

Topics: Content Management, Mobile

Issues: What are the best practices for managing content across the enterprise?

How will enterprises leverage mobile ecosystems to gain a competitive advantage?

Box OneCloud will Challenge Google and Microsoft

Summary: On March 28th, Box announced OneCloud for iOS, along with a new Apps Marketplace that it integrates with. They also announced and demonstrated Box Edit desktop support for editing Microsoft Office documents on the fly.

Event: At its customer event in San Francisco on March 28th, Box announced its iOS focused OneCloud Platform ecosystem as well as Box Edit, a simple way to edit Office documents without having to manually download and upload them to a repository.

Analysis: Box wants to be the dominant Cloud Content Service offering for the iPad and Android mobile ecosystems and Box OneCloud is a strong step in the right direction, particularly due to the integration of a new Content focused Apps Marketplace. Box Edit, which was also announced at the event, represents a low cost alternative to Google Docs and Microsoft Office 365 by offering a simpler way to edit and store content in the Box Cloud.

Since the introduction of Tablets into the enterprise, managing content on iPads has been a challenge. Box jumped on that trend early and now with OneCloud is now offering enterprises the ability to manage content across multiple apps in a seamless way and with one repository.

Box's OneCloud offering will appeal to users that use iOS devices now and Android support will come later. The added appeal to OneCloud is the launch of an Apps Marketplace that features over 30 mobile apps that work seamlessly with Box preserving the metadata, security and version control throughout the mobile content lifecycle.

This easy to integrate approach used in the Box Apps Marketplace is a counter approach to the partner ecosystem that other content management providers such as Microsoft offer with Microsoft SharePoint (note, Microsoft has hundreds of SharePoint Partners). The advantage for the Box Apps Content Marketplace is the enhanced mobile user experience and improved security and management for mobile productivity applications.

The tight integration with iOS, the Content itself and the mobile apps makes Box OneCloud a cloud content management framework that is particularly suited for the emerging tablet enabled workforce.

Box OneCloud now starts to position Box as a safe and secure choice for enterprises that need to conduct business on Tablets. Many of the apps that are being supported (e.g. Adobe Echosign and DocuSign) are focused on contract and signatures that are critical to closing business.

On the office desktop front, easy on-the-fly editing of content that is stored in Box just got

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simple, due to the ease with which users can edit Microsoft Office or other document types that are stored in a Box Cloud. The one click to edit with no manual steps is a feature-set that will challenge both Microsoft and Google for its simplicity and ease of use.

A compelling reason that Box Edit will be attractive to enterprises is cost. Enterprises will be able to leverage existing Office Tools, such as Microsoft Office, without having to worry about being on the latest version of Office. Enterprises have the potential for significant savings by delaying or avoiding costly Microsoft Office upgrades or by simply using lower cost editing apps on Tablets.

Aragon Advisory: Enterprises that are deploying Tablets should evaluate Box OneCloud, particularly for its ability to manage business content and the related data in one place.

Enterprises looking at Office Cloud Suites such as Microsoft Office 365 or Google Apps should evaluate Box and Box Edit as an alternative to deploying a full Cloud Suite.