

E G U I D E

11 Myths about Microsoft Exchange Backup & Recovery



For as long as Microsoft Exchange Server has existed, so too, has the market seen its share of products for backup and recovery. Over the years there have been a number of products that have been unable to come through when needed most - during an Exchange outage. Making proper backups is part of the process, ensuring that when you have an outage, it will be the shortest possible. But, with the large variety of products available for all types of businesses, it is no surprise that there are several misconceptions about backup and recovery software.

Here then, are **11 Myths about Microsoft Exchange Backup & Recovery**. And, how we can overcome them.

I will be able to recover from my backups

REALITY: According to research conducted by Microsoft, 42% of all Exchange Server recoveries conducted from tape will fail. Each year companies of all sizes spend thousands of dollars on the latest and greatest hardware and software backup solutions. These new technologies give us a false sense of security because they only address the issue of moving Exchange data from *Point A* (the Exchange Server) to *Point B* (the backup media). But Exchange is a dynamic and complex application. Special care needs to be taken to ensure all key components have been protected, not just the data. STM and LOG files, registry settings, AD configurations and O/S configurations all play an important role in maintaining an operational Exchange environment. And, if your Exchange Server is in an abnormal state when it's being backed up, your processes may be fruitless, as you're backing up information that will not lead to a successful restore.

The primary reasons Exchange Servers fail to recover from backups are corrupted log files and even worse, a corrupted EDB. The smallest issue may corrupt a data store or log file in such a way that when recovered from tape, the EDB fails to mount. At that point you call Microsoft and start running ESEUTIL to try and repair your database so it will mount, all at the expense of precious time and potential data loss.

Implement *continuous application protection (CAP)* by switching to an application-specific backup process. This will ensure that you are not just backing up the data but also the state of the application, ensuring a full recovery when needed.

Replay from AppAssure Software guarantees your recoveries will be successful, by continuously monitoring and checking the health of your Exchange data stores and log files. Replay notifies you in near-real-time if the data stores are not mountable or the logs are corrupt, so you can correct the issue(s) before it is too late. Should you have a corruption issue, Replay's utilities can even open and help you restore them. Replay gets you back up and running in minutes, not days.

I must perform brick-level backups to restore individual messages

REALITY: Most backup solutions require a separate MAPI-level backup known as "brick-level backups", in order to enable the restoring of individual messages. But, Exchange administrators don't have enough time in the day to spend time on restoring individual messages for the CEO who accidentally deleted an important memo. So these types of requests can often go unfulfilled.

Eliminate the need for performing brick-level backups by implementing an EDB-browsing utility. You'll save time by not having to perform a second MAPI-level backup and you'll be able to fulfill those requests for missing e-mails.

Replay eliminates the need to perform brick-level backups. Replay's "built-in" EDB browser can open any un-mounted EDB and restore individual messages with a search and click. Using the browser you can open any EDB (even many that are corrupted) from Exchange 2003 or 2007 and recovery messages back to a live Exchange Server or even export messages to PST files.

I can't detect data store corruption in a backup

REALITY: Traditionally, the only way to test for data store corruption in Exchange backups was to test the entire restore process (copy data back from tape to another Exchange Server and perform a restore via the "*recovery storage groups*" utility. Exchange administrators just don't have the time to devote to this cumbersome process, especially on a regular basis. And what if it fails? Do you have to refactor your process or just try again and hope it works?

Proactively validate the health of your Exchange Server so that you prevent corrupted data from permeating into your backups.

Replay 2007 continuously checks and validates the Exchange Server application and proactively alerts you at the first sign of data store corruption. Each recovery point is guaranteed to be mountable, because the process mounts and tests it off the host-server. Guaranteed recovery when you need it most!

It will take an all-nighter to get Exchange up and running

REALITY: Exchange's complexities combined with restoring backups often takes more time than desired. Coffee, Red Bull and Mountain Dew, are the real tools of the Exchange administrator. With traditional backup and restore processes, it can take an all-nighter to get Exchange going again, if and only if you can overcome all the "jet errors".

Replay automatically and continuously tests your Exchange backups, guaranteeing fast and corruption-free recoveries.

Exchange recovery solutions only protect the Exchange data

REALITY: Existing recovery solutions work hard to protect the Exchange data by backing it up, replicating it, and off-loading it to another location. However, when e-mail is down, you don't just want the Exchange Data, you need the data *and* the application environment up and running so your users have full messaging capabilities.

Adopt a backup and recovery solution that handles more than just the data – but the application too. By implementing continuous application protection (CAP) you gain end-to-end coverage.

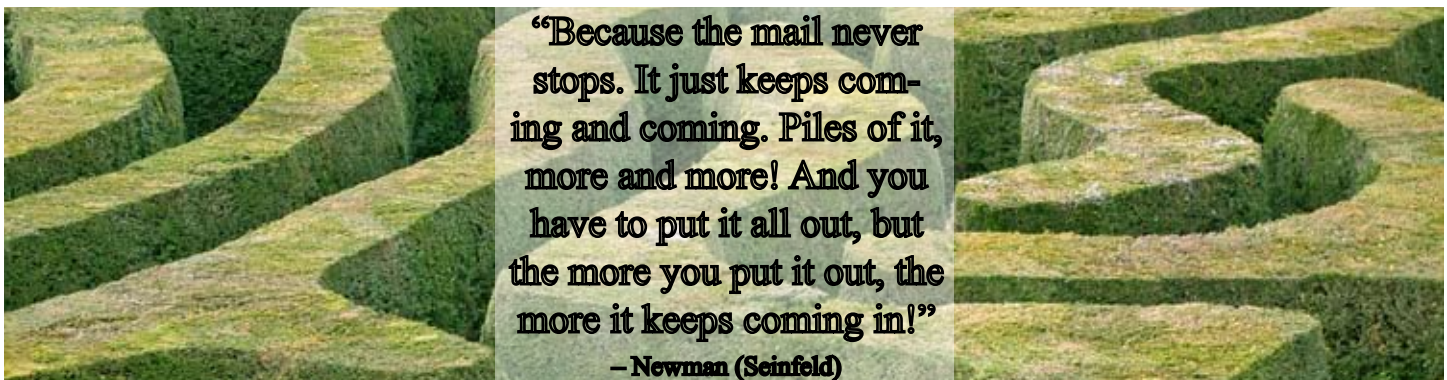
Replay is the *only* backup and recovery product available today that protects the *entire* Ex-

