

Client: OAO

Industry: Media

Business Driver: Better and consistent collaboration; Reduce costs and infrastructure

Solution: Google Drive for Work; Part of C³ Collaboration Platform

Google for Work Making Great Impressions for OAO



Making Great Impressions

“We know that Cloudbakers isn’t jumping through hoops for us simply because we are their client. They’re working hard for us because they are genuinely interested in finding the best solutions to our problems.”

-Brett Bernstein, Vice President of Technology, OAO

About Cloudbakers

Cloudbakers connects technology with change management to ensure successful adoption of your cloud projects, adding value to your business. We unite with your team, turning your users into evangelists and projects into partnerships.

OAO has come a long way since opening their doors in 2003. Beginning as a small team of ad traffickers, they have grown from doing ad trafficking, reporting, and inventory forecasting into a full-service, white-glove ad operations agency serving online publishers. They recognize that online advertising has evolved quite a bit over the last 20 years; it’s no longer about just getting the ad on the page. OAO are specialists in helping clients optimize all aspects of their digital advertising business.

Until working with Cloudbakers, [OAO](#) had been using a hosted version of Exchange 2007 at Rackspace. This situation had a number of shortcomings, not the least of which was that Microsoft has ‘end-of-lifed’ Exchange 2007, leaving only basic support services. On a more tactical level, OAO was running into numerous problems including mailbox size limitations, performance issues, and simply not having an integrated set of collaboration tools. In simplest terms, their legacy system was not meeting their needs. Advertising services and online publishing was evolving, and OAO needed a communication and collaboration platform that could keep up.

When [Brett Bernstein](#) joined the company in September 2014, the existing issues with the mail server were immediately identified to him as a high priority for 2015.



Preparing to execute the migration, Brett began by looking into migrating to the current version of Exchange. He also looked at cloud-based solutions, specifically Office 365 and Google Apps. A cloud-based solution quickly emerged as the right move; Google Apps was determined to be a better option for OAO than Office 365 for a number of reasons, including how many internal teams were already using personal Google Drive accounts for company business.

The need for external guidance was highlighted when he mapped out the existing communication process which OAO’s managed services teams followed with clients. Shared mailboxes used on a daily basis held almost

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a decade of client histories. These histories were (and remain!) the center-point for numerous communication processes and had to be flawlessly migrated in order to maintain the proper flow of business.

Coincidentally enough, Brett met Mitch, the founder of Cloudbakers, at a networking event at [Motorola Mobility](#) the day before they had scheduled to begin a self-managed pilot on Google Apps. Realizing both the scope of the task at hand and the ease with which this Google Apps evangelist spoke about the platform, Brett agreed there was a lot more to look into before diving into this project solo. He dropped the next morning's pilot and scheduled a follow up meeting with Mitch, stating "it's easier to trust Cloudbakers ... and their experience with the exact type of migration we were facing ... rather than to try and figure it out ourselves."



Brett's predicament is a common one. Often sales and accounting pressure IT to do such projects without third party aid, cutting corners. It is extremely clear, though, that doing these projects alone creates many challenges along the way. Even in what appear to be the simplest of migrations there is plenty of room for technical chaos, and when that happens you want an experienced cloud partner at your side to avoid a total disruption of business.

Migration: From folder madness to label luxury

"It's a collaborative, educational partnership that constantly churns out new benefits for both parties involved."

The OAO Exchange email infrastructure was complicated: Clients would send messages to a dedicated client-specific mailbox, which would then forward the emails to different shared mailbox. Inside that shared mailbox, a set of filing rules would move the message into a client-specific sub-folder. Managed services teams would have delegated access to the shared mailbox and navigate to the client-specific sub-folder they needed to access.

This meant that within each of these shared mailboxes, massive folder trees grew slowly over time. Poor search tools made navigating in and out of these shared folders comparable to whack-a-mole in terms of efficiency. The alternative, however, would be for each employee to connect to 50-60 delegated mailboxes. Outlook, as a mail client, simply is not capable of supporting something like that.

Mailbox size limitations were a significant issue. If a shared mailbox hit the cap, no additional messages would be accepted until a portion of history was archived off, making those messages difficult to access. For some of their most active accounts, this happened every few months. This system was in dire need of a replacement.

Life on the *other* side



The folder madness that was OAO's Exchange 2007 experience has been replaced by a far, far simpler system. Instead of folder trees within overflowing shared mailboxes, Cloudbakers implemented a mixture of shared inboxes (*without* the size limitations present in Exchange 2007) and collaborative distribution groups.

Gmail's label feature allowed for multiple labels on a given message. This means instead of having to remember where something was filed, team members could simply use the advanced search features of Gmail to quickly find what they were looking for. No more whack-a-mole folder searching!

From an administrative perspective, there is also a tremendous benefit from tools like email log search. This provides Brett and his team with an easy way to respond if a question arises about if and when an email has been sent or received. For a company so heavily reliant on consistent, accurate email, the level of intuitive organization and admin controls that Gmail provides has been a game-changer.

Google Drive (Unlimited Storage)



Many OAO employees had been using personal Google Drive accounts as a way to collaborate with their colleagues. The unlimited storage and admin controls offered by Google Drive for Work represented a double-win for Brett and his team. OAO can now

standardize team collaboration, confidently storing everything in one place. The admin controls remove the 'shadow-IT' concerns associated with using personal accounts in the workplace. Admins can manage sharing permissions for all types of files, blocking external sharing when needed and revoking permissions when deboarding. Maintenance of intellectual property became a piece of cake.

Hangouts



OAO has offices in 4 locations and a number of employees that work remote from home offices. Some teams spend a great deal of time each day in Hangouts with their colleagues from other offices. The automatic integration of Calendar and Hangouts means adding a video call to an event is accomplished in a single click. Additional integrations with chat applications allow for

equally simple usage and convenience; the integration of Google Drive for Work and Slack, a chat application used by OAO and many others, is a large component of the Cloudbakers [C³ Unified Collaboration Platform](#).

BetterCloud

Brett doesn't have a full-time person on his team devoted to corporate IT. Adding BetterCloud to the Google Apps platform has saved a significant amount of time for routine operational tasks. Certain tasks that before would take hours, such as enabling delegated access for entire teams to client mailboxes, can now be completed in minutes. In addition, BetterCloud's workflow tools allow him to standardize operational processes such as on-boarding new clients, resulting in a simplification of day to day operations.

A new type of vendor-client relationship

As a company with a small technology team that already has plenty on their plate, big changes like these can exert a lot of pressure company-wide. OAO notes that working with Cloudbakers greatly relieved this stress. Their connection with Cloudbakers is far more than a traditional vendor-client relationship; It's more than being sold licenses and a migration project. It's a collaborative, educational partnership that constantly churns out new benefits for both parties involved. The Bakers were solution-focused and OAO always felt like there was someone knowledgeable on the other end of the phone.

Further expansion

Going forward, OAO plans to build upon the Google Apps platform. This further expansion into the cloud will be largely made possible by the financial savings that OAO is realizing from their move to Google Apps. Brett acknowledges that they don't need as many licenses as they did with Rackspace. "We are spending less and getting more functionality. It's a double-win" says Brett.



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