Business challenge

When your workforce is often on the move, it can be a challenge for them to readily access information. How could IBM make it easier for teams to work with content, without compromising security?

Transformation

If you've ever worked remotely, then you know how frustrating it can be when you need a certain document, but just can't get to it from your phone or tablet. IBM is taking the pain out of file sync and sharing by giving employees an easy, secure way to share and work with information—anytime and from any device—using Box solutions.

Business benefits

Empowers
teams to work more efficiently, while meeting strict security protocols

Achieves
significant cost savings through lower on-device storage requirements

Boosts
engagement by making it easier for staff to work across locations and time zones

Office of the CIO

Helping global teams work better together with smart, secure file sync and sharing

The IBM CIO Office drives change, innovation and efficiency within the enterprise by ensuring the company's IT operations are responsive, resilient and secure enough to keep pace with ongoing changes in technology and business requirements.

"Box is a perfect example of the beauty of SaaS."

—Fletcher Previn, VP, Workplace as a Service, IBM

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Driving better ways to work

When you have teams spread across multiple countries and time zones—many of them working remotely—how do you bring everyone together to keep projects on track and operations running smoothly?

For the IBM CIO Office, the answer has been to find better ways to access and work with information—equipping employees with the tools they need to work productively, make better decisions and engage more effectively with customers, internal teams and suppliers.

Fletcher Previn, VP of Workplace as a Service at IBM, elaborates, "As part of an enterprise-wide employee survey in 2014, we asked IBMers to identify the biggest pain points of their digital working lives. One of the top responses was the lack of an easy way to share files internally and externally, as well as accessing documents from anywhere and on any device.

"Our office already offers a variety of solutions, including file sharing and collaboration tools, to our employees. We are always looking to build on these to add greater value for users, which sparked our search for a global platform that could empower the business to easily access and share information, while meeting very high security standards."

File sharing without limits

After carefully evaluating a number of solutions, the CIO Office selected Box to enable more flexible ways of working with information.

Fletcher Previn comments, "Box falls right in the crosshairs of the new way that we are working to deliver IT at IBM. We want to continue to put systems and processes in place that support smoother workflows, quicker action and greater efficiency.

"One of the key selling points with Box is its strong security focus. Many of our teams create intellectual property and work with sensitive information, and we can't risk having this compromised. Any platforms we use must not only meet strict internal security controls, they must also conform to very stringent protocols set out by certain clients, especially government institutions. Box's solid encryption, access and authentication capabilities support compliance with regulations such as FedRAMP and HIPAA, and keep us in full control of all our data."

As a managed, cloud-based platform, Box also aligns with the CIO Office's focus on cloud-first initiatives and eliminates the need for costly infrastructure investments and ongoing maintenance.

Fletcher Previn explains, "Box is a perfect example of the beauty of SaaS [Software-as-a-Service]. There's no infrastructure to buy, deploy or maintain, and I have just shy of two FTEs [full-time equivalents] managing it all."

IBM is making it easier than ever for users to access, manage and share information. Users can keep all the files they need in one place and access them anywhere, from their desktop or mobile device. Employees can also make use of tools like Box Notes, a document creation and collaboration solution, and Box Sync, an app that allows users to mirror files stored on Box to their desktop.

Employees have quickly embraced the new, simplified approach, as Fletcher Previn notes, "This project proves that if you make something simple and easy to use, people will take to it instantly. We didn't have an adoption unit or enablement team— we just made Box available to people and it has spread like wildfire. In just one year since our initial launch, more than 300,000 IBMers have registered for a Box account. We currently see approximately 3,000 additional IBMers using Box each week, and anticipate total adoption by our 400,000-plus global workforce in the coming months.

"Within that user base, only 0.23 percent of people have ever requested support from our helpdesk, and 58 percent of those requests can be dealt with automatically, without any intervention from a staff member. This clearly demonstrates how intuitive and easy-to-use Box is."

Reaping the benefits

Teams at IBM are reducing overhead, version control problems and security risks that come with sharing files by email. Employees no longer have to waste time on large file transfers or worry about whether they are viewing the most current version of content. They can share documents with a simple, secure link, and enable features such as file locking, folder-level access permissions, password protection, expiration dates or restricted download access for added security.

"One of the unanticipated benefits we've had with Box is that people are storing less material on their physical computers because everything is instantly accessible in the cloud," comments Fletcher Previn. "As a result, we've been able to purchase laptops with smaller hard drives,

which is delivering big cost savings— dollars that we are reinvesting in new technology solutions."

The ability to access documents anywhere is helping employees to work faster and more productively—a fact that is particularly evident amongst sales teams.

Daniele Hayes, Director of End User Computing at IBM, notes, "Box has significantly improved the working experience for our sellers. Today, they can access content from any device that they have at hand, whether it's a laptop, iPad or smartphone. The information is always there when they need it, so they can easily work on pitches and access marketing collateral on the go."

What started as a way to give a highly mobile workforce an easier way to sync and share content has evolved into a much broader transformation across IBM. Every day, teams from

all over the enterprise are finding new ways to take advantage of Box to drive more effective communication and collaboration—both internally and externally.

Daniele Hayes gives an example, "Employees across IBM have jumped on Box and use it not just with their internal teams, but to work more efficiently with external vendors, including creative agencies. For example, when a marketing department is creating something like a video, it's not just the large multimedia files that are being passed back and forth. It's multiple versions of the video scripts; it's images, such as logos and stock photography, that need to also be approved.

"In the past, so much of this was passed around through e-mails. Now that these teams have access to Box, they don't have to worry about emails bouncing back because

the attached files are too big, or about a new iteration getting lost in the shuffle—everything is available in a single Box folder, and it's much easier to stay on top of the work that needs to be done."

Another area of the business where Box is proving successful is within the developer community. IBM's developers are taking advantage of Box Platform to bring secure content services to their own apps and using Box APIs to integrate existing apps and backend systems to Box.

Daniele Hayes states, "Box Platform is an excellent enabling technology, and our users are constantly discovering new ways to make use of all the tools and features that it has to offer."

However employees chose to use them, tools like Box are ultimately helping the CIO Office to deliver on its goal of helping IBMers enjoy better working lives.

Fletcher Previn concludes, "At the end of the day, everyone is just trying to get their job done, and the more we can do to help our people work faster and more effectively, the better. The work that we are doing with Box and other programs like Mac@IBM, is helping us create a more productive environment for IBMers. We are working harder to listen to what our users really want, and deliver the tools that make them happier and more efficient. When our people are engaged and aligned,

it empowers our company to run better and helps IBM to remain competitive in an ever-changing market."

Today, IBM continues to build on its strategic partnership with Box to power next-generation content management and collaboration solutions for customers. IBM has integrated Box with its rich enterprise content management capabilities into its portfolio, and currently gives customers access to advanced collaboration, data classification, enterprise search and enhanced analytics capabilities through the following solutions: IBM Content Navigator with Box, IBM StoredIQ® with Box, IBM Case Manager with Box, and IBM Datacap with Box.

Solution components

- Box

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