Identify corruption proactively so that errors stay at bay. And, if they do happen to occur, have a method for recovering messages from damaged EDBs and log files.

Replay not only alerts you to corruption in near-real-time, but also enables you to open corrupted EDBs and data stores to recover messages. You can even leverage Replay's EDB-browser to recover messages while Exchange is off-line. Additionally, you can export the recovered messages to PSTs.

In order to perform Exchange Server snapshots I need a SAN

REALITY: SANs offer great disk I/O performance but are application-agnostic, therefore making no accommodation to the uniqueness of Exchange data. The result is fast storage of large backup files but with limited realized benefit when it comes to a true disaster recovery scenario. You'll still have to rebuild your server, not just restore the data.



Eliminate the need to rebuild an Exchange environment from all the various pieces and opt for a system that can simply be activated with an 'easy button' when needed, day or night.

With Replay, simply rewind your Exchange Server and instantly recover the data you need (including the AD, O/S and other environmental variables). From bare metal to individual messages, rewind and press play.

I don't have the time to properly test my backups

REALITY: There's not enough time in the day to test each backup. Doing so requires running several utilities and standing up a test server to check the validity of the backup files.

Eliminate the need to test individual backups after the fact by replacing this process with a proactive method for identifying issues in real time. This ensures that corruption never makes its way into your backup files.

change environment O/S, application settings, and Exchange data in the form of a single application state-full image. Other solutions only copy select files. Replay protects and recovers the *entire* Exchange environment so that when the Exchange server fails, there is no need to rebuild a server from scratch. Simply rewind to a point before the failure and press play. It's like Tivo® for Exchange.

I cannot recover e-mail when the transaction log is corrupt

REALITY: A "JET -501 JET_errLogFileCorrupt" error message can ruin your day. Support procedures generally indicate that you should run the ESEUTIL/K utility, which will result in repairing the corruption at the expense of potentially losing precious user data. This is not a viable option for those businesses where Exchange is mission-critical.

Add a utility that maintains complete application awareness, not just data backup for faster recoveries.

Add Replay to your existing SAN-based Exchange environment to realize the benefit of true application state-fullness. Your SAN will have full environment snapshots in case you need more than just data.

No SAN? No Worries! Replay's real-time imaging engine creates complete application awareness and ready snapshots of your Exchange environment to any type of disk storage system.

Continuous Exchange protection is expensive

REALITY: Maintaining a proper Exchange environment requires more than just a server and an Exchange license. You need storage, processing capacity, bandwidth and of course, backup and recovery software. All of these

components can add up to big price tags, exceeding many budget limits.

Not all backup and recovery solutions are created equal. Find a solution that balances your needs (performance, recovery time objective, automation) with right suite of utilities that fits with your budget. Newer, modern solutions are built to be application-specific, which means they make the backup and recovery process easier to automate, maintain and perform. Avoid the generic storage solutions.

Replay is priced right for your organization. With two versions, one geared towards smaller companies (sub-1000 mailboxes) and another geared towards multi-node high-transaction systems, finding the right balance of performance and features for your budget is easy. Best of all, Replay scales with your business, so unlocking the full power is just a few clicks away at any time. Replay pays for itself in its first use through savings in reduction of downtime during the recovery process and prevention of data loss.

An Exchange-specific recovery solution is too expensive and requires yet another software product to learn

REALITY: Installing, configuring and learning another application can be a daunting task to an already heavily burdened systems administrator. And then there are the associated costs with deploying new solutions (actual price and man hours).

Finding the right backup and recovery solution for you (and your team) is a challenging task. Take the time to properly evaluate a product before you commit to learning a new tool.

Replay can be installed in a few minutes and complete configuration is accomplished in less than 10 clicks. With an interface derived (and improved upon) from Microsoft Management Consoles, there is a minimal learning curve. Download Replay from our web site and see for yourself that backup and recovery management can be this easy.

A full backup takes a three-day weekend

REALITY: E-Mail might slow down over the weekend, but with each new day, there's more and more of it for you to manage. As the backbone of most organizations for not just messaging, but also scheduling and managing tasks/resources, data stores are growing at

exponential rates. Backing up your systems properly is a requirement, and most of us think it takes hours upon hours to complete. While archiving can reduce the data store size, it does nothing for the sheer number of messages contained in any one mailbox. As a result, it is not uncommon for a traditional "full backup" to take in excess of 24 hours, especially when factoring in the time it takes to perform the database integrity checks.

Adopting a process that doesn't require full ESE integrity checks on every backup will reduce your backup time dramatically because you will only need to check today's data, not the previous day's data.

Replay delivers a first for Exchange administrators, differential ESE checks. Not only does Replay continuously validate and protect you from data store corruption, it also dramatically reduces the time needed to perform costly data store integrity checks. Replay off-hosts the ESE checks (freeing up valuable processing capacity on the Exchange Server) and reduces the time needed to perform log truncation by over 70%.

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For more information about Replay, visit us on the web at:

www.AppAssure.com

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