

Whitepaper 2015

HOSTED EMAIL AND THE SMB: IT'S TIME TO RAISE YOUR EXPECTATIONS



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INTRODUCTION



Like every small business, you need applications that help your business grow with enterprise-level features, but with minimal requirements around management. Enterprises have the luxury of big budgets, in-house expertise, needed staffing, data centers, virtualization, and backup systems – all at their fingertips. In some ways, it's such a given for enterprise, they simply take it all for granted. You, on the other hand, lack these luxuries in every way and are desperate for a means to bring the benefits Enterprises have down to your small slice of the business world.

“When it comes to email, you have the same messaging demands as a company with 10,000 employees.”

So how is a small business supposed to access Enterprise-caliber applications?

When it comes to email, you have the same messaging demands as a company with 10,000 employees, but need the added benefit of handing off the management and maintenance of the infrastructure to someone else, while being able to quickly address day-to-day management without needing to call a support center. The good news is there are plenty of email solutions for the SMB, in both on-premises and hosted flavors.

The on-premises solutions – even if only a single server – will still require those same enterprise components previously mentioned, simply at an entry level: an IT person, a server, software, backups, and more. And if you're really small – like more near the small office/home office (or, SOHO) size of organization, you are the IT department (along with being the CEO, etc.) so this looks even more unpleasant. You can always outsource the work to a local Managed Services Provider, but at the end of the day it's you that's going to need to spend to cover new hardware, operating system upgrades, a failed backup system – in addition to the fees you're paying the service provider.

On the hosting side, nearly every web hosting company has some sort of basic email offering to go along with the website you're hosting with them, with the commodity set of features like access via a web browser, POP and IMAP, and your own domain. It sounds like you're getting closer, but then you wonder: should you just use “freemail” provided by some of the search engines instead?

You shouldn't settle for the simplest of email when you need so much more.

RAISING YOUR EXPECTATIONS



The reality is you need far more than just the basic services that come with email. Yes, commodity services will keep you connected to co-workers and customers via email, but as your business grows, so will your requirements around security, archiving, meeting compliance mandates, your ability to collaborate, the storage required to accomplish much of this, and the all-around feeling that your email is a part of your company, rather than a bunch of individually hosted email accounts on the same domain.

“You shouldn’t settle for the simplest of email when you need so much more”

So what should an SMB expect in a hosted email solution?

Your requirements around hosted email will quickly grow, depending on your industry and size, in four key areas:

- **Productivity** – You’re going to need a full corporate email experience, no matter the client used.
- **Security** – Protecting your email, your data, and your company increase in importance as you grow and have more to protect.
- **Archiving** – Having a copy of old email for compliance, security and HR reasons, will make sense one day.
- **Collaboration** – Your collaborative needs will be vastly different a year from now and email alone may not cut it.

Let’s look at why you should have each of these expectations for Hosted Email, and go over what to expect.

EXPECTATION #1:

PRODUCTIVITY

EXPECTATIONS

PRODUCTIVITY

SECURITY

ARCHIVING

COLLABORATION

Every hosted email solution, in general, provides three methods of accessing email: some form of web access, and via two email protocols – POP and IMAP. These three methods provide very different experiences for the user. Web access can provide an experience that includes a global address list, folder management, and a rich web client. But your business, like most, needs to run on a variety of mobile devices and, while POP and IMAP provide access to messages (and message folders in the case of IMAP), the mobile user lacks access to their corporate calendar and global address list, which could make them less productive.

Is there more than just basic email available to make your business productive?

Productivity: What to Expect?

At the end of the day, you need email to work like your company – one body made up of multiple employees. To feel like a “real” company, the hosted email solution you choose should provide a rich email experience, no matter the device used. So with everything from the full-blown Outlook client, to a browser-based experience from just about any device, all the way down to a mobile client (and that includes iOS, Windows Phone, Blackberry, and other devices), you should expect, at a minimum, the following features:

- **Email** – Synchronized email should be available from any device, anywhere, anytime. This should include not just your Inbox, but email folder structures you create to manage the storage of email.
- **Contacts** – Contacts should be synchronized between your client device and your hosted email, giving you access to the same contacts, in that same “anywhere, anytime, any device” scenario.
- **Calendars** – Not just yours, but others within the company, providing you’ve been given access. Mobile devices may lack some functionality in this area, but web access at a minimum should provide this.
- **Global Address Book** – A complete internal email address list of all employees, contractors, etc. should be accessible.

