

# Best Practices for State and Local Government to Address Communications Archiving, Search, FOIA and Public Records Requests

For Cisco Webex, Microsoft Teams, Ring Central, Slack, Zoom and more

As state and local governments manage increasingly dispersed “work from anywhere” employee populations, the need for corresponding capabilities to respond to public records and freedom of information requests is critical. During the pandemic, state and local government employees rapidly adopted collaboration tools like Zoom, Cisco Webex, Microsoft Teams, and Slack. Dynamic chat tools enabled colleagues to conduct internal conversations, to interface with the public and support key business process workflows. Key connective capabilities ensured requests for everything from marriage licenses to construction permits could be managed and public meetings and planning sessions conducted online.

Modern chat applications include a multitude of new communications functionality from visual images and GIFs to contextual information like emojis and reactions, with files and links routinely attached. Administrators in state and local government must contend with records requests spanning

all of these interactive capabilities. That’s in addition to screen shares, whiteboards, webcams audio and more. And, given that state rules require responses to requests in as few as five days, rapid and accurate search and retrieval capabilities are absolutely fundamental.

As employees use collaboration and chat tools to interact with each other and the public, the ability to search a shared screen, whiteboard, chat reaction, or long conversation for information pertaining to a particular individual or topic is imperative. The legacy technology tools organizations use to perform basic keyword searches on email, SMS, or social media content are insufficient in the era of collaboration and dynamic chat. State and local governments must ensure that their platforms for search, retrieval, and management of data align to the new applications employees are using for day-to-day business interactions.

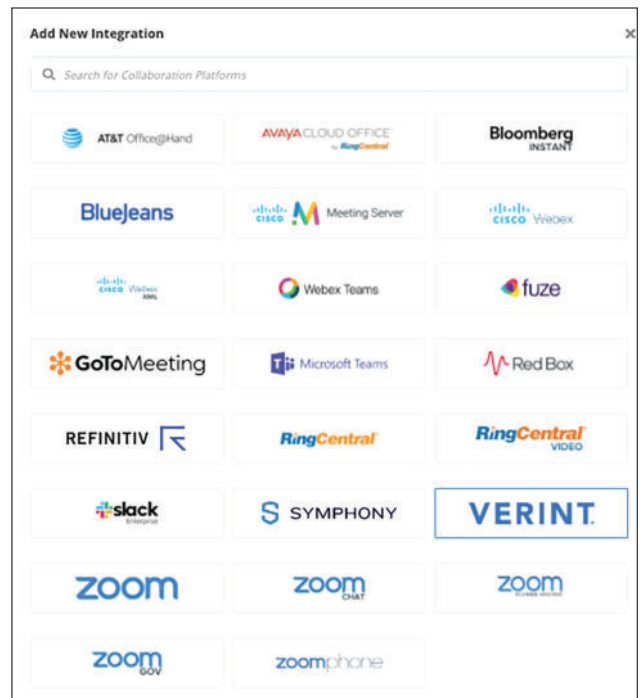
## Theta Lake’s Purpose-Built Public Record Management System

Theta Lake’s purpose-built capture, retention, and supervision platform for modern collaboration and chat applications, provides state and local governments with an essential tool to identify, search, retrieve, and preserve data subject to public records laws. Theta Lake’s platform empowers governmental organizations to unlock the core features of collaboration and chat applications while maintaining robust and proactive protocols to respond to information requests.

Forward thinking organizations must prepare for the inevitable increase in requests for data that will necessitate searches through video meetings, hearings, internal collaboration sessions, certification conversations, phone calls, and written communications that may be germane to a particular query.

### Easy and Safe to Deploy

Theta Lake’s direct, API-based integrations with the leading collaboration and chat applications provide comprehensive capture of every interaction taking place during meetings, chats, and phone calls. In a few clicks, administrators can enable secure connections to Webex, Zoom, Teams, RingCentral, or Slack as well as voice recording platforms like Red Box and Verint. Following integration, conversations are ingested directly into Theta Lake where they can be searched and analyzed by staff.



In addition, data can be ingested from cloud storage platforms like O365, AWS S3 buckets, and Azure blobs. Files of any type (.mp3, .mp4, .wav, .pdf, and all Microsoft Office formats) can be uploaded to the platform directly, if ad hoc ingestion is needed.

All data is stored in Theta Lake's SOC 2, Type 2-audited platform, which includes standard security controls such as encryption in transit and at rest, routine penetration tests, vulnerability scans, and unique encryption keys for every customer. Theta Lake leverages its STAR3 Security Architecture to secure data across the platform. More details about Theta Lake's security protocols can be found [here](#).

## Comprehensive Search Capabilities

Following ingestion of collaboration and chat content, Theta Lake facilitates comprehensive search across what was spoken, shown, and shared in each conversation. Every aspect of a communication is indexed and available to query—information and applications displayed during screen shares, text typed on native whiteboards, audio portions of meeting discussions, and images or written information shown through webcams. From a chat perspective, emojis, reactions, animated gifs, and text itself can be searched to respond to records requests.

