

Archiving Design and Deployment Services

Manage Electronic Records to Ensure Cost-Effective Storage and Retrieval that Meets Compliance Requirements and Business Needs

Service Overview

Objective

Identify archiving targets, design an archiving architecture that fits the organization's needs and resources, and facilitate deployment of an effective archiving solution.

Deliverables

- Data analysis and archiving target selection for major data types:
 - E-mail and instant messaging
 - Structured data and enterprise database applications
 - Unstructured data / file servers
- Technical requirements analysis
- Strawman archiving solution design
- RFI/RFP definition and project management with vendors and staff
- Vendor comparison summary and recommendation
- Deployment plan and budget
- Pilot implementation & testing plan
- Detailed deployment plan

Benefits

- Reduces risks of data loss and non-compliance, by moving static data and inactive records to archival storage
- Increases application service levels by removing inactive data from production systems
- Reduces the need for server additions and upgrades
- Lowers storage costs by selecting appropriate archiving systems and storage tiers for inactive data

Why Move Static Data?

Most records and data become less active over time, and the volume of static data keeps increasing. Application performance falls, backup and recovery take longer, batch jobs can't complete, and IT organizations find themselves buying more servers and storage.

This is especially painful when the static data is mixed in with active data on the same high-performance storage tier -- and then protected with frequent backups and remote replication.

By moving static data out of the active data sets, and placing it on a lower-cost storage tier, enterprises can significantly improve service levels and greatly reduce their storage costs.

Once the initial data classification is complete, and application data groups are placed on appropriate storage tiers, the next logical step is to look more closely at each major application.

Where are the opportunities to improve performance and lower costs? And who has the skills, tools and time to target those opportunities, define the technical requirements and drive an archiving project from design to deployment?

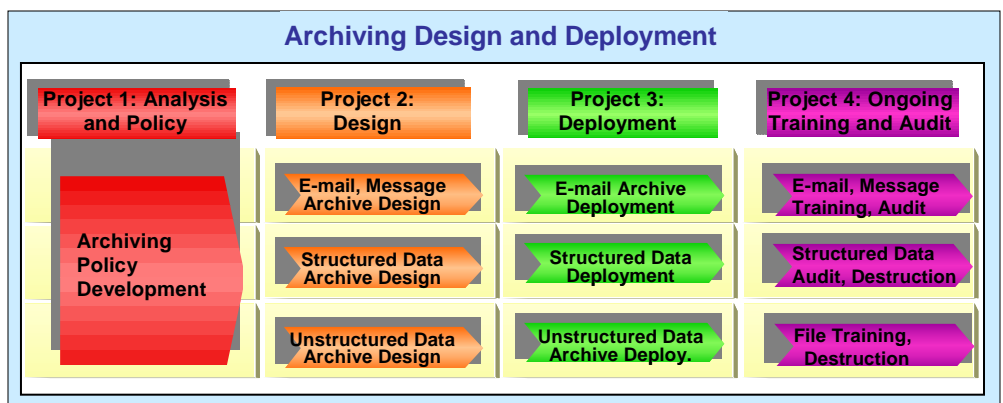
Application-Aware Archiving

The simplest archiving approaches use file-system metadata to select and move complete files. However, these methods provide little value for e-mail messaging and database applications, where old and new records reside inside the same file.

Even for unstructured data, such as office documents in a file system, some methods and technologies are more effective than others.

Contoural offers Archiving Design and Deployment services that help companies improve application service levels and reduce costs, by migrating static data out of active data sets and into lower-cost archival storage.

These services are structured as discrete projects that offer immediate value, such as helping clients understand the requirements and opportunities for archiving specific applications and data types. Or facilitating the architecture, design, vendor selection and deployment of an effective archiving solution for an impacted application.



Phase 1: Analysis and Policy

The first phase typically includes an analysis of the data retention and archiving requirements in one or more application areas, to identify opportunities for significant business benefits and ROI.

While the company may have previously updated its general record-retention policies to address electronic records, they may need to apply that policy to the specific data structures used in the target applications. These data elements may include database records, messages, files or other objects.

In addition, Contoural analysts will evaluate the potential benefits of available archiving solutions, based on the characteristics of the data and the amount of data that could be moved from active to static storage.

Phase 2: Design

The technical requirements analysis is followed by a strawman archiving solution design, including cost estimates for alternative approaches.

Depending on the client's timeframe and levels of in-house skills and staffing, Contoural may also develop and issue appropriate Request for Information (RFI) and/or Request for Proposal (RFP) documents and facilitate the vendor response and evaluation processes.

Since electronic archiving solutions and capabilities are continually changing, it is important that each client evaluate currently available solutions in terms of its own business requirements and infrastructure.

This phase generally concludes with a vendor comparison summary, a short list for testing and negotiation, and a recommended deployment plan and budget.

Depending on the applications and time horizons, the recommendations may range from point solutions for specific applications to more general-purpose archiving approaches.

Phase 3: Deployment

Contoural offers deployment services for clients who prefer an objective and experienced partner to guide them through the challenges of matching a vendor's product to their company's unique technical environment and business processes.

The tasks in this phase can include project planning and management, configuration and installation assistance, pilot deployment, user acceptance testing, and a review of business process changes that can help assure a successful outcome.

Contoural offers deployment services directly to enterprise clients, and also works closely with a number of major archiving hardware, software and solution vendors. By adding Contoural's understanding of business needs, data policy and application requirements to the vendor's technical product skills, these vendors can help their customers quickly realize the full value of their investments in archiving solutions.

Phase 4: Training and Audit

A successful archiving strategy must look beyond the immediate issues and technical solutions, and address other factors that impact compliance, cost or business productivity.

Contoural offers follow-on projects in areas such as end-user communication and education programs, and periodic audits of policy compliance and process effectiveness.

For very-long-term archiving needs, Contoural experts can also help plan and budget for data migration as media and data formats evolve over time.

About Contoural

Contoural is a leading independent provider of business and technology consulting services focused on compliance, intelligent data management and storage strategy.

Contoural helps clients address the emerging business requirements around data, and then align their business needs with their IT strategies and storage spending. This bridges the gap between applications and storage.

Contoural helps enterprises ensure compliance and reduce risks, while also optimizing service levels and reducing costs.

Contoural Services

Contoural consulting services cover a broad range of enterprise needs, from compliance assessment and policy definition to storage strategy, solution architecture and deployment assistance. Contoural is an independent provider of professional services, working with IT organizations and major storage software and hardware vendors to ensure selection and deployment of cost-effective solutions that meet real business needs.

Contoural consulting practices include:

- Compliance and Retention Policy Development
- Data Classification and Tiered Storage Strategy
- Archiving Design and Deployment
 - E-mail and Instant Messaging
 - Unstructured Data and File Servers
 - Structured Data and Enterprise Applications
- Backup and DR Optimization

For more information, visit www.contoural.com or email us at info@contoural.com

