

Flexible Collaboration Solution Reduces Paper, Cuts Costs, and Boosts IT Control

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—Kevin McDonald | Head of IT,
Bowmer & Kirkland

From 3 to 1300, the Path to Value Engineering

Founded by a bricklayer and a joiner in 1923, today Bowmer & Kirkland (B&K) is a construction and engineering group made up of 26 companies spread across three continents—Europe, North America and the Middle East, employing a staff of over 1,300.

B&K works on large scale national projects as well as some of the well-known sporting, academic and transport buildings in the UK including the Edinburgh Elite Sports Centre and the Gatwick Airport. Last year, the company had a turnover of about £662 million.

B&K's construction group and its subsidiaries heavily rely on the IT team to connect the head office, regional offices and site office teams across Europe, North America and the Middle East to increase efficiency and growth.

Following the slow economic growth in the late 2000's, the management team at B&K decided to consolidate how its groups utilized IT. This consolidation meant all 26 companies in the group were initiated into a global project of digital transformation.



Hybrid deployment enables B+K to deliver high quality projects quicker than before at a competitive cost

Egnyte's hybrid deployment provides everything our business needs; it's easy to use, secure, and allows us to deliver high quality projects quicker than before at a competitive cost. It makes things easier for not only my team and I but the whole Bowmer & Kirkland organization.

—Kevin McDonald | Head of IT, Bowmer & Kirkland

Challenges in a Competitive Industry

Version Control

A key finding from his study revealed that over the years, paper use for document management became a bigger problem for the group as double data entry confused project teams and lack of document versioning was making it hard

to identify the latest copy of a blueprint or a new business pitch. Also, the environmental and economic costs associated with purchasing reams of paper were excessive which made moving to a digital documentation system the logical choice.

Shortened Deadlines

Another discovery was that sub-contractor and client management had evolved rapidly in the last three years. Construction project timelines had shortened, from 52 weeks to 40 weeks, and construction companies were forced to find a solution which delivered value in a shorter time period.

BYOD Concerns

Continued research found the design stage of the project had become increasingly ad hoc as engineers adopted mobile devices to 'design on the

job' rather than the past method of agreeing on the design before building commenced. Client demands, a shorter time to complete projects, and limited economical resources meant B&K needed technology to help employees securely access the right design to exploit Building Information Modelling (BIM) or pitch documents at any time.

COMPANY

- Family-owned company since 1923
- Consists of 26 subsidiary companies
- Major projects: Edinburgh Elite Sports Centre, Gatwick Airport
- More than 1300 staff
- £662M in turnover (2013)

LOCATION

HQ: Heage, Derbyshire (England)
Regional offices throughout the UK, USA and Middle East

INDUSTRY

Architecture, Engineering and Construction (AEC)

CHALLENGES

- Version control and cost issues with paper documents
- Shortened project timelines driven by competitive pressures
- BYOD security and bandwidth concerns for on-site project changes

