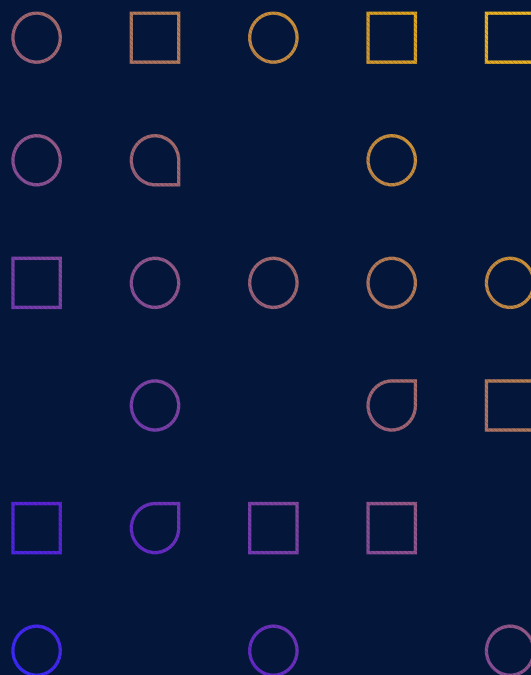


ActiveNav and Microsoft Information Protection

A Fortune 1000 Success Story.



Background

The Microsoft 365 (M365) platform encompasses various data security solutions that are grouped under the umbrella title of Microsoft 365 Compliance. Microsoft's Information Protection (MIP) is the security element of this compliance stack that enables organizations to protect and control access to critical data assets, prevent data loss and govern data more effectively throughout its lifecycle.

MIP supports labeling of content in line with data classification policies by providing sensitivity labels that can be selected by end users and applied as file metadata. Data can then be protected based upon the sensitivity label by using other elements of the Microsoft compliance stack.

One major obstacle when adopting MIP is how to deal with vast amounts of legacy data owned by the organization – most of which is unused “dark data” generated by normal business processes that includes substantial amounts of Redundant, Obsolete or Trivial (ROT) content.

So how can you identify which data is useful and how it can be labeled effectively while minimizing disruption to the business?

This case study describes how ActiveNav Governance™ has helped one particular organization discover, cleanse, label and protect over 100TB of data – enhancing Microsoft's MIP capability and enabling the organization to realize significant benefits and manage their data more effectively.

At a glance

CHALLENGES

- 100TB+ data estate
- Data both on-premise and in the cloud
- Manual application of MIP sensitivity labels

BENEFITS

- Millions of files reliably labeled at scale
- Complete visibility into entire data estate
- Relevant content identified for migration

ABOUT

- Fortune 1000 company
- United States-based
- 6,000+ employees

The Challenge

The client is a US-based Fortune 1000 business founded in the early 1990s with some 6,000 employees and an existing data estate that has grown to over 100TB.

At the point where ActiveNav became engaged, the client had defined their data classification policy and started to roll out sensitivity labeling. As part of that roll-out, users were trained on and tasked with assigning a sensitivity label when working on a document. The client intended to use the sensitivity labels to drive enforcement of their data management policy throughout the data lifecycle, from managing permissions through to applying encryption by using related tools from the M365 security stack.

The major problem the client faced was the vast amounts of existing data spread across the organization, some residing on-premise and the remainder in the Microsoft cloud. They had a limited understanding of what data actually existed, and which was important, sensitive or critical in nature. With over 100TB of data contained in more than 120 million files, manual labeling was not a viable option.



The Solution

ActiveNav Governance was selected and deployed in order to achieve the following objectives:

- Map all existing data across the organization, including sensitive and critical data
- Identify which data was Redundant, Obsolete and Trivial (ROT)
- Validate the accuracy of manually applied sensitivity labels
- Apply relevant sensitivity labels to content (both on-premise and cloud-based) in-place



Within only six months the ActiveNav solution enabled the client to successfully index, triage and label over 120 million files, with those files residing both on-premise and within cloud-based repositories.



The Findings

Key findings from the initial program highlighted the following:

50% of
data was
identified as
ROT

99% of
eligible files
were unlabeled
by users

40% of
user-labeled
files were
labeled
incorrectly

In common with many organizations, not all data within the client's data estate can be managed by sensitivity labeling. Many file types are not supported by Microsoft's sensitivity labeling without the use of encryption – ActiveNav Governance creates a catalog of all labels, including for file types not currently supported by Microsoft.

In detecting incorrectly labeled files, ActiveNav Governance identified the need for a higher data classification than the one manually applied. Further analysis concluded that users were struggling to understand the data classification policy and were typically selecting the first label (lowest classification) in the list.





The Benefits

The project's objectives were met and the client has derived a range of benefits:

- Millions of files were accurately labeled using ActiveNav Governance (including both on-premise and cloud-based content) without modifying date information and owner properties
- Relevant data was labeled and migrated to the appropriate repository with minimal disruption to the business users
- ZIP file archives fully were inspected to determine and apply the highest relevant sensitivity label to the ZIP file (together with encryption) so that the container structure was protected in accordance with policy
- The monitoring of new content and manually applied labels is ongoing to ensure the correct critical information controls and policies are being applied
- A catalog of classifications for all data, not just MIP-supported files, has been established to ensure the organization has a 360-degree view across their entire data estate

Conclusion

ActiveNav Governance has boosted the value of the client's MIP deployment and enabled the client to successfully manage, label and secure their entire data estate without the need for users to have to manually review and classify millions of files.

With sensitivity labels applied across the data estate, all important content can now be consistently secured and protected.

ActiveNav Governance continues to perform a vital operational role by applying sensitivity labels as new content is created and reporting on manually labeled files that require a label upgrade. As part of a workflow process, ActiveNav Governance is also proactively upgrading labels to ensure the right protections are applied based on corporate policy.

GET STARTED TODAY. SEE ACTIVENAV IN ACTION. REQUEST YOUR DEMO.



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