

Kroll Migrating to Exchange 2010 and more with Ontrack PowerControls 6.1

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The move to Exchange 2010 is on. According to a Report by The Radicati Group, Inc, it was expected that by the end of 2010 the entire installed base of all versions of Exchange would have 301 million mailboxes and by 2014 that is expected to grow to 470 million mailboxes. This represents an annual growth rate of 12% and the expectation is that by 2014 57% of the total Exchange deployments will be on Exchange 2010. What this means is that there is a need to help users with those upgrades. There is also a compelling new feature within Exchange 2010, The Archive Mailbox, that may require accessing old Exchange data and re-integrating it back into the Exchange environment. In both cases Kroll Ontrack's Ontrack PowerControls 6.1 may be the ideal solution to not only help with these migration issues but to also be a valuable daily tool when accessing Exchange data.

Migration Without Upgrading

One of the more challenging aspects of moving to Exchange 2010 is that the stated best practice is to first move to Exchange 2007. For customers still on Exchange 2003 or an even older version of Exchange this means they have to upgrade twice to get to the most current version of the product. There also may be some additional licensing fees associated with this path. Often this can lead to further resistance to upgrading and put the organization even further behind or may even cause them to look to alternative email platforms.

Ontrack PowerControls may be an ideal solution. It allows you to read old mailbox stores and move or "restore" them directly into Exchange 2010. No other instance of Exchange needs to be running since Ontrack PowerControls can directly read and interpret the Exchange information. If a mailbox already exists on the server it will store the new messages into that mailbox, if the mailbox does not exist it will create the mailbox for you.

Migrating Legacy Content

One of the more compelling features of Exchange 2010 is the Archive Mailbox feature. That brings basic email archiving functionality to organizations that have not yet implemented an email archiving strategy and maybe never plan to. The archive mailbox eliminates the need for local user mailbox PST files. Local PST files have long been a problem area in Exchange environments, they are typically stored on the local user's hard drive (or worse on the corporate NAS), get corrupted easily and are difficult to include and manage in the backup process. The Archive mailbox is a place where users can archive messages but it resides in the same mailbox database as the user's main mailbox on the Exchange server. This also means that it can be accessed from anywhere with the Outlook Web App not just from the user's desktop.

What would make the Exchange 2010 Archive Mailbox capability even more compelling would be the if legacy data that is stored on tapes or disk backups could be reimported, easily, into an Exchange environment to take advantage of the archive mailbox. Ontrack PowerControls' again makes this possible. With the ability to read old Exchange backups directly those can be queried for the right data and then that data can be imported directly into the users Inbox and then Exchange 2010 archive mailbox rules will move those old messages to the archive mailbox automatically. The older version of Exchange does not need to be started and thanks to Ontrack

PowerControls search capabilities only the specific emails you want re-integrated will be added back into the environment.

More Than Migration - Archive For The Rest Of Us

For organizations that need it, nothing can replace an enterprise archive system, but small to medium sized companies have repeatedly decided (by not buying them) that an enterprise archive system is not worth the investment and have counted on a combination of snapshots and backups to protect their Exchange environment and to fill the role of the archive function. The problem is that with most storage systems the snapshot feature is only good for complete Exchange database rollback. It is not effective for single message recovery as you would need to launch another copy of Exchange to explore that store. While backup applications offer some search functionality most do not allow for a specific project type of search like "find all the emails that John sent to Tom in 2008".

Ontrack PowerControls 6.1 brings that kind of search capability to both snapshots and backups. It can read these images quickly and directly without requiring any Exchange server resources. This information can be moved back into an active Exchange instance or it can be exported to a PST file and sent to the information requestor. Also all of this interaction with the data is read-only, so access is safe and secure. Ontrack PowerControls is not designed to replace your backup application or snapshot functionality, it augments them by adding advanced search capabilities and drag and drop restoration of information.

Storage Swiss Take

I've been using and implementing Ontrack PowerControls for what seems like forever, probably about five years (which is forever in the IT world). It has always proven to be fast, reliable and affordable. It should be a required add-on to any storage system that has snapshot functionality and for any organization that has an Exchange migration on the horizon. It can add significant functionality until you do that migration, while you do that migration and after the migration is complete.