

# Only AppAssure Gives ITS Group's Exchange 2010 Enterprise Clients "More 9's", Killer RTO/RPO, Continuous Protection, and Granular Restore

## Background

ITS Group is a leading provider of IT solutions and professional services for organizations within the Washington, D.C. Metropolitan area. With more than 16 years of expertise as a solution provider, ITS Group designs, implements, and supports technology solutions for businesses of all sizes. ITS Group provides hosted exchange as a Microsoft partner and also IT consulting to enterprise-level clients. Having been around the block a few times with enterprise-sized clients, ITS Group knows the headaches and the successes of working with an Exchange messaging environment. That's why they use AppAssure.



**"AppAssure is simply the best and most cost-effective solution. I love this product. I love the AppAssure team."**

– Mitch Chen  
CEO, ITS Group Consulting

Based in the Metro Washington, D.C. area, ITS Group's CEO and Lead Enterprise Architect, Mitch Chen, has been doing this a long time. With over 20 years of IT experience, Chen has managed everything from global rollouts of Microsoft Enterprise Products to the virtualization of 300+ servers, as well as coordinated an entire data center move for a large financial firm—not to mention developed the virtualization methodology for 10,000 desktops in a single organization. Having been around the block a few times with enterprise-sized clients, Chen knows the headaches and the successes of working with an Exchange messaging environment.

"We offer hosted Exchange as a Microsoft partner for some of our clients," says Chen, "and then also, we provide IT consulting to enterprise-level customers for 2010 Exchange." The unique requirements of enterprise consulting have changed over the years, and Chen and his team have seen Exchange evolve from a transaction processing system to a repository of information. "Exchange 2010 can now handle extremely large mailboxes," says Chen, "Now we have to figure out a way to backup and restore that much data!"

## Exchange 2010 and CDP

Chen explains: "The Exchange 2010 default mailbox quota is now 2GB. The Microsoft Business Productivity Online Suite (BPOS) environment now offers 25GB mailboxes. Building large database volumes with SCSI disks on SANs is getting too expensive. Though SATA disks can cost effectively handle the large mailboxes, they run into issues with sustained throughput like standard backups."



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Chen and his team commonly see Symantec’s Backup Exec or NetBackup in Enterprise environments. To backup Exchange 2010, Backup Exec 2010 or NetBackup 7 are required, which most customers haven’t adopted. “To upgrade the backup software on all of your servers is a monster undertaking,” notes Chen. “It’s a real lose-lose scenario. With the massive increase in email and data, traditional backup is not scaling appropriately.”

The question that Chen always keeps in front of him is: “How do you back all that data up?” Big mail means a big backup window, which means a big headache without a continuous data protection (CDP) methodology, or you just won’t finish the backup. “Migrating from Exchange 2003 to 2010 will decrease disk I/O by 90%,” says Chen. “My customers want to use SATA drives because they’re 1/5 the price per GB of SCSI in storage arrays, which is OK. But again, performance is fine except when doing backup. When doing a massive stream of data, it just craters on them and use is very sluggish.”

That is, unless you are using a CDP technology like AppAssure.

“SATA disks can work using AppAssure,” says Chen, “because it provides high availability and continuous backup.”

Chen’s winning formula for his enterprise clients includes the Exchange 2010 environment, with SATA Disks + AppAssure’s CDP backup and disaster recovery solution. “We give our clients the great benefit of low cost SATA with AppAssure’s CDP. This completely eliminates the backup windows. We also set it up so that the system performs Exchange maintenance and virus scans at night so there is no user impact at all.”

### Big Mail Boxes but Granular Restore – Killer RTO/RPO

In addition to being able to assist larger clients with the data volume needed with Exchange 2010, Chen uses AppAssure’s item-level restore functionality to quickly recover emails that are lost in the thousands that might be part of a company’s repository. “The granularity of the restore is an incredible feature of AppAssure,” says Chen. “As an example, we host venture capital firms whose staff gets flooded with emails in excess of 10,000. So of course they delete a lot of emails. There have been many instances where critical messages were deleted and we’ve gone in and restored in a manner of minutes. Let me tell you—this develops customer loyalty.”

ITS Group can restore an Exchange server under any level of outage in less than 30 minutes. Since AppAssure continuously updates an offline copy of the Exchange servers as a virtual server image, services can be back up at a moment’s notice even with a catastrophic failure. Under DR tests, Chen found that Exchange servers

**“When one of my executive clients, who gets flooded with 10,000+ emails a month, accidentally deletes a critical message, I can restore it in a matter of minutes with AppAssure. In this way, AppAssure helps us develop customer loyalty.”**

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with AppAssure offer a 20 minute RTO for message level recovery. RTO for corrupted info stores, corrupted storage groups, and server operating system corruption can happen in less than 15 minutes.

Offering outstanding RPO is just as important. When Exchange comes back on line, customers want to resume e-mail right where they left off, or very close to it. AppAssure delivers very low RPOs for ITS Group customers across situations. Chen’s AppAssure RPO estimates are as follows:

*Message level recovery: 15 min  
Corrupted info store: 0 min  
Corrupted storage group: 5 min  
Server OS corruption/hanging: 15 min*

From the complex and large-data facility of Exchange 2010 to the item-level recovery of individual messages, Chen and his team always recommend AppAssure. “AppAssure is simply the best and most cost-effective solution. I love this product. I love the AppAssure team.”

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