
When someone leaves, the project stays

Project email that belongs to the project, not to the mailbox. A sheet for the management of an architecture or planning office.

As at 19.09.2026. Swiss law, Swiss francs.

The three moments when it shows

The resignation. A project manager leaves. A few months later the mailbox is switched off, as the licence bill and usually data protection require. Half the project history goes with it: the agreement with the client from last spring, the specialist engineer's commitment, the exchange in which the contractor changed the execution. What sits in the project folder are the drawings. How they came about sat in the mailbox.

The holidays. The client calls while the site manager is away for two weeks. He wants to know what was agreed at the meeting a month ago. Nobody in the office knows, because the answer sits in a mailbox that nobody looks into, for good reasons.

The dispute. Four years after handover, a defect notice arrives. Now it matters who wrote what and when, in the original. Business records have to be kept for ten years anyway, and a building project can occupy you for longer than that. Ten years is a long time in IT: usually two mail providers and a handful of staff changes.

All three have the same cause. Mail belongs to mailboxes, and mailboxes belong to people. Projects outlast employment.

The gap this is about

Two numbers face each other, and the whole problem sits between them.

You are liable for five years from handover of the work, and since 1 January 2026 that period can no longer be shortened in your favour (Swiss Code of Obligations, art. 371 para. 2 and 3, expressly against architects and engineers). A Microsoft 365 mailbox, by contrast, is gone thirty days after the licence is removed. A hold can stop that, but it needs the right plan and has to be set while the licence is still running.

Put the two together: if a project manager resigns in the third year after handover, you lose their project correspondence thirty days later, in the middle of your liability period. Not because anyone makes a mistake, but because both clocks run correctly on their own.

Filum puts the correspondence where it survives the resignation: in the project folder, as files, readable without Outlook, without Microsoft and without us.

What Filum changes

Everyone in the office files their own project mail themselves, with their own Microsoft sign-in, into the project's folder on your NAS. Nobody has to share a mailbox, and nobody needs access to anyone else's.

What ends up there is an ordinary folder. Inside it are the original messages, the attachments unpacked, the conversations as readable pages and an overview with search that opens on a double click. Nobody

needs a program or an account for that. If Filum no longer exists in ten years, the folder is still there and can still be read. That is the point.

After that, the project history belongs to the project. A mailbox that gets switched off no longer takes it along.

What this means for working together

Three mailboxes, one story

The site manager, the project assistant and you work on one project. Everyone files from their own mailbox, and still no triple archive appears. The same message that went to two people stays one message, and Filum only notes everywhere it was found. It builds the conversations itself, across mailbox boundaries and also when a reply arrives three weeks later.

The result reads as one story rather than three partial views that somebody has to lay side by side.

Who was responsible for what stays visible

Anyone who separates their project mail by party, so client, specialist engineer, contractor, bank, can note that label on the folder. It becomes a filter in the overview. Four years later, somebody finds the entire correspondence with the structural engineer in one go, without knowing who handled it at the time.

The label is optional. Where nobody has given one, no empty filter appears.

A label can be changed at any time without anything happening to the archive: it belongs to the folder, not to the record. The check computes over the messages themselves, not over their labels. What has already been filed keeps the label from back then, and what comes afterwards gets the new one.

How complete a project is, without looking into a mailbox

This is the question every mail archive hangs on: who actually sorts the mail, and do they do it? Filum answers it with a number. After every run, the report says how much of the conversations the archive knows about is actually in it, and which conversations are still open.

What matters is what does not happen. Only a conversation with at least one message already filed is counted. Everything else in the mailbox is other people's mail: the holiday request, the newsletter. What was passed over appears as a bare number, never with subject, sender or date. A report that spreads out a mailbox would be surveillance, not a measure of filing.

So it stays what it should be: information about how complete a project is, which the people involved can act on themselves.

Filum helps with sorting, people decide

Before archiving, Filum shows what is already waiting in the project folder and suggests from the inbox what might belong with it: messages from the same conversations and from the same senders. A person

accepts or declines. Whoever declines a sender once does not get it put in front of them every time.

There is no artificial intelligence behind this, and that is deliberate. The suggestions are two lists you can recompute. What enters the archive, a human confirmed.

Everyone in the office can read it

The archive is a folder with an overview page. Whoever has the drive mounted opens it and searches by subject, sender, year or attachment. Whoever prefers the browser gets the same view through the reading service, a small service on the NAS, with one shared password for the office and no account per person. It cannot change anything, and it does not record who read what and when. If it fails or is never set up, every archive in the folder stays readable.

2024-0042Lindenhof

1037 emails61 conversations297 attachments2024-03-09 to 2025-09-26

This archive is a sample archive with fictional messages. It exists for trying things out and is not charged.

search subject, participants, text and attachment names ...

