

Message Archiving



TO: Board of Directors
Mike Fletcher, Executive Director
SUBJECT: Message Archiving Proposal

Background

As a government entity, Columbia 9-1-1 is required to maintain an archive of the communications of its employees to satisfy public record requests and investigatory interests. Currently, the district uses the Barracuda Message Archiver for this purpose, originally installed in 2013.

Columbia 9-1-1 has recently completed a migration away from the old email server to a cloud service, Office 365. This move was necessary as the aging email server had become unreliable. The move to Office 365 additionally enhanced district security, and the ability of district employees to collaborate with powerful tools like Microsoft Teams.

Problem

The existing Barracuda Message Archiver is an aging piece of hardware, which is no longer supported by its producing company. It will receive no further security updates and is inherently vulnerable to physical failure. Additionally, it is incapable of archiving communications on Microsoft Teams. Office 365's integrated archiving tools are relatively limited and will hinder the district's ability to fulfill public record requests in a timely fashion if relied upon.

Solutions

The district has solicited quotes from two professional archiving services, Smarsh and Barracuda. Both Smarsh and Barracuda offer cloud-based solutions which will greatly enhance the security and reliability of message archiving. Both companies are reputable and well-established in the field. The Barracuda solution can archive most components of Microsoft Teams but is unable to archive chat conversations between users. The Smarsh solution can archive all components of Microsoft Teams.

Pricing

Smarsh (Email + Teams): \$8,880 per year + \$2,362.50 onboarding = \$11,242.50 upfront

Barracuda (Email): \$2,286 per year

Recommendation

The district's technical team recommends that we procure the Smarsh solution. The Barracuda offering is less expensive, but its inability to capture all parts of Microsoft Teams is a critical weakness in fulfilling our obligations as a government entity.