Participants are identified in every conversation and smart searches can be constructed to filter based on other metadata attributes. Searches can be filtered by date range, media type, duration, number of participants, and any other relevant triggers. Searches can also include keywords, images, and emojis as well as personally identifiable information like names, email addresses, birthdates, and Social Security Numbers—standard identifiers included in many record requests.

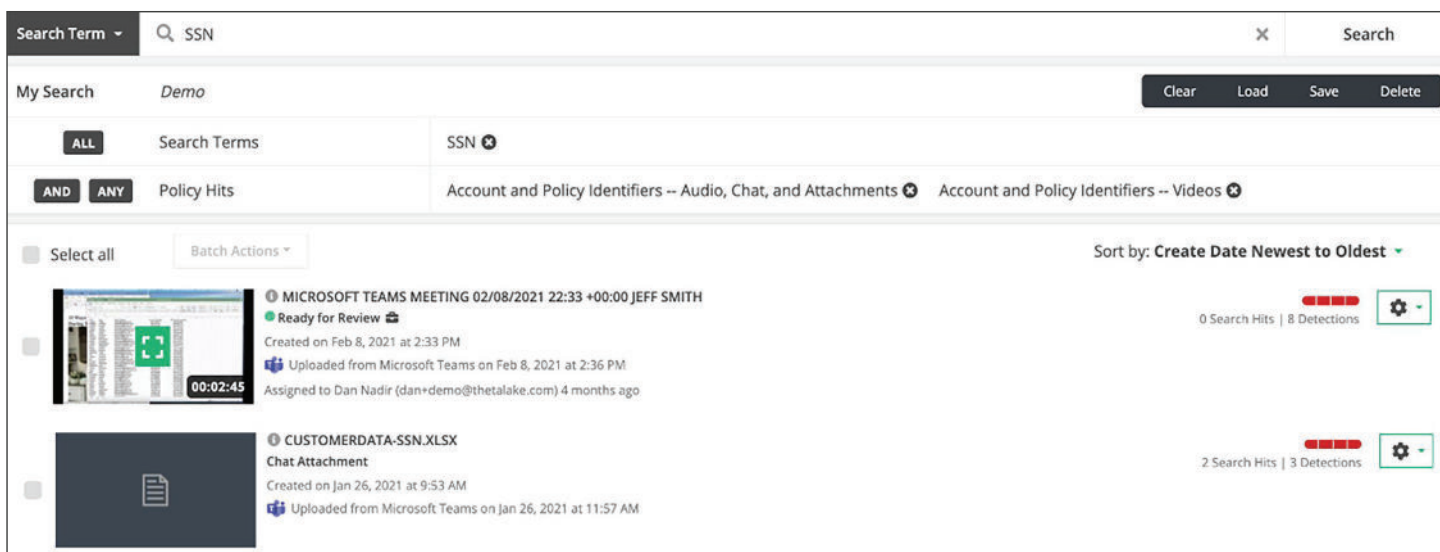


Figure 2: Sensitive information search using search terms and policies.

Staff can save searches for team or individual use as well as convert searches into workflow actions to support repeatable internal processes.

## Efficient and Cost Effective

The increasing use of collaboration and chat platforms by state and local governments both internally and as a mechanism for interfacing with the public has resulted in a corresponding increase in volumes of recorded data generally. In particular, the proliferation of chat messages within meetings, group or privately as well as video and audio content presents unique challenges for teams tasked with responding to public records requests. Reviewing the entirety of a Webex meeting or Zoom phone conversation or chat conversations spanning multiple participants and time periods, to determine if the content of the conversation is relevant to a particular records request is time consuming and inefficient. Additionally, Theta Lake provides archiving of terabytes of data in its cloud at no additional cost.

Theta Lake's AI, ML and NLP capabilities enable instantaneous search and identification of relevant content across all communications as well as detection of conduct, compliance, or data security risks.

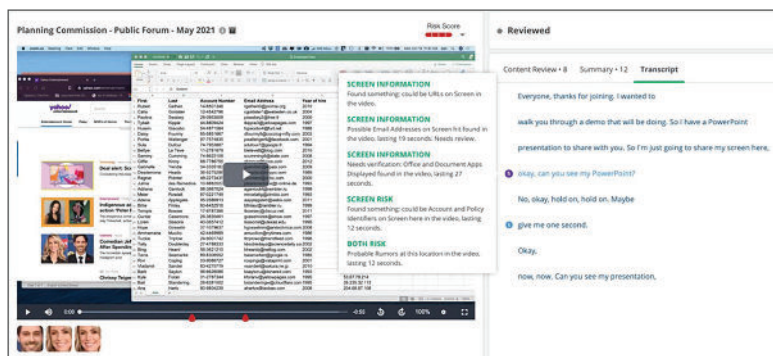


Figure 3: Automated detection

Theta Lake's ability to search across every aspect of collaboration and chat drastically reduces manual efforts required to uncover relevant data and increases the accuracy of searches resulting in overall reduced costs associated with the data retrieval process. As data requests increase in scope and complexity, Theta Lake allows state and local government teams to scale review and response efforts to include every aspect of official communications efficiently and effectively.

