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White paper

Dropbox Business: Getting the most from collaboration



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For the modern enterprise, helping employees get—and give—the most from their jobs is critical. And in this increasingly data-driven age, it's no surprise that humans generate a staggering 2.5 quintillion **bytes of new data every day**.¹ Big data and business analytics tasks support an increasingly mobile workforce, which needs anywhere, anytime access to business-critical data, whether on or off the corporate network.

Just as the volume of data has increased, so too has the number of devices. Statista forecasts growth to **more than six devices per connected user by 2020**,² as users increasingly rely on laptops, tablets, and/or smartphones, depending on tasks and locations.

At the same time, employees increasingly need to collaborate and share files to achieve the greatest productivity and utility from the data deluge. For many organizations, using hosted cloud storage is the only way to support this growing need, since traditional enterprise tools can't keep pace with the demand for seamless anywhere, anytime access to content and files for secure team collaboration.

Collaboration, storage, and the cloud

As the fundamental building block for external collaboration, files cannot be locked up behind network access in a corporate data center. To deliver the most value for both internal and external collaboration, a storage solution must offer secure file access for all parties involved. Using hosted storage is the natural way to deliver secure file access.

Hosted storage also provides a “single source of truth.” Instead of sending 20 copies of a file as attachments to a list of recipients, you have a simple link that points to shared data so authorized users can all access the same information, even as changes occur.

Files housed in hosted storage are automatically backed up to the cloud and are available at many locations and bandwidths. Perhaps most importantly, hosted storage makes critical files available immediately on a range of operating systems (OSs), devices, and platforms. And, almost incidentally, eliminating the distribution of large attachments can reduce overall storage spend by virtually deduping the inboxes and outboxes of users who share files.

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Security, governance, and the cloud

There are many choices for collaboration and file sharing platforms, but not all of them are appropriate for sensitive, business-critical data. IT leaders need enterprise-grade security so they can meet regulatory demands and protect confidential information, so any solutions must integrate with existing tools and support compliance mandates that govern where and how information is stored and secured. This is increasingly important as new regulations such as the EU's General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) emerge, because many IT leaders are challenged to ensure compliance with such policies.

When you are evaluating a cloud storage provider, it is important to look at the threat exposure its platform presents to the outside world. Today's enterprises and managed service providers may have thousands of

¹ <http://www.iflscience.com/technology/how-much-data-does-the-world-generate-every-minute/>

² <https://www.statista.com/statistics/678739/forecast-on-connected-devices-per-person/>



applications and platforms. Working with a provider that narrows its attack surface by offering just a single platform can reduce exposure. As such, the platform should be purpose-built for file sharing and designed to deliver maximum performance while minimizing external as well as internal risks.

Statista forecasts growth to more than six devices per connected user by 2020.



The consumerization of IT

Many users have already adopted a cloud storage solution for personal use, including Dropbox, which is used by [nearly half of cloud storage API expert CloudRail's cloud storage users](#).³ However, this can be vexing for many IT staff members, as some believe that unsanctioned cloud applications of any kind, often known as “shadow IT,” are unsafe. And, because of the associated risk of shadow IT, the need exists for a secure, enterprise-grade file- and data-sharing solution that’s easy to deploy and easy to use.

The consumerization of IT, or the blending of personal and business use of technology devices and applications, has affected the way enterprises develop and deploy applications. It has also contributed to multiple ways to collect information from outside the enterprise, whether storing files in the cloud or sharing a photograph of a whiteboard via iCloud. The fundamental problem is not data leakage; it is, instead, data ingestion, or the ability to bring content back into the system of record and federate it across multiple enterprise systems.

In other words, enterprises want the simplicity of a program such as Dropbox and enterprise-grade security. So, how do you achieve both?

Introducing Dropbox Business

There is nothing easier to deploy than something that’s already in use with a significant and often underestimated fraction of the organization, and that’s what many companies will discover when they adopt Dropbox Business.

In many cases, gaining the additional functionality of Dropbox Business doesn’t require uninstalling the Dropbox apps already in use by employees. Enterprise usage can be widespread and immediate, since users can convert the organic growth and existing use of content into sanctioned enterprise usage, giving IT and users visibility and control from day 1.

Once IT switches users to Dropbox Business, it retains all the basic functionality it is used to while also gaining a myriad of new, enhanced features, including:

- **Team folders**, which enable users to automatically synchronize content with other team members and provide a simple method of sharing individual files and folders
- **Dropbox Smart Sync**, which enables users to access all of an enterprise’s Dropbox files and folders while using virtually no local disk storage on end user computers or devices
- **Dropbox Paper**, which, like a virtual whiteboard, enables teams to create documents, write, share comments, and embed images in one document together in real time

All the other features of a paid Dropbox account instantly appear in each Business user’s Dropbox once that person joins a team, and with Dropbox Business Advanced, each new business user also gets as much space as needed.

³ <https://blog.cloudrail.com/cloud-storage-report-2017/>



For IT, Dropbox Business provides enterprise-strength security, ease of deployment, and the scalability to grow as the business grows. And to support an increasingly mobile workforce, IT can grant employees access to Dropbox Business both online and offline. This ensures simple, secure availability of business-critical information, regardless of connectivity or location.

Dropbox Business security features include remote wipe, which can delete corporate information from any user's device if it is lost or stolen—or if the employee leaves the business—without touching personal files and photos. Dropbox Business also offers device limits, which enables IT to grant access only to specific devices—for example, enterprise-owned PCs with encryption—thus keeping sensitive information off personal devices or public kiosks in hotels or airports.

Adopting Dropbox Business enables an organization to gain control of shared data while meeting the many security mandates that challenge enterprises of all sizes.

An integrated ecosystem

Organizations can leverage the DBX Platform to secure and enhance collaboration across applications, tools, devices, and operating systems. With the DBX Platform, companies gain access to a unified suite of APIs to seamlessly connect Dropbox Business to a broad range of workflow and productivity tools from Salesforce, DocuSign, Slack, Adobe, Microsoft, and many more. In addition, the DBX Platform enables you to secure and manage your Dropbox deployment with leading security partners such as Cisco Cloudlock, Netskope, Symantec, Okta, and Palo Alto Networks.

The bottom line

Dropbox Business enables users to collaborate securely, with the tools they use and love. With Dropbox Business, there is no need to send employees to rigorous training sessions to view how-to videos, since many users may already know how to use Dropbox.

From an IT perspective, eliminating file server challenges such as weekend backups and the need to bring servers down for hardware and OS upgrades means that IT staff can focus on adding business value instead of worrying about infrastructure issues. This effectively increases the availability of business-critical files while reducing the IT burden.

Deploying Dropbox Business also enables IT to demonstrate to users that it understands their challenges and sees the value in building upon the consumer tool that users choose. Instead of user complaints, IT gets appreciation and kudos for sanctioning and securing a tool already widely in use.

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Use Case Why Dropbox Business?

Dropbox Business is being adopted by global enterprise companies. Take the case of travel giant Expedia. With employees spread across 72 countries, the organization has relied on Dropbox shared links and folders instead of the clunky process of sending email attachments.

Word of mouth drove Expedia user adoption of Dropbox Business, which has increased shared folder use six-fold and doubled the use of mobile devices connected to the platform. Expedia has also reduced hardware costs by deploying and scaling Dropbox.

Smart Sync gives Dropbox customers access to virtually all their Dropbox files from user devices with just 256GB of local storage apiece. This creates a seemingly “bottomless” local drive by fetching content on demand and evicting it when it is no longer needed.

Visit dropbox.com to learn how Dropbox Business can secure your collaboration and sharing.

