

National Archives (NARA)

The National Archives & Records Administration uses ZL UA for a cloud-based records management solution, creating a records management standard for all federal agencies.

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Background

The National Archives & Records Administration (NARA) approached ZL Technologies for a cloud-based solution to records management. The agency had an upcoming initiative with three primary objectives:

- (1) archive emails to a secure cloud environment, while improving end-user access;
- (2) establish best practices in email management standards for other federal agencies to emulate;
- (3) index emails for eDiscovery and Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) requests.

ZL UA was uniquely positioned to help the agency execute this initiative through its centralized archiving, records management, and eDiscovery functionality. The unified platform offered them options for on-premise, cloud, and hybrid information management, eliminating data silos and data duplicates and assuring consistent search and retention across all organizational data.

ZL UA and Gmail

NARA had recently switched from its Novell email platform to the Gmail platform, a key factor that would inform its vendor selection. ZL rose to the top of the vendor list being the only email archiving platform to have satisfied the requirements of the Department of Defense (DoD) 5015.2 Standard for the Gmail platform. ZL UA is able to capture all Google email, calendar, task, and metadata content, thus providing the 100% capture the agency was looking for.

Additionally, ZL UA allows users to execute records management policies based on easy-to-use native properties like Gmail labels, simplifying the classification process for end-users. The ability to use Gmail's familiar labeling system was a key differentiator as the agency sought an intuitive solution for end-users to sort and mark messages with minimal training. NARA chose three main labels to implement by default in its Gmail environment: permanent, temporary, and non-record. For these reasons, NARA selected ZL.

CUSTOMER PROFILE

INDUSTRY

US Federal Government Agency

HEADQUARTERS

Washington, D.C.

BUSINESS REQUIREMENTS

Archive emails, FOIA and Managing Government Records Directive compliance, establish Capstone records management approach, access emails for eDiscovery

SOLUTION SUMMARY

SOLUTION

ZL UA
Records Manager
Discovery Manager
Storage Manager
Gmail Journaling/Crawling

ENVIRONMENT

Google Mail
MS SQL Server 2008
5300 mailboxes
240+ million messages

Email Management Standards for Federal Agencies

NARA leveraged ZL UA to develop the Capstone approach to standardize electronic management of email records for government agencies. The goal of the Capstone approach was to scale the classification strategy to accommodate the sheer growth and ever-changing definition of electronic records while bolstering classification integrity.

The Capstone approach includes two types of users (senior officials are permanent and standard users are temporary) and three categories of records (permanent, temporary, and non-records). The entirety of a user's emails are initially auto-classified based on the type of user: either temporary or permanent. In other words, a senior user's emails are initially automatically classified as permanent records, while a standard user's emails are auto-classified as temporary records.

End-users have the option, however, of overriding the initial categorization and manually classifying a given email as one of the three categories of records: permanent record, temporary record, or non-record. Thus, a standard user wishing to reclassify an email as a non-record could do so by selecting the "non-record" label within the Gmail; similarly, a standard user wishing to reclassify an email as a permanent email could do so by selecting the "permanent record" label.

The agency tested several approaches when implementing Capstone within its organization, and while ZL UA is able to accommodate a wide range of approaches, from fully automated to fully manual records classification, the agency decided to go with a hybrid approach.

The agency's records management approach utilizes end-users as a filter in the categorization of records. This strikes a sensible balance between the desire to limit the burden on end-users and the desire to avoid categorizing "junk" emails as records. Should NARA's records management requirements change, however, it can always tailor ZL UA to fulfill those requirements, with as much granularity and specificity as necessary.

Cloud Environment and Managed Services

ZL provides NARA a single-tenant, isolated cloud environment as is required for federal data. ZL partners with major cloud players, both domestically and globally, offering clients full flexibility in executing their cloud, on-premise or hybrid strategies.

ZL's SaaS model also provides customers with a complete menu of services such as:

1. Migration services to move on-premise customers to the cloud
2. Services catering to our customers' changing needs – for example, increases in data volumes
3. Complete management of updates
4. Managed services such as exports, special eDiscovery related searches, etc.

These services have enabled NARA to seamlessly execute records management as well as eDiscovery and FOIA requests without the need for their own internal IT team. Because of the scalable architecture that ZL's cloud offering provides, NARA's growing data volumes have been seamlessly accommodated over the years.

KEY BENEFITS

- The only DoD 5015.2 certified archiving solution for Gmail
- Archiving, records management, and eDiscovery functionality all within one platform
- Elimination of data silos and data duplicates
- Consistent search and retention across organizational data
- One-stop solution for all governance needs
- Seamless, reliable migration with unparalleled data integrity

Conclusion

ZL Technologies was able to provide NARA with a comprehensive hosted solution for its eDiscovery, archiving, and records management requirements, making emails available for search and retrieval to both legal teams and end-users (with appropriate access controls). Addressing the lifecycle management of both records and non-records alike, ZL UA delivers unparalleled information governance through its cloud offering.