

**Egg, December 23, 2025:** *The past year has been marked by many changes. Much of what was previously accepted is now being increasingly questioned. The field of information technology appears to be facing unprecedented upheaval. This year in review and blog post will take a quiet look back and offer a brief outlook for the future.*



### **Is IT knowledge becoming obsolete?**

For many years now, it has been observed that SMEs are increasingly less likely to have their own internal IT departments. The necessary services are being moved to the cloud. The arguments often cited are that skilled workers are hard to find or simply too expensive. Currently, this has gone so far that there is a belief that AI will solve all IT problems in the future. Several examples from this year show that this is unlikely to be the case.

A customer needed assistance. It turned out that the box was running without a network cable. Apart from the fact that this option is no longer possible with many solutions because they are necessarily connected to the network, this is not the case with the ArchivistaBox. However, remote maintenance is not possible with an ArchivistaBox that is not connected to the network. The ArchivistaBox can be connected to the outside world via cable, USB, and Wi-Fi. There is a **graphical program for this (see manual)**. The customer said he didn't know how to do it. A case for an on-site visit. But the travel expenses were too expensive for the customer. He tried to solve the problem with AI. After two days, he reported that the box was connected to the network. Access was still not possible. The customer didn't know what had been changed; the AI had done it.

In another case, it was reported that the box kept switching itself off and that the power supplies were defective. Although this was hardly likely with two (redundant) ArchivistaBoxes, the customer wanted new power supplies installed immediately. These were installed within four hours (platinum maintenance contract). It was noticed that all servers were connected in series via four power strips. It was not possible to determine whether the external service provider had not noticed such intertwined power cables or was unaware of the problem.



Another customer needed to replace their ERP solution. The clients were to receive Windows 11, using a Windows Server 2016. After the upgrade, the solution ran 4 times slower. The supplier insisted that this was due to virtualization (specifically ArchivistaVM). The customer was advised to install everything on physical machines, which would resolve the issue. To this end, a new SQL server was installed on a physical Windows 11 machine for the customer. Only when this installation was transferred to virtualization was it possible to demonstrate that the new installation ran just as fast there. The problem was due to the combination of Windows 11 and Server 2016.

### **The creeping loss of digital sovereignty**

When Windows XP was introduced, there was heated debate about whether it was permissible for a product to require a key to be activated before it could run permanently. When switching to Windows 11, an online account and a permanent connection to the internet are effectively mandatory. No one can guarantee that no data will be leaked to Microsoft. The outcry today is barely noticeable. The new magic word is “no alternative.”

With all due respect, Archivista solutions have been on the market for almost 30 years precisely because they offer an alternative. Since the launch of ArchivistaBox products, ArchivistaBox has used open data structures. The customer’s data belongs to the customer and no one else. To date, there is no “hidden” back door that allows us, as the supplier, to access the ArchivistaBox. Thirty years ago, this was state-of-the-art; today, it is sometimes branded as “obsolete,” to put it somewhat more vividly. In principle, it’s about dependencies. With such solutions, price increases can be dictated more easily for data that is no longer available to customers. Apart from that, it is also likely that data outsourced to the cloud can hardly be migrated locally to your own servers (and if so, then at high cost).



A few decades ago, there were concerns that it might not be such a good idea for manufacturers to have unsolicited and unrestricted access to customers' systems. Today, this is accepted (almost as a mantra). Back then, it would have been unthinkable for company data to be stored by third parties without any kind of control. Today, the argument is that there is simply no viable alternative to the cloud. The cloud is virtually without alternative. Primarily, this way of thinking is without alternative.

