

PRODUCT FLASH

RenewData Announces ActiveVault 4.0: Offers Retention Management, Legal Hold, and Early Case Assessment for Historical Data

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IN THIS PRODUCT FLASH

This IDC Flash discusses RenewData's recently announced ActiveVault 4.0 release.

SITUATION OVERVIEW

On June 26, 2008, during Legal Tech West, RenewData — a provider of data extraction, migration, and electronic discovery services — announced the release of its ActiveVault 4.0 offering. Key features of ActiveVault 4.0 include:

- ☒ **Data consolidation.** ActiveVault consolidates virtually any data sitting on backup media into a single place for uniform management and control. This focus on the archival of historical data is unique in the market.
- ☒ **A new Web-based interface.** Authorized users (e.g., compliance, security and incident response, general counsel, and outside counsel) can go directly into the ActiveVault archive and conduct their own search activities. There are significant cost and process benefits from enabling this self-service capability.
- ☒ **Automated workflows for retention management.** Historical data that is ingested into the archive is indexed and classified. The application supports user-based and lexicon classification schemas. The client can use the information in the metadata to define retention and legal hold business rules.
- ☒ **Support for early case assessment (ECA).** ActiveVault 4.0 currently supports Boolean search. Users can search across names, data ranges, file types, key words, and phrase with proximity and exclusion support. RenewData has an existing integration with Attenex to conduct meaning-based and conceptual search and analysis within the results of the original search result set. These activities can be done within the RenewData ActiveVault repository.
- ☒ **Case management capabilities.** The application allows authorized users to create case folders and track and manage the status of legal holds within the ActiveVault archives.

FUTURE OUTLOOK

RenewData made its name by providing high-volume processing, extraction, migration, and ingestion of historical data from legacy backup tapes, content addressable storage (CAS), and optical platters. Despite the robust growth for eDiscovery services, the segment for media extraction, restoration, and processing has been facing tremendous pricing pressure. Historically, this market segment also tended to be project based with unpredictable revenue streams.

Over the past 15 months, RenewData has taken several steps to successfully differentiate itself from its peers and enable more predictability in its revenue model. These steps include continued R&D investments in its content extraction and processing technologies, strategic relationships with market leaders in content archiving and search and analytics, the introduction of supplementary risk management services for legacy media, and the introduction of new pricing models that move away from the volume-based revenue approach. RenewData appears to be very focused on its customer (the large corporation with multiple litigation and massive volumes of historical data). The vendor's product, pricing strategy, professional services, and channel activities are tailored to address the complex litigation risk management and cost containment needs from historical data.

RenewData already enables its existing content extraction and migration customers to have the option of hosting the historical data within RenewData's repository (ActiveVault) or within the customer's own datacenter. When the customers choose ActiveVault, the solution functions as a hosted archival repository of potentially responsive electronic evidence from the legacy tapes, disks, platters, and other media that RenewData processed and extracted for its clients. Since the content is historical data that existed before the client had adopted an archival application, ActiveVault was not intended to facilitate customers' mailbox and storage management requirements. A mailbox owner cannot go directly into the ActiveVault archive to search for and restore historical mail. The prior versions of ActiveVault also did not enable authorized individuals (such as a corporate paralegal or compliance officer) to go directly into ActiveVault and conduct their own pre-discovery investigations, invoke preservation workflows, conduct early case assessments, and manage the status of legal holds and collection activities. The RenewData ActiveVault 4.0 would not attempt to offer the

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mailbox and storage management requirements of its clients; however, the new release addresses some of these eDiscovery and retention limitations. This is a smart move as enabling the storage and mailbox management capabilities for historical data would mean an additional layer of archived data that the corporation would have to manage and govern. (For example, the corporation may have to define, enforce, and monitor for retention, acceptable use, and communications policies for historical data once it is opened up to employees.). By positioning the ActiveVault archive to manage historical data from the legacy media, RenewData is protecting itself from potentially jeopardizing its lucrative strategic relationships with its archiving partners such as Mimosa, Symantec, and AXS-One.

There will always be customers that would want to manage historical data within their own datacenters, and RenewData senior management indicated that they are committed to continue providing that option. The productivity enhancements RenewData introduced in the processing, extraction, and ingestion of historical data are also available as a service offering to customers that would prefer to ingest these into their own Symantec, Mimosa, and AXS-One on-premise archives.

RenewData's ActiveVault already supports popular messaging platforms MS Exchange, Outlook, Lotus Notes, Novell Groupwise, and Internal Email (RFC) and other unstructured data types. In April 2008, RenewData announced significant improvements to its tape extraction and processing technologies resulting in faster ingestion rates, single-pass processing, deduplication, and enhanced chain-of-custody reporting. IDC believes these technology enhancements are baked into the ActiveVault 4.0 release, in addition to the improved GUI and business process automation workflows for retention and eDiscovery.

There are productivity and automation enhancements in the legal hold process that ActiveVault 4.0 should consider. For example, serial litigants are looking for more intelligence and analytics in the early case assessment process. The current approach of most corporations is based on taking linear analysis as the first step and then using advanced analytics and nonlinear approaches within the original results set. There may be some benefits (to a firm's legal and eDiscovery strategies) if they could do the reverse. Obviously, there are some technical and scaling challenges that currently prohibit most corporations from doing this (given the massive volumes, data types, and language attributes to consider). But RenewData could potentially explore these options with its search and analytics solution partners. The integration of Active Vault 4.0 with technology that automates the workflow around the entire legal hold life cycle and end-to end- management of the potential evidence (managed within corporate networks) is also another area that RenewData could explore with its technology partners.