The bottom line is you don’t just want to send and receive emails to/from an address. Your expectation should be to have the minimum productivity-related functionality that Enterprises enjoy daily.

“At the end of the day, you need email to work like your company”

EXPECTATION #2:

SECURITY

EXPECTATIONS

PRODUCTIVITY

SECURITY

ARCHIVING

COLLABORATION

“An SMB grows...bringing security more into the spotlight as a necessary aspect of the investment you've made into hosted email.”

You may feel that, as a SOHO business, security doesn't have much value - after all, there isn't a lot to protect in the first place. But as an SMB grows, customer data, intellectual property, and business plans become part of the vernacular, bringing security more into the spotlight as a necessary aspect of the investment you've made into hosted email.

To better define what you should be looking for in a security offering, let's define what are the goals of security around email. The first goal is to *keep company information in* (that is, ensuring only employees, and their intended recipients, can see company emails, attachments, etc.) and the second is *keeping malicious code out*.

Can hosted email security meet both goals?

Security: What to Expect?

At a foundational level, there are three layers of security you should be looking for that enterprises implement: security at a message, content, and user level. Let's look at each and see how they, in total, achieve the goals of keeping company data in and malicious code out.

Message Security

At a message level, email needs to be protected while in transit by means of encryption. Web browser sessions, and (at a technical level) the ports used to send and receive email need to be encrypted.

An additional layer of encryption borders the *message/content* security layers, by offering encryption around the email message itself. Organizations which need

to ensure messages with certain content, or those being sent to specific recipients, remain completely secure can utilize policy-driven encryption to keep this information from being seen by anyone other than the intended recipient; encryption at these different levels help to keep company information within the proverbial walls of the organization

Content Security

Content security protects the business by ensuring email doesn't contain spam and malware. But with spam representing nearly 70% of email, and over 99% of virus infections originating from an email, you absolutely need to expect that hosted email has not just a function to identify spam, but also to proactively scan and quarantine emails and attachments suspect of containing malware.

User Security

If you can find an exceptional hosted email solution, the concept of security extends to the user by means of providing desktop antivirus/antimalware. The reason? Malware is malware; email is just the delivery mechanism.

So if a provider is serious about protection, they won't simply draw the line at email.

EXPECTATION #3:

ARCHIVING

EXPECTATIONS

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SECURITY

ARCHIVING

COLLABORATION

Compliance regulations, litigation support and storage management are just some of the reasons organizations look to archive email. When you're starting out with Hosted Email, there is so little email that archiving isn't an issue, but fast forward 6 months, a year, etc., and you may need to offload older email content to an archive, but still retain it for an extended period of time.

While you may think that because your email is in the cloud, archiving will never pertain to you. But when you consider that every hosted email solution has some form of mailbox size limit (and assume you hit it), mixed with your desire (or external requirement) to retain older content for a number of years, the need for archiving becomes evident.

What, then, defines a solid archiving offering?

Archiving: What to Expect?

Archiving is partially about taking old messages and attachments meeting certain criteria (usually around age) and hosting them in a system designed for long-term storage and retrieval; that's the easy part. It's what you're able to do with the archived content that matters. In general, you should expect an archiving offering to have the following features:

- **Encryption** – Archived messages should be encrypted while in transit to/from your hosted email and when archived.
- **Retention Policies** – Not all email really needs to be archived (like lunch invites, or plans for the weekend). Policies based on content, sender, or recipient can determine what should be held and for how long.
- **Data Validation** – From a compliance and legal perspective, Data Validation is what allows you to demonstrate that the archive hasn't been altered and that it is a true reflection of what communications transpired; this is critical.
- **Self-Service Search** – You want to be able to perform searches yourself, or to assign them to legal counsel, should the need arise. And the search capabilities should be powerful enough to scour email bodies and attachments.
- **Legal Holds** – If content is subject to anticipated litigation, audits, or a government investigation, it can be held within the archive, regardless of retention policies that would otherwise discard it.

While this all sounds rather complex and expensive, it is well within the reach, both technically and financially, of SMB customers looking for a complete hosted email solution.

“You may think that because your email is in the Cloud, archiving will never pertain to you. But...”

