



Solution Brief

Archiving Instant Messages

Barracuda Message Archiver and the Barracuda Cloud Archiving Service provide organizations with the ability to archive instant message (IM) conversations, conferences and other content from both the on-premises and online Office 365 versions of Lync and Skype for Business. IM content is kept securely alongside other archived content such as email messages and attachments, meaning that everything is available in one place for end users to search and retrieve, as well as enabling organizations to meet their compliance, eDiscovery, and storage management requirements.

Why Archive Instant Messages?

Instant messaging is becoming an increasingly popular form of communication internally within many organizations, as well as being used externally between organizations. In many cases, it is now being used as an alternative to more traditional email communication. Just as with email, there is likely to be a need to retain all IM content and make it available for search and retrieval, whilst managing the ongoing storage requirements for this.

Litigation and Compliance

Many organizations are subject to industry or business regulations that require them to accurately capture and preserve all instant message conversations for legal and compliance purposes. They will need to respond to eDiscovery requests for search, legal hold, audit and export, and comply with a range of laws and regulations that require message archiving and retrieval, such as FOIA.

End User Access

End users may want to view and search all of their previous instant message conversations, and preserve them for future reference—even if these conversations have been deleted from the instant messaging server or associated email server.

Storage Management

From an operations perspective, archiving can reduce the expensive storage requirements of instant messaging and email servers. Both email and instant message data that needs to be retained can be moved onto more cost effective storage whilst retaining full access for end users.

Archiving from Skype for Business (Lync)

Skype for Business, previously known as Lync, is Microsoft's solution for providing instant messaging, conferencing, and media sharing to businesses of all sizes. It is a key part of the Microsoft Office product set in conjunction with Exchange, and is a central component in many Office 365 plans. It is also available as a separate server application.

Barracuda Message Archiver and the Barracuda Cloud Archiving Service (BCAS) both provide the ability to archive all instant messages from Skype for Business or from Lync. They will capture and preserve IM content securely using a similar method to that already used for email, enabling organizations to realize operational efficiencies and achieve regulatory compliance.

All IM content is fully indexed to provide administrators, auditors, and end users with easy retrieval of messages stored in the archive, whilst comprehensive search, legal hold, audit, and export functionality will accelerate and simplify eDiscovery requests. An intuitive search and retrieval capability is provided via web browser, Outlook Add-in, PC, Mac, or mobile device, giving end users self-service access to any message ever sent or received.

Two Ways to Archive

Barracuda provides two alternate methods for archiving instant message data, allowing customers to implement the most appropriate method for their particular requirements and circumstances:

1. Archiving from the Exchange Conversation History folder

This method uses Exchange for initial capture of IM data, and can be used with all versions and configurations of Skype for Business or Lync, including Skype for Business Online provided within Office 365.

2. Archiving direct from Skype or Lync

This captures data directly from the Skype for Business Server (or Lync Server) SQL database, providing a robust solution that maintains a fully compliant record of instant message activity.

What Can be Archived?

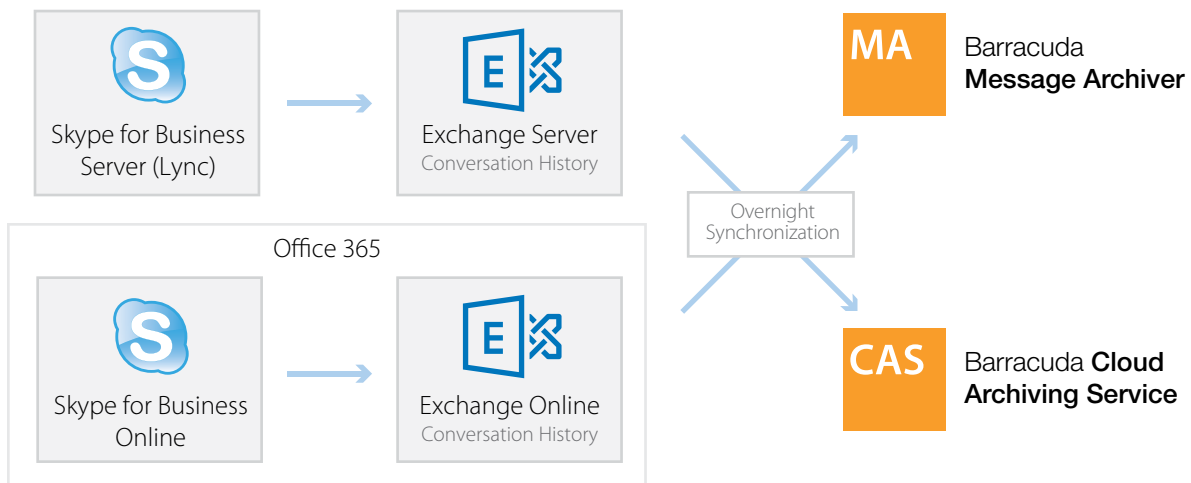
Both of these archiving methods will capture and store all conversations from individual peer-to-peer IM sessions and from multi-participant IM conferences.

At this time, it is not possible to archive dynamic content such as audio or video from peer-to-peer or multi-participant conference sessions. Desktop or application sharing, persistent chat (named conference rooms), and peer-to-peer file transfers also cannot be captured and archived.

Archiving from Conversation History

How does it work?

When a Skype for Business Server or Lync Server is installed, by default it will integrate with its associated Exchange Server, and a Conversation History folder will be created in each user's Exchange mailbox. A record of every IM conversation that the user subsequently takes part in (both peer-to-peer and multiparty conferences) is then saved into this folder.