Benefits of Egnyte Enterprise File Services

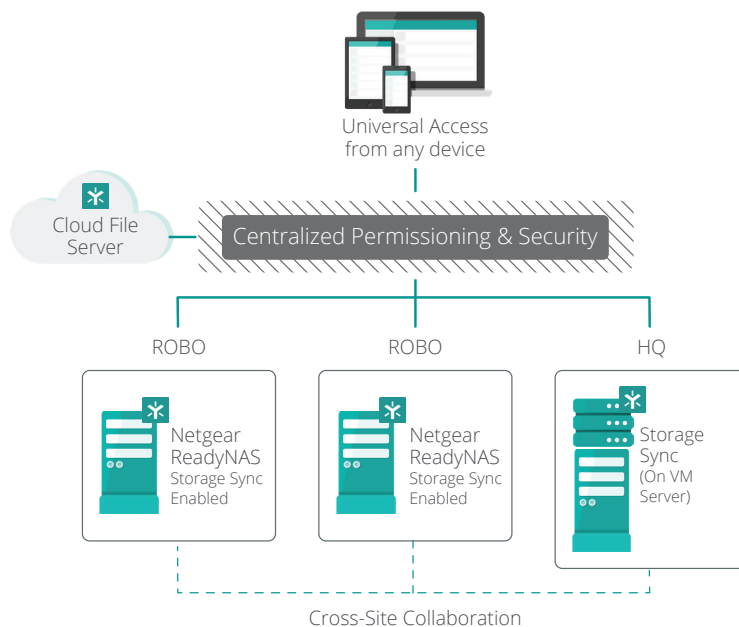
Effective Collaboration

In response to the new demands of the construction industry, McDonald sought a file collaboration technology where employees could access and share content across multiple time zones. B&K wanted to achieve “value engineering”.

Kevin McDonald, Head of IT at Bowmer and Kirkland, led the transformation project after undertaking an in-depth research project to analyse how each department interacted with technology, and how employees fit IT into their individual ways of working.

The main reason Egnyte was chosen ahead of Huddle and Dropbox was because it provided multiple deployment models of its Enterprise File Services solution. One of those deployment models is Egnyte’s hybrid cloud solution which bi-directionally syncs local storage systems with the cloud. Through the use of Egnyte’s platform, McDonald and his team have “one version of the truth” at all times giving each of the 25 companies in the group autonomy as they have the choice to decide what files should be kept on the local network and what files can be shared in the cloud with external contractors.

With Egnyte’s hybrid cloud solution, the company’s files can be replicated across sites for cross-office file sharing and data redundancy through the use of Netgear ReadyNAS boxes at each location.



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BENEFITS

- Effective cross-site collaboration
- IT administrative control of files & users
- Fast and secure access to CAD and BIM files from anywhere, any device

SOLUTION

- NetGEAR ReadyNAS 4200, 3100 & NVX
- VMware Servers
- Egnyte Desktop Sync & Mobile

CLIENT

- Egnyte Cloud File Server
- Egnyte Storage Sync
- Microsoft Outlook Interface

IT administrative control of files and users

A key feature of the Egnyte solution for B&K was the Audit Reporting feature which allowed the IT team to identify the location of any file and see who had access to this file. The IT team was not comfortable using Dropbox because they could not see where the files were located.

Egnyte also helped B&K comply with data privacy and recovery regulation, an issue facing construction companies across the world. Having offices in three continents and managing sub-contractors and employees means requests for information come in all day, every day. Egnyte's Enterprise File Services solution offers multiple ways for IT to control and securely share information with sub-contractors and employees. Egnyte's administrative controls help the IT team set up specific users and groups along with specific folders and sub-folders for projects while controlling the structure and permissioning.

Fast and secure access to CAD and BIM files from anywhere, any device

Egnyte's hybrid deployment, on premises or in the cloud, meant B&K had two avenues to share large Computer Aided Design (CAD) and Building Information Modelling (BIM) files quickly and securely while not being at the mercy of limited bandwidth coverage on job sites detrimental to cloud-only solutions.

This offered employees fast access from their mobile devices to the local storage on the job site, coupled with the global easy sharing and sync capabilities provided by the cloud. Being able to access the right files at any time from any device means new business proposals and design files are delivered quicker to customers, giving B&K a better chance of winning new projects. Being application agnostic, Egnyte is used by B&K via the Microsoft Outlook interface (Egnyte plug-in) which means employees do not have the hassle of going back and forth to work on and share construction content. McDonald states, "With Egnyte, there is no need to watch an egg timer while waiting for the 10GB file to sync. Its speed and ability to audit trails of files really helped in managing documents. Egnyte became the cornerstone of our new IT strategy."

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EGNYTE

In a content critical age, Egnyte fuels business growth by enabling content-rich business processes, while also providing organizations with visibility and control over their content assets. Egnyte's cloud-native content services platform leverages the industry's leading content intelligence engine to deliver a simple, secure, and vendor-neutral foundation for managing enterprise content across business applications and storage repositories. More than 16,000 companies trust Egnyte to enhance employee productivity, automate data management, and reduce file-sharing cost and complexity. Investors include Google Ventures, Kleiner Perkins, Caufield & Byers, and Goldman Sachs. For more information, visit www.egnyte.com