EXPECTATION #4:

COLLABORATION

EXPECTATIONS

PRODUCTIVITY

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Let's assume you have a robust, full-featured hosted email solution in use. That means it's not a far stretch to make the generalization that you are comfortable with your company data being hosted with a trusted provider. So as your business grows, it's likely you'll find that collaboration through email (even with multiple people on a single email thread) isn't exactly the most productive way to collaborate. You need logical spaces to host projects, discussions, related files, and calendars. Therefore, you'd likely look for a collaboration solution in the same way you needed hosted email - by searching for a hosted solution that gives you all the benefits of an enterprise collaborative solution, without any of the management headache.

That's obviously not email. So is looking to your email provider the right choice?

Collaboration: What to Expect?

Enterprises, in general, go in one of two possible directions with collaboration. They either utilize in-house solutions to take advantage of their internal Directory Service for single sign-on, or they utilize a cloud-based solution.

So, do you need to just find two separate solutions?

The short answer is *No*. Hosting collaboration is really no different than email. In fact, it benefits you to find a single provider that offers both for a few reasons:

- **Integrated Security** - The right solution integrates authentication between your email and your collaboration, and that's important; your employees should only need to know one username and password to access both environments. It also simplifies the management of security within these systems to allow proper groups of employees to access those conversations, content, and data appropriate to their job.
- **Additional Storage** - Collaboration includes accessing related files, which require additional storage. By finding a single provider that provides this extended web presence for collaboration and storage, in addition to hosted email, you'll find a single partner to help you grow, and lowered overall costs for all three services.

By choosing a hosting partner that ties email with collaboration and storage, you'll lower management and subscription costs, while working to increase employee productivity.

"You need logical spaces to host projects, discussions, related files, and calendars."

CONCLUSION

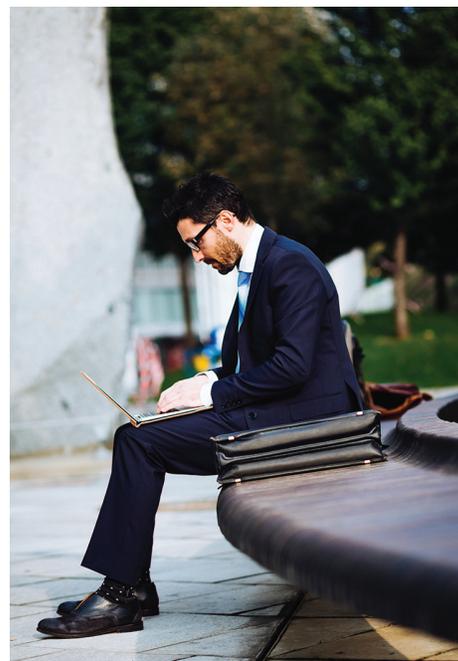
And you thought all you needed was basic email! It's evident that when you're a company of one, a simple Inbox will do, but as the company grows anywhere beyond that, the business needs change. That's why it's important to raise your expectations of your hosted email to successfully meet those needs. Enterprises aren't the only companies that should take services around productivity, security, archiving and collaboration for granted; there's no reason why the modern SMB shouldn't as well.

By raising your expectations to include these additional services, your business can begin to function like a larger business, improving employee productivity, increasing security, optimizing storage, and maintaining compliance – all allowing the business to grow.

NaviSite's Exchange Portfolio

Because Exchange implementations are distinct across organizations, NaviSite provides convenient service personalization and cost-competitive pricing options to meet the unique needs of your business. NaviSite Hosted Exchange services provide exceptional resiliency, high availability, industry-standard security and a feature-rich portfolio of services. Pricing and options are available to meet the various needs of your business with an expert support team and powerful SLAs.

For more information about NaviSite's Hosted Exchange services, visit www.navisite.com.



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NaviSite, Inc., A Time Warner Cable Company, is a leading worldwide provider of enterprise-class, cloud-enabled hosting, managed applications and services. NaviSite provides a full suite of reliable and scalable managed services, including Application Services, industry-leading Enterprise Hosting, and Managed Cloud Services for organizations looking to outsource IT infrastructures and lower their capital and operational costs. Enterprise customers depend on NaviSite for customized solutions, delivered through a global footprint of state-of-the-art data centers.

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