT NUSTAR ENERGY

This strategy has also allowed NuStar to start eliminating the use of .PST files in the organization. After users clean up their .PSTs the remaining emails are ingested back into the mail system and are archived, classified as Workspace and stubbed using the OpenText rules. This reduces the storage requirement of the ingested emails by 90% and brings all of the users email into compliance with RIM Policy.

"Eliminating the use of PSTs in our organization is one of the things that we are pretty proud of," says Wentworth. "We have either deleted or ingested them into ECM Suite for each user and we've actually deleted, in terms of size, about as much as we put in. So right now a little over a terabyte of storage has been ingested and around a terabyte and a half has been deleted. A terabyte of storage doesn't cost that much, but what it really saves us is the paralegal time to search those PSTs for any kind of legal holds or electronic discovery."

Wentworth adds, "For the end users, they have a way to comply with policy. But more importantly, we now have a way for them to make sure what's important is kept, and not just for their information, but for everybody on their team from the perspective of succession planning or people leaving the company. As long as the former employee followed policy and classified his or her email appropriately, the important records are kept in the system for the full retention period long after that person is gone."

### Reducing unnecessary legal risks

NuStar's "three-zone" approach to classifying email is balancing the needs of its three key stakeholders: IT, legal, and the business users themselves. For the legal department, this approach reduces legal costs by minimizing the total volume of information retained within the company subject to legal discovery and review. It also reduces risk by ensuring that important messages are demonstrably retained in accordance with policy.

"Legal is one of the big winners," says Wentworth. "It's very easy for us to put the pertinent email on legal hold because all the important information has already been classified, so it's already in the system.

That is simple. And when we do need to perform a review of that information, there's less email to look at. The collections are smaller because the employee's mailboxes are smaller, so they can find what they're looking for a lot faster."

For the employees, the interactive classification three-zoned email management approach has been a catalyst to getting them better organized. "Now that there are rules in place, people are actually thinking about what they're doing with the email and classifying the important messages and getting rid of the clutter. Before, in the absence of policy, everybody kept everything forever. Now there's a little more thought put into organizing their messages and actually taking ownership of their mailbox and their email records. Employees now have less information to manage," states Wentworth. "In addition, the email system is faster and more responsive. All of their email is in one place and all of it is accessible remotely."

### Conclusion

"Having a good RIM policy and complying with it is good business and makes the organization more efficient. We are a fairly young company; we don't have a lot of data right now, so by managing information now in an appropriate way and according to our corporate policies, it won't be a problem in the future. In 10 years, when we're double the size, we won't need to look back and think, 'I wish we'd gotten this under control then because the email growth rate we were looking at was somewhere around 700% a year.' From my perspective, the better run companies in our industry have a good handle on their electronic information. If we don't manage our information according to retention schedules, then instead of it being an asset, it will become a liability," concludes Wentworth. ■