

Background information

CPA Ontario is the ambassador of the public accounting profession in the Canadian state of Ontario. The mandate of the organization is to protect the public interest by setting and enforcing the highest professional and ethical standards. It also strives to ensure that its members are identified as Canada's premier leaders and advisors in the financial arena. For this to happen, CPA Ontario supports its members in their efforts to enhance their capabilities. In particular, the organization wanted to provide users with a cloud storage solution, but with an essential condition: the data was to stay on premises. As Fabian Bajjnauth, Network & Server Analyst for CPA Ontario, confirms, "Data residency is huge at our company."

Satisfying the File Storage Needs of Thousands of Accountants

More than 80% of Ontario's more than 85,000 CPAs work in positions in businesses of every size (as CEOs, CFOs, VPs Finance, etc.), in government, academia, or the not-for-profit sector. CPA Ontario also caters to over 25,000 students working outside public accounting in a variety of roles in all sectors of the Canadian economy. For a cloud storage solution to appeal to all of these different accounting actors, "We wanted something that was easy to use and safe and secure at the same time," explains Fabian Bajjnauth. Naturally, price was also a factor. After all, accountants are trained to look for cost-efficiency, value for money and return on investment.



Challenges

CPA Ontario also had other criteria in mind. Security had to include interworking with common security programs, encryption methods, and firewalls, together with the possibility to verify requests for file transfers. Connection and transfer abilities had to include the possibility to work with accepted code (ASCII and binary) as well as connection consistency, proxies and protocols. The technology had to run completely within the CPA Ontario infrastructure, for total control over data, yet integrate effortlessly with existing network permissions and directories, in order to make existing network folder shares accessible from anywhere.

The Solution

“Using FileCloud we can ensure all data stays on our server at the same time as providing our users the luxury of a cloud storage solution,” says Fabian Baijnauth. The synchronization capabilities and intuitive user interface of FileCloud have allowed CPA Ontario to roll out its own Dropbox-style solution, with all the user-friendliness and extra data protection and security. (Compare Dropbox vs FileCloud and learn why FileCloud is the leader among alternatives to Dropbox). Content can be synchronized over computers, smartphones, and tablets, with secure backup and restore of files across all platforms and devices too. As accountants, like their counterparts in so many other professions, go mobile, FileCloud is there for CPA Ontario to provide seamless access for its users from iPad, iPhone, Android, Blackberry and Windows devices..

Exploring a Plethora of Valuable FileCloud Functions

Fabian Baijnauth and his colleagues are now using more and more of the FileCloud functionality, and giving CPA Ontario users the benefit of the exemplary user experience refined over many years of product development across FileCloud enterprise and consumer product lines.



Users get the advantage of real time sync across network folders (FileCloud is one of the few products that can do this) and virtual drives that allow them to map and access their remote files as though they were on a local attached drive. CPA Ontario administrators are making the most of the powerful controls at their disposal, for instance, for limiting the maximum number of downloads for a shared file, automatically expiring a share after a certain time, enabling anonymous file uploads, preventing downloads, and integrating file uploads with the CPA Ontario website.



Data residency is an important requirement for us. FileCloud met our requirements and provided an easy to use solution.

Fabian, Network Analyst

Looking Ahead to a Bright Cloud Service Future

FileCloud has brought CPA Ontario the self-hosted, on-premise Enterprise File Sharing and Sync (EFSS) solution that it was looking for. The application runs safely on CPA Ontario's infrastructure, managed by its trusted administrators, and regulated by its corporate IT security policies, unlike public cloud based file sharing solutions running on third-party servers. As regulations and standards evolve, so will FileCloud, to help CPA Ontario meet every legal obligation and user expectation.