

Box Focuses on the Enterprise

Summary: On September 27th, Box held its first Customer event and demonstrated that it is serious about the enterprise.

Event: Box held its first customer event, BoxWorks, in San Francisco. It unveiled a number of partners it works with to help it focus on the Enterprise market for Content Management and Collaboration. Box also announced at the event that salesforce.com was investing in Box. Box later indicated on October 11th, that the total investment round was US \$81 Million from Bessemer Venture Partners, NEA, Andreessen Horowitz, and Draper Fisher Jurvetson, along with strategic investors salesforce.com and SAP Ventures.

Analysis: Box has gotten a lot of media attention for its entrepreneurial CEO Aaron Levie and also for its recent significant VC funding round, but at its BoxWorks event, it showcased a number of enterprises that had put its Service into production.

The main use case was using Box for sharing content by users with a need for continual content access regardless of device, location or organization. Accessing content securely on Tablets, such as Apple iPads and Android based devices, was mentioned frequently.

We interviewed several of the customers who were at the event and had deployed Box and there were several consistent things that cropped up as to why Box was selected:

- Fast Deployment
- Works on Tablets (iPad)
- Easy to access, share and collaborate on content
- Passed security audits that other startup offerings did not.

The business side of the house, mainly Executives and/or Sales people, appears to be driving the use case for Box. In some of the cases, business users had started sharing files on tablets in an unsecure way and in a few cases that was the opening for Box in those accounts.

In 2011 users are not afraid of technology. Frustration grows because files are larger and business people are demanding to use tablets for work, and email systems block the transport of large files.

People want to be able to collaborate too, and for those that remember, collaboration has always been part of the content management story. Google established the collaborative content approach with Google Docs and now Box and others are working hard to capitalize on that trend.

Box and competitors such as DropBox, ShareFile and others, represent a new class of collaborative content providers that are moving fast and innovating every quarter, not every 1-3 years. They are catering to business users and IT and providing an alternative to the more established providers such as Microsoft (Office 365), Google (Google Docs) and even IBM (Lotus Live).

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Aragon Advisory: Enterprises should evaluate these new cloud based collaborative content offerings, both for the flexibility they offer in general and in areas such as tablet computing, as well as the speed in which they can help enterprises move forward (deployment and ongoing support).

Aragon also advises enterprises to look carefully at where the content will be stored (e.g. in which country) before they scale up any global deployments.