Skype for Business Online (in Office 365) works similarly, creating a Conversation History folder in each user's Exchange Online mailbox to record all IM conversations.

The Barracuda overnight synchronization process scans the Conversation History folder for each user to identify all new content that has been added, and then archives this securely alongside other content such as email.

Configuration

The process to capture all IM conversations into the Exchange Conversation History folder is configured to be on by default, but individual users can change this setting within Outlook .

To ensure that all IM history is captured for every user, this setting should be included within the Lync Global Client Policy so it cannot be changed by individual users.

Barracuda Message Archiver or the Barracuda Cloud Archiving Service should also be configured to archive (synchronize) all Conversation History folders every night. The setting for this is found under **Mail Sources > Exchange Integration**.

Advantages

Archiving from the Conversation History folder can be used with all versions and configurations of Skype for Business or Lync, including Skype for Business Online provided within Office 365.

This method is easy to configure, and if being used together with email archiving, requires no additional software or processes.

Disadvantages

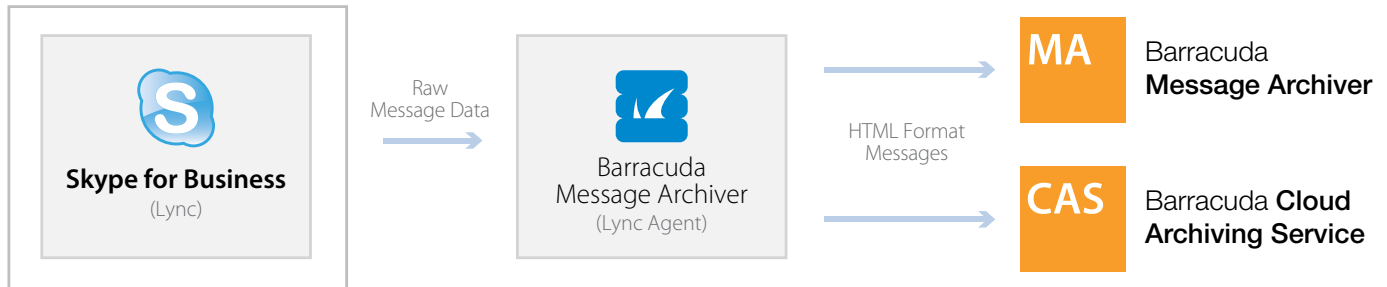
The Conversation History folder is accessible to end users, so it is possible that information stored there may be modified or even deleted before it has been captured by the Barracuda overnight synchronization process. Therefore this method does not guarantee a 100% compliant record of all IM conversations.

This method will capture all conversations from individual peer-to-peer IM sessions and from multi-participant IM conferences. However, any additional content that is uploaded or shared for conferences (such as handouts), any whiteboards and polls that are shared, or events such as when individual participants join or leave a conference, will not be captured.

Archiving from Skype or Lync Server

How does it work?

Skype for Business Server and Lync Server can record details of every conversation in a SQL archive database, allowing them to provide an accurate record of all IM activity. However, this data is stored in a raw form and is not easily accessible for search and retrieval, and the database itself is not designed for long-term storage.



The Barracuda Message Archiver Lync Agent runs every hour, and scans the SQL database to extract any new content that has been added.

The Lync agent then converts and formats each peer-to-peer IM session into a single new HTML email, as if it were sent from the user who started the IM session and received by the other party in the conversation. Completed Lync conference sessions are similarly converted into a number of HTML emails from the conference organizer to each individual participant, reflecting their own participation in the conference.

These email representations of each IM session are finally loaded into the Barracuda Message Archiver or Barracuda Cloud Archiving Service for long-term archive storage alongside other content such as email.

Configuration

If Lync Server 2010 is being used, the Lync Server Archiver Server Role should be deployed. This step is not necessary with Lync Server 2013 or Skype for Business Server, as in these later versions the archiving service is included in the standard install.

The next step is to enable archiving to the SQL database. This can be done using the Lync Server 2013 Control Panel or via the Lync Server Management Console.

Finally, the Barracuda Message Archiver Lync Agent should be installed. This is provided as a standalone component that can be installed on any suitable Windows 64-bit machine. Configuration settings for this are simply the SQL Server authentication to allow it to connect to the Skype or Lync SQL database, and Message Archiver or Barracuda Cloud Archiving Service configuration to allow it to deliver content to Barracuda archive.

Advantages

This method supports legal and business requirements for compliance and eDiscovery, as all IM content is captured in raw form from the SQL database, and cannot be subsequently amended or deleted. In addition, archived content from IM conferences will accurately represent each individual user's participation in the conference, and omits any content that user did not receive.

Disadvantages

At this time, it is not possible to use this method with Skype for Business Online, as the SQL archive database is not supported within the Office 365 environment.

Conclusion

Barracuda Message Archiver and the Barracuda Cloud Archiving Service each provide two different methods for archiving instant messages from Lync or Skype for Business. Both will retain this information securely for as long as needed, and keep it available for end users to search and retrieve.

- **Archiving from Skype or Lync Server** provides a secure IM archive that will meet legal and business requirements for retention, compliance and eDiscovery.
- **Archiving from Conversation History** is an ideal way to allow end users to view their old IM conversations, and to preserve these conversations for future reference.

With both methods, instant messages are archived alongside other content such as email, allowing a single search and retrieval process to cover multiple content sources.

End users will be able to access their IM history in the same way they access their archived email: via Outlook, web browser, PC or mobile device.