VIEWConversationsSingle emails

DIRECTIONAllIncoming (720)Outgoing (317)

YEARAll20242025

With attachment only

61 of 61 conversations

2024-03-09 - 04-16Preliminary design Lindenhof: room program and apartment mix

M Fontana, Lea Hartmann, R Brunner, Jonas Keller, S Wyss

18 messages · 7 in / 11 out · 8 attachments

2024-03-14 - 04-26Planning law clarification parcel 1284, Lindenhofstrasse 14

Lea Hartmann, Bauverwaltung, Jonas Keller, Info, M Fontana, r.brunner@fontana-immo.example, s.wyss@baurea.example

17 messages · 7 in / 10 out · 4 attachments

2024-03-30 - 04-19New office address Studio Hartmann and update of the contact list

Info, m.fontana@fontana-immo.example, S Wyss, P Steiner, d.roth@klimatex.example, S Marti, Bauverwaltung, Lea Hartmann, Jonas Keller, R Brunner

14 messages · 8 in / 6 out · 3 attachments

2024-04-07 - 05-13Cost estimate preliminary design Lindenhof according to eBKP-H

Lea Hartmann, S Wyss, Jonas Keller, P Steiner, D Roth, S Marti, M Fontana, R Brunner

18 messages · 13 in / 5 out · 10 attachments

2024-04-15 - 05-30Soil investigation and structural concept Lindenhof

Lea Hartmann, P Steiner, Jonas.keller@studiohartmann.example, M Fontana, r.brunner@fontana-immo.example, S Wyss, R Odermatt

16 messages · 9 in / 7 out · 9 attachments

2024-05-03 - 06-08Energy concept Lindenhof: heat generation and photovoltaics

Lea Hartmann, D Roth, jonas.keller@studiohartmann.example, M Fontana, Bauverwaltung, info@studiohartmann.example, s.wyss@baurea.example, R Brunner, S Marti

17 messages · 10 in / 7 out · 7 attachments

2024-05-05 - 06-08Lindenhof: compilation of the building application documents

Lea Hartmann, M Fontana, S Wyss, Jonas Keller, Info, R Brunner, P Steiner, D Roth, S Marti, Bauverwaltung

18 messages · 9 in / 9 out · 13 attachments

2024-06-08 - 07-04BG 2024-118: request for additional documents from Wettswil

Bauverwaltung, Info, M Fontana, Lea Hartmann, Jonas Keller, P Steiner, S Wyss, r.brunner@fontana-immo.example

17 messages · 8 in / 9 out · 11 attachments

2024-07-04 - 08-09Main contractor tender BCC 211, tender queries and final bid

15 messages · 15 in / 0 out · 3 attachments

What an archive looks like when you open the folder. The picture comes from the sample project Filum brings along: 1037 fictional messages from a fictional office.

Overview, conversations and read-me are written in the language that was set the last time something was filed: German, English, French or Italian. For an office with a branch in the French-speaking part, that is the difference between an archive everyone uses and one only head office uses.

What a successor finds

When a new person takes over a running project, they find the history in the same place as the drawings. They do not have to ask anyone or request an old mailbox. And if somebody later doubts that a message arrived as claimed, the original sits next to it, with a timestamp issued by a third party.

What you set up once and never touch again

The principle while building was: only mechanisms an office without its own IT sets up once and that are correct afterwards without maintenance.

Once	Afterwards
A folder on the NAS for the archive, everyone may write in it	nothing
Daily backups on the NAS that only its administration can reach	nothing
Everyone signs in once with their Microsoft account	nothing

There are no permissions per project, and that is not an omission. Nobody in an office of six maintains a permission matrix across forty projects, and what nobody maintains is wrong after the second staff change. Protection comes from the backups and from the check: if something in the archive is missing or altered, the check names the file, and the backup brings it back.

If your Microsoft environment does not allow third-party programs by default, Filum needs a one-time approval from whoever looks after your accounts. It takes one click and then applies to everyone in the office.

What it costs

What is counted are the mailboxes that are archived, not the people who operate the program. The calculation is tiered like income tax, so that one more mailbox can never lower the bill.

Mailboxes	per mailbox and year
1 to 10	CHF 50
11 to 20	CHF 40
21 to 30	CHF 30
from 31	CHF 25

An office with twenty mailboxes pays CHF 900 a year. The smallest invoice is CHF 250. Three years paid in advance cost two and a half annual fees.

The first year comes with two hours of support: setting up the archive folder, the first sign-in, a walk-through with the team. After that, support costs what it takes, CHF 190 an hour, and the more hours an office draws over the years, the cheaper the next one gets. Anything caused by a fault in our software costs nothing, ever: whoever bills their own mistakes by the hour is selling their mistakes.

What is archived stays readable, even without a running licence. You need the licence for new runs, not for what is already there.

What Filum does not do

A sheet that only lists advantages does not help you decide. So here is the other side:

- Filum does not look into mailboxes. It works with the sign-in of the person operating it and sees only what that person sees anyway. An evaluation of who mails how much is therefore not possible, and it is not planned either.
- Filum does not sort for you. It takes what somebody put into the project folder and helps with filing the rest. The decision about what belongs to the project stays with the people in the office.
- Filum does not prevent changes to the archive. It makes every change detectable. That is exactly what the law requires for a changeable medium such as a NAS, and the backup brings back what is missing.
- Teams chats are not covered.
- The Windows version is on hold. What is being built today is the Mac version.

The first step

Filum brings a sample project along: a fictional building project with about a thousand sample messages, without sign-in and without a licence. Afterwards you have a finished archive folder in front of you and can see what comes out at the end, before you set anything up.

Questions about introducing it are answered by bimover support.