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Boels Zanders manages simplified, risk-free move to a robust Office 365 environment, with help from Mimecast

Exchange to Office 365 migration tool guides law firm through a de-risked migration, while tight integration between Mimecast services and Office 365 creates a more secure, available, and productive cloud email environment.

Boels Zanders Advocaten is a full-service law firm with 140 employees and offices in Venlo, Eindhoven and Maastricht. Its lawyers represent entrepreneurs, directors and their organisations, which range from SMEs to large enterprises, and from public sector to not-for-profit institutions.

Legal services span a broad range of disciplines across labour, administrative, family, corporate and real estate law. Boels Zanders also has specific sector and branch teams specialising in areas including healthcare, education, compliance, food & agriculture and privacy. There is also a unique Brightlands team and acceleration programme for innovative startups.

At a Glance

Company:
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Products:
Boels Zanders uses the M2A bundle, consisting of support for Security, Continuity and Archiving.

Looking ahead:
The speed of retrieving emails from the archive is crucial to Boels Zanders. So any improvements in speed of Mimecast's email retrieval is great for this law firm.

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> *Jos Meuwissen, ICT Manager,*
> *Boels Zanders*

Distinctive through innovation

Boels Zanders has grown significantly in recent years despite a tough, competitive environment. "There are lots of firms in the market that can, for instance, draw up a contract," explained ICT Manager Jos Meuwissen. "It has become a fairly standard process, so the only way to really stand out is through innovation in client service and delivery."

The firm has, for instance established online portals to streamline client collaboration and service delivery.

"Our client portals contain, for instance, finalised contracts and, alongside that, draw live feeds from websites so we are notified of legal or jurisdictional changes. So, if a ruling arises that affects a contract, then the client and the lawyer receive a notification and can adjust the contract to the meet any new legal requirements."

Office 365 Migration. Guided by Mimecast

Agility in IT has been critical to this culture of innovation and, naturally, that has seen Boels Zanders increasingly adopt cloud-based technologies. "We need to be able to access our data at all times and from anywhere, both online and offline and the cloud enables us to do that," said Meuwissen. "At the same time, working with cloud providers keeps us one step ahead as we can benefit from their innovations in the core cloud platform."

The importance of email in everyday workflows meant Boels Zanders' migration from Exchange on-premise to Microsoft Office 365 was a key component of its transition to the cloud. But the move was not without risk – the risk of data loss and downtime for instance - and Meuwissen was acutely aware of the need to mitigate them as part of any migration.

Fortunately, the firm already had Mimecast on board, having relied on it for services like email security, archiving and continuity for more than a decade. Crucially, that relationship gave Boels Zanders access to the support it needed to manage a smooth transition to cloud email – including Mimecast's Exchange to Office 365 Migration Tool, which helps ensure data integrity, continuous access to email, and protection against cyber threats during a migration.

"As a Mimecast user, we had access to all kinds of simple tools, and great support, to help us de-risk our migration. The result was a smooth transition to Office 365," Meuwissen explained.

Clearly, as a law firm, Boels Zanders has a big focus on security – and it already had a solution it could depend on. "With Mimecast email security, we didn't have a single infection in ten years," confirmed System Administrator, Robin Steeghs. "The spam filter stops almost everything too, and it never stops the wrong thing."

Now, that reliable email security is part of the Mimecast M2A bundle, which also provides a real time failover solution for email continuity. If, for instance, no emails can be sent due to a failure at the cloud provider, then Mimecast takes over – indeed, Mimecast cloud services are backed by a 100% availability SLA.

Secure, Accessible, Reliable Cloud Email

Of course, migration is not the only issue associated with a move to cloud email. The over-reliance on a single vendor for critical email security, archiving and availability can also create risk. But Meuwissen and his team can be confident they have a robust Office 365 environment, thanks to tight integration with Mimecast.

Creating a more robust Office 365 environment was merely a matter of pointing existing Mimecast services to the firm's new cloud email environment. Meuwissen said: "We just had to adjust the routing, and everything worked just like before. In all the years of using Mimecast, we have not suffered any malfunctions."

Automated Archiving. Superfast Search

"The email archive is very important for us too", Meuwissen said. "We do an awful lot of emailing. It is important here that dossiers are complete at all times, and that incoming and outgoing email messages are added to them."

Now emails that are sent to a lawyer are automatically added to an ongoing dossier via a smart plugin in Outlook. The Mimecast Cloud Archive even offers a simple solution when emails are lost. "Unfortunately, every now and then an email is accidentally deleted," Meuwissen explained. "Mimecast makes it very easy to find and retrieve them."

In fact, Meuwissen's team can find and retrieve archived in just seven seconds. "It is impressive how swiftly Mimecast's search function works," said Steeghs. "Even if you are looking for multiple email messages from six or seven years ago, Mimecast will rapidly find them. I do not understand how this is possible, but I think it is great - and you get the data that you require."

Overall, Meuwissen is delighted with the way Mimecast dovetails with Office 365 to strengthen Boels Zanders' cloud environment, helping to create a basis for innovation without impacting on client service.