In this sense, the loss of digital sovereignty is a fact. Not because there are no alternatives, but because the key players have managed to sell it that way and, where necessary, to help it along. Why should an environment running Windows Server 2016 and Windows 10 with Windows 11 clients suddenly run 1:4 slower? Providers should ask themselves this question in the interests of their customers. However, these providers are so dependent on Microsoft technology that they would not dare or want to "fall out" with Microsoft. And if the public sector relies so heavily on (closed) technology, it should not be surprised when problems arise at (in)opportune moments. **The example of the blocked email account of the chief prosecutor of the International Criminal Court could have been a wake-up call.**

The move to the cloud (primarily from a few providers) may seem like a convenient solution. However, it should be noted that this reduces one's own (digital) sovereignty. Primarily, dependencies arise that allow manufacturers to gain access to their customers' systems for their own purposes, virtually without being asked.

### **The ArchivistaBox offers digital sovereignty**

Digital sovereignty with the ArchivistaBox means that Archivista solutions have never had and never will have proprietary data structures since entering the market. This is not a matter of counting peas. Movies in MP4 format have been manageable with the ArchivistaBox since the end of 2019. At that time, there were still two partial patents. However, the key point was/is that these were expiring and that the corresponding tools had been available for many years under an open source license. Today, at the end of 2025, **it can be said that the patents for H264 are now obsolete (in Europe).**

But it is not only the question of possible patents that is central; it is equally important that the information remains available (and readable) in the long term. Since entering the market, Archivista solutions have been "photographing" data virtually. This makes it possible, for example, to keep the

content of emails or Office files (visually) readable without the corresponding programs being available. All you need is a browser to view the content on the web. Add-ons such as Office Viewer are explicitly not necessary. Originally, this meant that Archivista solutions generated more data due to the image copies. A few decades ago, Office files, for example, were much smaller. Today, even Office files are incredibly large, so the corresponding image copies are no longer significant.



However, locally managed data still has advantages that cloud solutions do not offer. One of these is price. Cloud solutions are significantly more expensive. The annual costs for storage space alone are usually around 1:5 to 1:10 higher than the corresponding prices for data carriers. Over the average lifespan of data carriers of 5 years, this results in cost advantages of 1:25 to 1:50. Furthermore, the availability of local data is trivial compared to the effort required for cloud services. Data stored on site remains accessible even when there are problems with the internet. The disruptions that occurred in 2025 can be seen as a warning sign.

In this sense, ArchivistaBox offers digital sovereignty. The data structures are disclosed, the solution is subject to the AGPLv3 license (meaning that the software sources are disclosed), and ArchivistaBox is extremely easy to maintain in operation (not just in setup). The ArchivistaBox in its current form was created precisely because the last few decades have shown that users, even experienced professionals, simply do not have the time to operate highly specialized IT solutions.

The ArchivistaBox does not change, it evolves. When the first ArchivistaBox was launched in 2006/2007, it was limited to 40 GB. Larger solutions already existed at that time, but they were not implemented with the ArchivistaBox. Later, all Archivista solutions were implemented with the ArchivistaBox, and since then, the ArchivistaBox has become more powerful year after year. Standard solutions are now in operation that cover many dozens of terabytes of data. This involves not only data management, but also processing.

Over the last two days, for example, the program used to process the captured DVDs has been converted from single-CPU to multi-CPU. This means that even with 16 CPUs or 32 threads, the processing time per hour for the corresponding DVDs has been increased from approximately 5 DVDs to 30 data carriers. In addition, the program has been optimized so that all tracks (audio and video) are available in the desired quality in a single pass. The corresponding program

mkv2mp4.pl is available on the ArchivistaBox AGPLv3 published today in the folder /home/cvs/archivista/jobs:

<https://archivista.ch/cms/agplv3> (Don't forget 2013 password!)

**Company holidays: December 24, 2025 to January 4, 2026**

Our company will be closed from tomorrow until the end of next week. We will be happy to assist you again from January 5. Customers with a Gold maintenance contract will receive support on December 29 and 30. Customers with a Platinum contract will receive support on December 24, December 29-31, and January 3, 2026.

*Wishing you happy holidays and a happy new year in 2026gi!  
Urs Pfister, Managing Director, Archivista GmbH*