

Re-Invest 30 Minutes Per Day

Maximize "Return-on-Time" to Funnel Benefits into Productivity and Career

By Tad Benson, X1 Technologies

Without an effective email and desktop search solution, knowledge workers are suffering from a poor "return-on-time" (ROT). This has become a systemic problem for both *Fortune* 500 employees and sole proprietors working from home offices. The exponential proliferation of daily emails sent and received and data stored on local desktops, email archives, in the "cloud" and in proprietary storage silos has resulted in a staggering information management struggle for individuals.

A recent Deloitte study stated that knowledge workers send 160 messages per day and check their email more than 50 times—in total dedicating up to two hours of each working day to email.¹ Compounding the problem is the sheer magnitude of saved and stored data that individuals are forced to manage, including documents, spreadsheets, proprietary format files and images. Accenture estimates that middle managers spend more than 25% of their time searching for information necessary to do their jobs, "and when they do find it, it is often wrong."²

What You Can't Quantify Should Scare You

Unfortunately, calculating a return-on-investment (ROI) for email and desktop search can be difficult because of its personal and amorphous nature. As a consequence, it is a frightening thought that organizations don't understand just what they are losing in employee productivity. In a sobering study, IBM reported that businesses waste 5.3 hours per employee as a result of poor business practices, while 42% of employees are forced to make decisions with the wrong information at least once per week.³

While strict ROI calculations for enhanced productivity resulting from effective email and desktop search can be challenging, we can poke around the edges on

our personal—and, by extension—corporate return-on-time. Stop and think about the last time you searched for an email or document that you thought existed but were unsure of its location. How much time did you spend searching for it? Was this search ultimately abandoned? Did you spend hours re-creating the document? More importantly, how can you truly quantify effectively answering a key customer, partner or colleague's question in a timely manner?

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Re-Investing Saved Time—A Case Study

The simple truth is that email and desktop search users are able to react quicker and more accurately to inbound requests, allowing them to accomplish more meaningful corporate objectives. Take Rick R., an X1 Professional Client user, who has been able to save considerable time and re-invest it into value-generating personal and professional tasks. Rick is a presales solutions

architect who says: "Frequently, my customers ask if I know of any tips about using component 'abc' in an 'xyz' environment. I have saved email messages from three topical groups with tens of thousands of messages over the past year or so. I can almost always find an answer for a customer searching this resource with X1," he said.

"We are constantly out of time and have more demands on our time than we have time to fulfill them. Now I can:

- ◆ Get customers answers quicker—raising customer satisfaction;
- ◆ Move out of the routine, mundane, time-consuming administrative search time-sink into creative, revenue-producing architecture proposals for our customers;
- ◆ Provide more quick answers for a base of several hundred peers who share internal mail lists asking technical questions for mutual support and then get back to my revenue-producing work; and
- ◆ Spend less "after-hours" company time and do family time instead for better work/life balance," said Rick.

Once this individual time savings is extrapolated and applied against the entire organization, the sum return-on-time metrics become incredibly compelling. One leading *Fortune* 500 technology company has collectively saved \$6.4 million dollars with just one division. The employees surveyed reported that 67% use the product on a daily basis and 99% use it at least once a week. They estimate that they EACH save 74 hours per year. This equates to over \$6.4 million savings for the company with this one department alone.

According to a November, 2009, survey, users reported saving an average of 30 minutes per day. This equates to 2+ hours of valuable time every week that professionals are redirecting into both their daily responsibilities and broader career development. By first designing a plan to replace time previously wasted searching for information with higher value objectives, email and desktop search users can both increase their overall productivity levels and enhance the quality of hours spent working. ■

X1 Technologies was founded in 2003 with a mission to make it easier to find emails, files and data on networked computers. Our patented search solution allows people to access all forms of data, from email inboxes to contracts in document management systems to archived email, all through a single, elegant interface.

For more information and to download X1 Desktop Search visit www.X1.com.

1. deloitte.com

2. newsroom.accenture.com

3. www-03.ibm.com/press/us/en/pressrelease/27408.wss