

# From the Medical Center to the Athletics Department, Central State University Safeguards Student Data with Virtru

## Why Central State University Chose Virtru

With Virtru, Central State University can add a seamless, intuitive layer of security to communications in Microsoft 365. Central State University uses Virtru to empower doctors, coaches, faculty, and staff across the university — from medical departments to administrative offices and the athletics program — to protect sensitive data while still being able to share it as needed.

## The Result:

With Virtru, Central State University is able to:

- **Add a layer of encryption to Microsoft Outlook** so faculty, staff, and administrators can confidently share data while keeping it under their control.
- **Give employees tools that fit within their existing workflows**, increasing the frequency of data protection with tools that are easy to use.
- **Revoke shared information if needed**, with controls directly within the Microsoft Outlook interface.
- **Securely communicate with students, parents, and other stakeholders** with a simple recipient experience.
- **Expand data protection to new departments** as more employees learn of Virtru's capabilities and how they can be used to safeguard various types of sensitive data.

## FERPA-Compliant Data Protection Across Departments: Administration, Athletics, Finance, and Medicine

As CIO, Showkat Choudhury manages Central State University's entire digital ecosystem. From deploying learning management systems to loaning student laptops and negotiating agreements with vendors, Choudhury and his IT team are exceptionally busy managing the interconnected systems that underpin the university's collaboration.



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-Showkat Choudhury,  
CIO, Central State University

Choudhury is always looking for ways to optimize and streamline technology, so when a doctor from the university's medical center reached out to him about needing a secure fax capability, he started thinking about alternatives. "To have a fax machine, then I need to have a dedicated phone line. That adds another expense. Another issue is that our entire campus has VoIP — and with a traditional phone line, I then need to convert it to VoIP. So, there's a lot of technology behind the scenes to enable something like this."

In his search for a simpler solution that would secure this medical data, Choudhury came across Virtru. "What I like about Virtru is that it gives you total control of your information," he said, referencing how Virtru users can revoke a sent email at any time, or set parameters around how long the recipient can access the data.

Choudhury has extensive experience managing technology for universities, and too often, he sees universities sign up for technology that doesn't get used. "In many cases, software and services do not work the way the vendor committed," Choudhury said. "These universities end up in a five-year agreement where they're paying for solutions that are never used. I don't want to be one of them." With Virtru, Choudhury is able to scale up and down user licenses as needed — which is a good thing, because the word is spreading about Virtru.

"We installed it for that doctor, then for a second doctor and nurses. We've now installed it for our athletics department: The coaches need to transmit a lot of sensitive data like date of birth and social security numbers, so they wanted it. It's catching some air. "

Choudhury also received requests from administrators, the finance department, and leadership offices, so his team continues to deploy Virtru to stakeholders across the university.

## Preserving Faculty and Staff Workflows with Microsoft 365 Outlook Encryption

Central State University's faculty, staff, and students use Microsoft M365 for email. One of the things Choudhury likes about Virtru is the way it seamlessly integrates within Outlook, so users don't need to disrupt their existing workflows in order to protect the data they share. "Virtru's technology is designed in such a way that you don't have to change your habit or work," he said. "It is seamlessly integrated with your current workflow."

"In higher education, we have a trend where employees stay for a long, long time. People start working here and retire after 20, 30 years. During that time, they get used to one type of work," said Choudhury. "You hear things like, 'I do things my way. I work like this.' With Virtru, they can keep those processes. It changes just a little bit, but in a way that's very doable."

Other, portal-based email encryption providers create too many hurdles for users, Choudhury said. "You have to log into a different portal and send your email from there. And if you need to find an email you sent four months ago, you have to go back to the portal, and it may not even be there because they have a three-month retention policy." With Virtru, on the other hand, encrypted emails are both secure and accessible within Outlook, making it intuitive for users. "You don't have to be a rocket scientist to understand how to use it," he said. "You just click the button, and it's done."

## Building Trust Through Security

"Security is a main reason why businesses fail and get hacked," said Choudhury. Prior to joining Central State University, he previously worked at the largest college in Washington state, where he witnessed the impact of a data breach on another nearby private college. "Everyone was upset, and many students and parents lost their trust in that college," he said.

“These students are just 18, 20 years old. They’re just starting their lives,” Choudhury emphasized. “At this early age, if they lost their most securely held information — date of birth, health records, social security numbers — if it’s compromised just one time, that information may float on the web for decades.”

Choudhury works tirelessly to keep security top of mind across the university in order to protect students’ personal information. With weekly emails, monthly training sessions, and consistent communication, Choudhury’s leadership influences security behavior across the many departments of the university, instilling data protection as a habit for faculty and staff. Virtru is part of Choudhury’s strategy for equipping faculty and staff members to keep student data secure.

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### **About Central State University**

[Central State University](#) prepares students with diverse backgrounds and experiences for leadership, research, and service. The university fosters academic excellence within a nurturing environment and provides a strong liberal arts foundation leading to professional careers and advanced studies.



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