

How Virtru Shows Columbia County Employees When to Encrypt

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— RICHARD JULIANO, Chief Technology Officer, Columbia County, NY



Located in the always-busy state of New York, Columbia County's government needs to send a lot of emails. Columbia has 23 different departments, from healthcare to law enforcement to the courts, and its more than 450 staff members also manage senior living and probation facilities and regularly contact the sheriff's and treasurer's offices. Do the math, and you've got a massive amount of sensitive info being exchanged online each day. Thankfully, Virtru now keeps it all safe.

Before Virtru, Richard Juliano, Columbia's Chief Technology Officer, worried about complying with CJIS and HIPAA, laws that mandate the protection of criminal justice and patient health information, respectively.

"HIPAA and CJIS are serious stuff, bringing the risk of hefty fines," he says. "Now that the whole county uses Virtru, we're confident we have the solution."

Encryption and Control—For Everyone

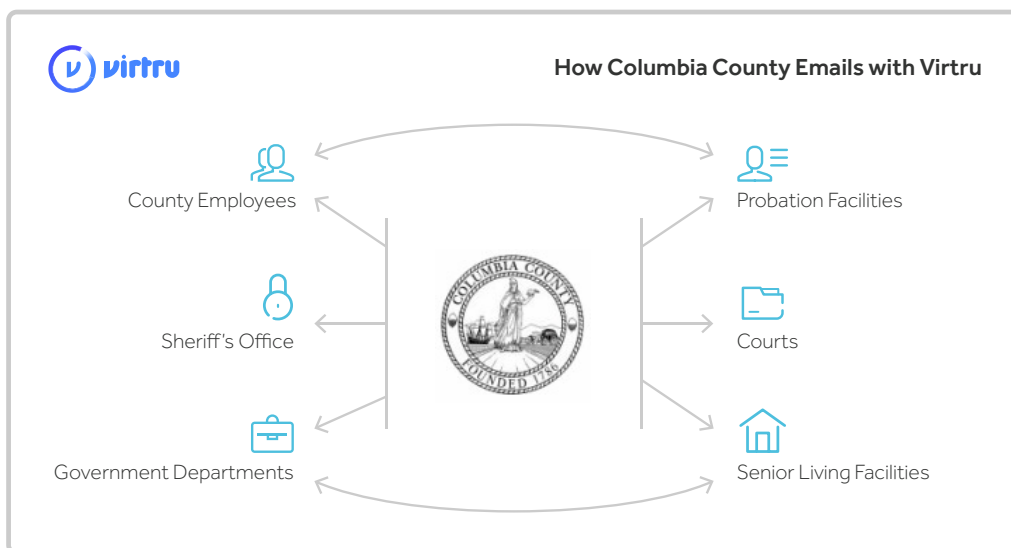
Regulations like CJIS and HIPAA require Columbia County to have an encryption service in place for their electronic communications, and they receive annual audits from the comptroller to ensure they are following these protocols. Before Virtru, the onus was on employees to try their best to stay HIPAA-compliant when transmitting health information, having to rely on

non-specific identifiers instead of client names. With no formal solution in place, human errors inevitably occurred.

Virtru now gives Columbia County the power to control email encryption across the board, leaving nothing to chance. The easy-to-use software examines subject lines, email content, attachments, and other criteria to scout out sensitive info, including credit card and social security numbers, and other keywords flagged by administrators. When Virtru detects these patterns, emails can be set to automatically encrypt, or to simply pop a warning message to the end user indicating that he or she may want to encrypt.

As Juliano explains, "Virtru isn't complacent—it's actually educating our staff on HIPAA and CJIS as they do their normal work. We use the administrator tools and warning messages to highlight keywords that are included in emails, prompting senders to simply click for encryption."

Virtru can also automatically encrypt all messages sent to specific domains or email addresses, meaning that any email going to an employee at the sheriff's office, for example, will always be protected. With control like this, compliance takes care of itself, for both end users and admins.



