



## The Importance of Using Secure Communications Technology in the Boardroom

A special look at the benefits of Diligent Messenger Module

*Communication among board directors and administrators is essential for boards to run effectively and efficiently. It's alarming that corporate executives and board administrators send confidential information to directors' personal email accounts, which are insecure and vulnerable to data breaches. Email continues to be a highly vulnerable attack vector. Approximately 8,000 businesses each month are targeted by business emails that are related to scams, according to the Symantec ISTR Email Threats 2017 report<sup>1</sup>. Email and other communications tools are also vulnerable to phishing attacks, password hacks and other potential data breaches.*

Your sensitive board data needs to stay secure and safe. But if you're still using email and text to send board-related materials, you are putting your board – and your entire organization – at risk.

As an industry leader in board portal technology, Diligent is uniquely positioned to provide strategic and actionable insights on the rapidly changing digital landscape. This report will examine the risks of using insecure email and communications tools, discuss the benefits of secure communications technology for boards, and make a case for adopting Diligent Messenger, a secure communications tool built specifically for boardrooms.



**Diligent**

## CHALLENGES & RISKS

### Email is not secure

Directors who use email to send board materials say that they do so because it's easy and convenient; in fact, some board directors will even use personal email. A NYSE Governance Series/Diligent report<sup>2</sup> found that 60% of board directors use personal email regularly to communicate with fellow directors and executive management. But using email – especially personal email – to send board materials is inherently risky. Not all third-party communication solutions have the same level of security as Diligent. Personal email, such as accounts on Yahoo! and Gmail, are on an inherently open and shared platform. Any email user can intentionally, or unintentionally, forward confidential information to unauthorized users. Unfortunately, hackers know these vulnerabilities, and high-profile email account issues, like those experienced by former Secretaries of State Hillary Clinton and Colin Powell, have made the headlines.

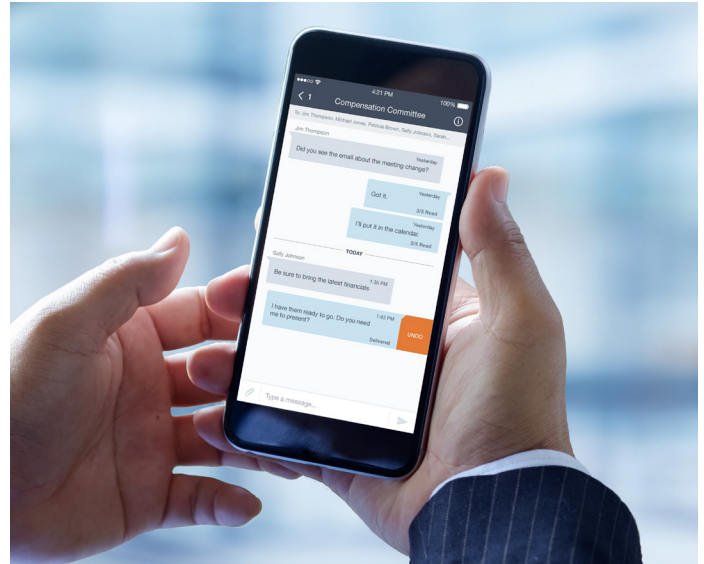
### Attackers Targeting Boards

Board information and communication between company executives and board administrators and board directors is often extremely sensitive. Allowing directors to use personal email accounts exposes not only the directors, but company executives and the whole organization. In some cases, if the information is leaked to the public, it could create disastrous results for the company (e.g., legal ramifications, disclosure of company secrets, impact on revenue, damage to the brand).

Criminals, hackers and some nefarious competitors know this vulnerability and have set their attack sights on board directors who are viewed as “big targets.” The email threat known as “phishing,” the fraudulent practice of sending emails purporting to be from reputable companies in order to induce victims to reveal sensitive information, has transformed into a more advanced form known as “whaling.” In 2016, a breach of Colin Powell's email account exposed confidential information that included the mergers and acquisition list for Salesforce, on whose board Powell was serving.<sup>3</sup>

### Email is cluttered

While not exactly a security threat, the velocity and volume of email can create obstacles for effective board director communications. Board directors may sit on different boards and work with various organizations, and in so doing, they will be bombarded by mountains of email. Board members are often involved in operational processes, such as loan approvals, insurance disbursements and pension fund payouts. Email clutter can delay these processes. How can board directors keep board-related communications specific and timely when managing these various duties and emails?



## HOW DILIGENT MESSENGER CAN HELP

Boards must be proactive with their security, but where do they start in terms of secure board communication technology? Not all communication technology providers are the same. Some lack the stringent security needed to combat advanced threats, while other vendors may lack particular features that, in turn, can create more problems.

Diligent Messenger, which integrates seamlessly with Diligent Boards, specifically solves the challenges and risks boards face when dealing with insecure email and text.

Here's a look at some features and benefits of adopting Diligent Messenger:

### Advanced Security Technology

Diligent Messenger is built on rock-solid encryption technology and uses the same security standards of Diligent Boards. Because Diligent is ISO 27001-certified, organizations can feel confident that they've partnered with a secure communications technology provider with a proven track record.

Unlike personal email or third-party corporate email, Diligent Messenger is a closed environment including only authorized and approved users. Therefore, all information is contained inside the Diligent security perimeter. However, if a device goes missing or is compromised, the user's account may be quickly disabled to avoid any exposure of data. Furthermore, there is no discoverability within Messenger's environment. Directors and users can use the system confidently and be ensured that none of their communication will ever be read or be able to be discovered in cause of an audit.

