



MASSACHUSETTS MUNICIPAL ASSOCIATION:

Protecting PHI in Emails and Attachments

The Massachusetts Municipal Association (MMA) represents 351 cities and towns in the state of Massachusetts, as well as the municipal officials who run them. Through an affiliated organization, MMA helps to supply health insurance to their membership (the municipalities of MA), and MMA must meet HIPAA compliance requirements and keep data secure, especially when communicating externally to their members. We spoke with Scott Anderson, Information Systems and Network Systems Administrator, to learn why he and his team selected Virtru as their HIPAA-compliant data protection solution. With Virtru, MMA was able to:

- **Protect PHI shared via email** to meet HIPAA compliance requirements.
- **Roll out a user-friendly encryption solution** that does not get in the way of regular communication workflows.
- **Provide non-Virtru licensed recipients** with an easy way to view encrypted email.

The Use Case

"The most critical data security concern we have is HIPAA compliance, but we strive to meet compliance for several other regulations as well, such as SOX, GDPR, and PCI-DSS. We supply members with health insurance and therefore need to share sensitive data—such as personal health information (PHI)—with BlueCross, banks, members, internal staff, and others.

"Although we mostly use Virtru to safeguard HIPAA-protected data, we also use it to share other forms of sensitive information such as contracts, technology settings and configurations, and passwords. 95% of our Virtru usage is standard encrypted



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Scott Anderson, Information Systems and Network Systems Administrator

emails and attachments. I expect that we will require more and more at-rest data protection in the near future, and with that, we will be well equipped to meet those needs through Virtru's advanced access control and data protection features."

Easy-to-Use Encryption Required

"We were trying to be proactive about encryption when I came across Virtru at an expo and thought it looked like the right fit for us. Coincidentally, soon after I discovered Virtru, we were audited by the Massachusetts Division of Insurance. They required us to begin using some type of encryption method for emails, so the timing was fortuitous.

From the beginning, working with Virtru has been simple and straightforward. The Virtru for Gmail plugin is easy to manage and install, easy for the end user to use, and easy for the non-Virtru licensed recipient to view the encrypted message and its contents.

"After nearly two years as Virtru customers, we are very pleased with the product and ease of use, specifically the direct Gmail integration. Anytime you introduce new technology, you have to consider how you will ensure a high adoption rate. With Virtru, we have a very high success rate using the solution with our membership due to the product's user-friendly nature. We needed to secure our information while keeping our members happy with how they receive our data and communications, and Virtru was able to do that for us."

sector. "Forge works with a lot of small businesses in the defense industrial base, and they don't always have their own IT or cybersecurity folks," explains Watson. "They need plug and play type options, and Virtru is a great solution for small businesses that need to quickly turn on this type of capability."

CASE STUDY



Need to safeguard your organization's sensitive data?
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