The Other Contenders

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Before partnering with Virtru, Columbia County relied on SOPHOS for online security, but the software didn't work well enough with their cloud-based Google Apps for Government platform. As Juliano explains, "SOPHOS

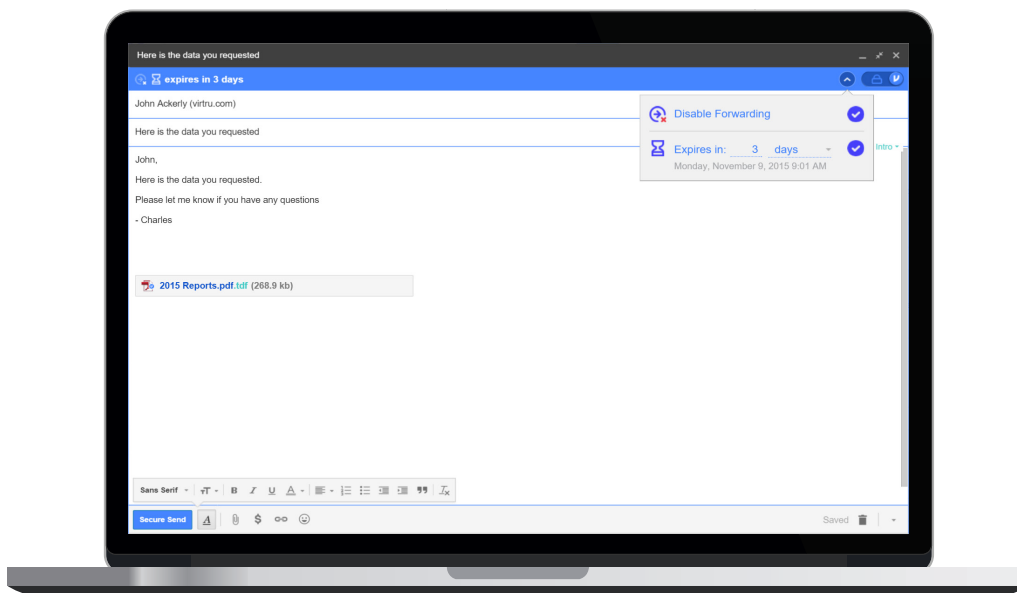
functioned on our local server. It didn't encrypt from the client-side and protect emails being sent outside the organization or via a cloud service like Gmail."

Juliano researched other encryption services and discovered that Virtru's client-side functionality offered the deepest and most flexible security coverage, while providing much more value than tools like ZixMail, GAME, and SOPHOS.

Virtru was also the easiest encryption service to use: "You don't have to log in multiple times, and there are no long passwords to remember, so people can use it without too much fuss," he says. "Virtru is incredibly easy to implement county-wide. That, plus its other functionality, makes it seamless for us to train our users."

Columbia County chose Virtru for the following attributes:

- **HIPAA and CJIS compliance:** Sensitive information is encrypted from the client-side, so only senders and recipients ever have access.
- **Robust Data Loss Prevention (DLP):** Administrators can easily set rules to detect and encrypt end-users' sensitive information.
- **Domain-Specific Protection:** Virtru DLP can auto-encrypt messages sent to certain domains, which greatly reduces the risk of human error.
- **Easy-to-Use:** Virtru integrates directly into tools like Gmail and Outlook.
- **First-Rate Support:** Virtru provides clients with a direct support line to its dedicated team of engineers.
- **Innovative Roadmap:** Virtru's product is constantly evolving, and will soon include client-side encryption for Google Drive documents.



Install in Minutes

Since Virtru works directly within existing email systems, there's nothing new for users to learn.

"The installation process was a breeze because Virtru integrates seamlessly into Outlook, Google Apps, and Gmail, which is what all government departments use," Juliano says. "Even better, Virtru also enables secure replies for our recipients. Clients can respond to us with a safe, encrypted email, without even having to download the software themselves."

Virtru also provides excellent customer support after installation. Juliano specifically recalls a visit by Virtru CEO, John Ackerly, to personally check in with Columbia's team. Even after this visit, Juliano and his IT staff continue to work closely with Virtru's developers to refine and improve service based on Columbia's specific needs.

"We couldn't ask for better assistance," Juliano says. "We always have the Virtru team's ear because they always want the product to work better for us."

Easy-to-use, ironclad email encryption plus excellent customer service is a winning security equation for the government of Columbia County. Even when they're not receiving visits from Virtru's CEO, Columbia employees take comfort knowing Virtru is always safely by their sides—serving as a personal compliance companion and confidant.