## Beyond Basic Search: Remediation, Redaction, and Analytics

Beyond simple identification and search, Theta Lake's platform includes capabilities to redact visual and audio data to limit exposure during the review process. So, for example, organizations can programmatically redact Social Security Numbers, resulting in obfuscated screens where SSNs are displayed or muted audio where SSNs are spoken, to limit visibility among review staff.

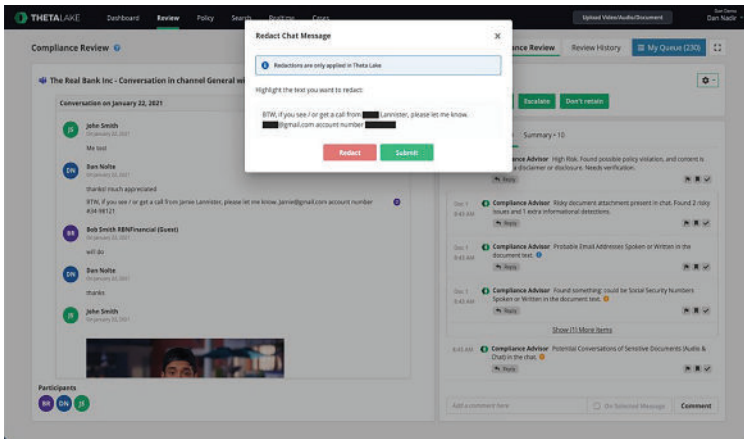


Figure 4: Example of redaction capabilities in a chat message.

For organizations who want to take a proactive approach to search and supervision, Theta Lake's AI-enabled risk detections can identify issues like risky behavior, customer complaints, the display of sensitive applications like QuickBooks, Zoho, or Gusto on screen as well as the presence of disclaimers, Social Security Numbers, or email addresses in what was spoken, shown, and shared in collaboration and chat conversations. Theta Lake's AI-based classifiers allow organizations to identify potential compliance, security, privacy, or customer support issues when they arise and address problems before they become litigation, data exposure, or regulatory incidents.

Remediation capabilities allow for the removal of sensitive or inappropriate information from chat platforms themselves. In these instances, profanity or confidential data can be deleted from Microsoft Teams or Cisco Webex Teams interactions limiting the visibility of objectionable or confidential material among chat conversation participants. Remediation is a particularly powerful feature when chat tools are used for public interactions and sensitive data like birthdates or driver's license numbers are shared—this data can be removed and will not persist in chat conversations.

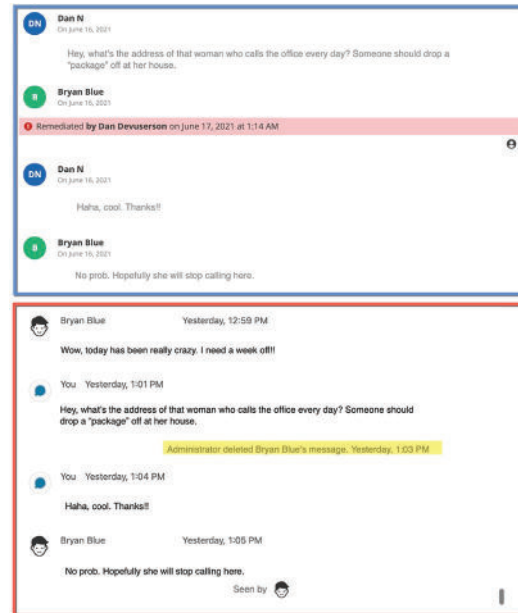


Figure 5: Example of remediation capabilities in chat messages and notifications of that edit.

**To learn more about Theta Lake's capabilities for state and local governments and request a demo**

[click here](#)

**ABOUT THETA LAKE.** Theta Lake, Inc., dual winner of UC Today's 2020 Best Compliance Product and Best Security Product, was founded in 2017 by proven entrepreneurs and enterprise technologists with decades of leadership experience and recognition from Global 100 customers and top industry analysts. With a mission to provide modern collaboration security and compliance, Theta Lake's patented and multi-patent pending AI helps security and compliance teams more effectively and quickly scale their risk detection and the workflows for communication security, data loss protection, and supervision of modern video, voice, and unified collaboration systems. The Theta Lake Compliance Suite is SOC 2, Type 2 compliant. Visit us at [Thetalake.com](https://thetalake.com); [LinkedIn](#); or Twitter at [@thetalake](#).