



EXPOSING THE 4 BIGGEST HIDDEN COSTS OF EMAIL

Luckily no-one has to write a cheque to cover the cost of poor email habits.

All businesses track the cost of their email infrastructure: email servers, software licenses and so on. But few organisations measure the cost of the poor email habits and processes that have evolved as we try to stay in control of an excessive volume of email.

And the situation is not going to change. Every year email volume is going to increase so you will spend more time creating emails, reading emails and managing emails.

When you spend this much time on email (upwards of 2 hours a day for many people), it makes sense to look at *how* you use it. **Poor email habits can cost you upwards of 20 days per year.** And when you extrapolate this figure to the rest of your organisation, the number of lost days is huge.

So how do you lose this time?

You lose it in small chunks that are easily overlooked. Here's how it breaks down:

Volume

People don't take a lot of time to think about whether email is the best communication tool for what they want to do; it's easy so they just use it.

Email is now used for over 60% of all business communications.

Email overuse, poorly targeted and poorly constructed emails all contribute to excessive email volume and the more emails you receive, the more emails you have to read, respond to, act on and manage.

With a clear understanding of the tasks that email is suited to and knowledge of alternative communication tools, the volume of email in an organisation can be significantly reduced. This will then reduce the time spent reading, responding to, acting on and managing email.

If you receive an average of 50 emails a day, a 15% reduction in volume will result in a potential savings of 6.4 days annually.

Interruptions

The "beep" of a new email costs you time. It causes a break in your concentration which takes around 64 seconds to re-establish.

If you stop what you're doing to check the email, it costs more time. Switching from your current task to your Inbox and then back again will cost you upwards of 4 minutes.

If you decide to attend to the new email, studies have shown that on average, it's likely to be around 25 minutes before you get back to your original task. Was how you spent that 25 minutes the best use of your time?

If you reduce email interruptions from 50% or emails being an interruption to 20% of emails being an interruption, you will potentially save of 8.5 days annually.

Lack of Clarity

Every email takes time to read and process. If the sender improves the clarity of their emails, you can save a small chunk of time – around 10 seconds per email.

When you multiply this small chunk of time by the number of emails you receive every day, you end up saving a larger chunk of time.

If you extrapolate this to everyone in your business, a very large chunk of time is saved. You get the picture.

In addition, if your emails are well structured with required actions clearly identified, ambiguity is reduced and this means you're going to get less clarification emails. And less emails means less time.

*If you receive an average of 50 emails a day, an improvement in email structure and clarity will result in a **potential savings of 3.2 days annually.***

Lack of Efficiency

As we receive more and more email, many people struggle to stay in control of their Inboxes. Inefficient habits and processes start to creep in.

If you have an overloaded Inbox, it's a sign that your email management processes are not efficient. Your Inbox is designed to be a delivery area for emails, not a task management system.

*If you introduce best practice email management processes, you can reduce Inbox management time by 25%. This will result in you **potentially saving of 5.3 days annually.***

The impact of Email VICE'S

As a result of these four email VICE's, people lose time in small chunks and consequently many organisations overlook the huge loss of productivity that results.

You can make substantial savings by addressing the issues of excessive volume, email interruptions, lack of clarity and lack of email management efficiency. Establishing best practice processes that govern email behaviour will go a long way towards addressing these issues and when you apply these processes to each of the four hidden costs areas in your organisation, you can expect to significantly reduce the organisational cost of using email.



If you would like to find out how I have helped other organisations reduce the hidden costs of email, please call me on 0438 699 153; email me at jani@emailsmart.com.au or visit www.emailsmart.com.au.