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Diligent regularly conducts ongoing reviews of its security technology, including:

- **SSAE 16/ISAE 3402 (SOC 1 Type 2) service organization annual audit of controls.**
- **Type 2 SOC 2 Security and Availability audit.**
- **HIPAA AT 101 audit.**
- **ISO 27001 Certification since February 2014.**
- **Third-party vulnerability scanning and penetration testing**
- **Diligent employee training in data security is a requirement.**

## Functionality

Diligent Messenger is a multiplatform solution that works on computers and mobile devices. Rivaling email, Diligent Messenger can help increase productivity and board director collaboration. Features include:

- **The split-screen view capability of Boards and Messenger allows directors to connect instantly to other directors while reviewing board materials.**
- **Allows for group messaging and attachment sends. Users can share documents with select directors in real time for faster and easier board collaboration.**
- **Users can share and comment on new resolutions in real time. When users can discreetly and securely discuss resolutions outside the boardroom, time is saved at the board meeting.**

With Diligent Messenger, there is the ability to send escalation notifications, which can be delivered via email. The escalation message is just a notification for the user, who must then securely sign in to Diligent Messenger in order to read the information.

## Ease of Use

Diligent Messenger empowers board directors with a powerful but easy-to-use communication solution that promotes greater and more secure collaboration among board directors. To avoid email clutter, directors using Diligent Messenger get more direct communication; that way, information is not lost in cluttered inboxes.

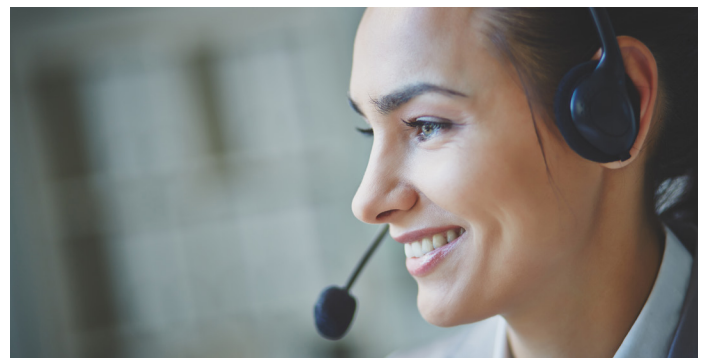
If an organization selects a solution that is too complex, they run the risk of users not adopting it. Fortunately, Diligent delivers a highly secure, yet simple, solution. The initial Diligent Messenger setup takes less than two minutes, and the user interface is familiar and intuitive. As discussed, Diligent Messenger integrates seamlessly with Diligent Boards so users can make the transition and communicate with ease.

Because we're committed to advancing the technology, Diligent is constantly improving and innovating new features and functionality with Diligent Messenger.

## Higher Control and Visibility

As mentioned, emailing sensitive board information seamlessly – especially via personal email – curtails governance and accountability as well as an organization's control and visibility.

Diligent Messenger now gives directors, board administrators and legal teams control of the retention of board communications, making it a predictable and defensible process. Diligent Messenger helps preserve the information that's required and purges the rest, on the customer's required schedule. Diligent Messenger can help you stay compliant with your organization's document retention policy.



## Backed by World-Class Support

Diligent Messenger is supported by Diligent's award-winning customer success organization. Although the integration and adoption of Diligent Messenger is simple, you may have questions or require specific training. Diligent can help, as we provide 1:1 training as well as 24/7 support in more than six languages.

## CONCLUSION

While no solution is 100% secure, it's essential that your board directors move away from using email, text and other insecure communication channels. Diligent Messenger delivers secure communication technology directly into the hands of board directors and administrators while promoting greater levels of visibility, control, collaboration and productivity. Diligent Messenger is tightly integrated with Diligent Boards, giving users a familiar interface that can drive the high adoption levels needed to ensure board communication security and privacy. The cyber threat landscape is evolving rapidly; therefore, it's essential that you select a solution provider like Diligent, which is dedicated to producing innovative security technology to meet your changing needs today and tomorrow.

1. Symantec ISTR Email Threats 2017 Special Report, <https://www.symantec.com/content/dam/symantec/docs/security-center/white-papers/istr-email-threats-2017-en.pdf>  
2. "The Price of Convenience" NYSE and Diligent [https://www.nyse.com/publicdocs/Diligent\\_Board\\_Comm\\_Report\\_2017.pdf](https://www.nyse.com/publicdocs/Diligent_Board_Comm_Report_2017.pdf)  
3. "Secrets of Silicon Valley Intrigue Revealed in Colin Powell's Hacked Emails," Fast Company, Oct. 29, 2016.

Introducing Diligent's

# Governance Cloud™



Begin your journey with Diligent Boards. Grow with Governance Cloud.

## Good governance isn't just one thing. Why buy software that only manages board documents?

From the creators of Diligent Boards, trusted by 50% of the Fortune 1000, Governance Cloud partners with board directors and executives to mitigate risk more effectively and meet demands in the boardroom and beyond.

With over a decade of experience as the leader in the market and with over 12,000 clients and 400,000 board directors and executive users around the globe, Diligent spent the last two years working with clients to develop the various components of the Governance Cloud. Backed by Diligent's unparalleled customer support, easy-to-use technology, and earned industry trust—Governance Cloud is a partner that can grow with you.

Begin your journey to the best-in-class governance.  
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