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Why businesses should not use Sugar Sync, Google Drive, Microsoft SkyDrive, Dropbox etc.

Businesses desire collaboration, accessibility, and external access; and that can be delivered through the cloud.

But when choosing solutions such as SugarSync, Google Drive, Microsoft SkyDrive, and Dropbox, businesses should be aware of these threats and problems:

Security breaches

Beyond personal use, SugarSync, Google Drive, Microsoft Skydrive, and Dropbox are not recommended for networks.

With each of these solutions, a stranger hosts your data. Your business is secured by one encryption key, that everyone else is using. This explains why Dropbox's recent security failures were so heavily publicized: everyone was at risk.

Additionally, external hosting means that information is stored on a foreign server. There is no local oversight over this infrastructure. Your files are secured by these companies, exclusively.

Increased downtime

Most of these cloud companies host on a third-party server, such as Amazon. What this means: when Amazon goes down, these companies experience downtime, and ultimately, your cloud goes offline.

Downtime is more likely to occur because the entire ecosystem depends on this external server.

Limited visibility

Cloud solutions, thus far, have not provided users with visibility. There is limited policy and access management, and absolutely no reporting. What are your employees doing? How much data are they using? What files are excluded? What is the revision history on a specific document? None of these questions go answered.

Weak business functionality

SugarSync, Google Drive, Microsoft SkyDrive and Dropbox are not made for businesses, they are consumer solutions. There is no integration with your business environment or applications.

Also, because these companies pay for data, they will erase revisions and deleted files without your consent, on a recurring basis. Finally, there is no restoration of these files, and thus, they are not true backup solutions.

Understand why Consumer/Prosumer Cloud Solutions Don't Work for Business

An examination of Dropbox, Google Drive, SugarSync, and Box

The adoption of consumer/prosumer cloud solutions in the workplace threatens company security and uptime. Companies should transition to business-grade solutions that incorporate administrative features, heightened security, seamless integration, and an easy-to-use interface...

Dropbox

Over the past year, Dropbox has lost their reputation as a secure, reliable cloud storage provider. In July, 2012 a Dropbox security breach allowed thief(s) to access user accounts, passwords, and sensitive files. A month later, Dropbox users were unable to access their files for up to nine hours.

The recent FixYa Cloud Storage Report found that 40% of Dropbox users complained about "Security Concerns."

For companies like Dropbox, working in the public cloud has meant that security breaches and downtime are not isolated. This is because companies like

Dropbox have no private encryption key (and generally, your files are not encrypted at all) and the entire system depends on public web services.

Through its blunders, Dropbox has single-handedly lowered business confidence in the public cloud.

Without encryption (at rest, on the server), central management of data, or policy management for users (who can upload and what type of files), Dropbox and Dropbox for Teams ultimately lacks the administrative features that ensure uptime and efficiency.

Google Drive

Google Drive is a proprietary cloud service built for users of the Google platform. Similar to Dropbox, Drive was built for sharing family photos, and not for business collaboration and sharing. Indicative of this, Drive does not offer a business alternative.

Drive and Dropbox ultimately face many of the same challenges: no file encryption at rest/on the server, no central management of data, and no policy setting for users.

Another problem arises from Google Drive automatically converting files into proprietary file types (.gdoc, .gsheet, .gslides). This prevents files from being readily shared (due to incompatibility) with internal and external parties and limits the types of files companies can collaborate on.

The awkward communication between the local drive and these proprietary files may explain why 30% of users complained about "Folders Missing," 20% about "Syncing Issues," 20% about "Automatically Conversion to Google Doc," and 20% about "Unknown Error Occurred."

SugarSync

SugarSync has been regarded as a close alternative to Dropbox. Unfortunately, just like Dropbox, SugarSync "for Personal" lacks the oversight and collaboration businesses need, including central file management and team shares.

So what about SugarSync "for Business"? Based on CNET reviews, SugarSync Manager received a score of 2.5/5 and presented serious problems, specifically data loss and lack of customer support. Additionally, 15% of users complained about "Syncing Issues."

No doubt: SugarSync has put together a great consumer cloud solution. But at \$55 for three users, businesses will be hard-pressed choosing a "business" solution with syncing issues that is neither privately hosted nor privately managed.

Box

While Box is a robust solution for enterprises, both the "Personal" and "Business" alternatives lack security and administrative features.

Box "Personal" does not encrypt files in transit or files at rest and lacks password protected sharing. This option also lacks version history and any collaborative features (group based access).

And businesses will not find a large difference between the consumer and business alternatives; Box "Business" picks up some business features like version history, a user admin console, and access management, but still does not encrypt files at rest. Custom branding, bulk add/edit users, enhanced settings and reporting, activity notification archiving, dedicated support, Active Directory integration, and mobile device management -- all missing from the "Business" alternative.

Box for "Enterprises," is a viable solution that has all the aforementioned features -- but for upwards of \$25/user, businesses should consider private, business-grade solutions, that don't go down for two hours.

Finally, FixYa reported that 25% of users complained about "Upload Issues," 25% about "Security Concerns," 20% about "Backup Files Issues," and 20% about "Laggy Response on Web Apps."