Migrating to Google Apps for Work
An Inside Look at How Enterprises Go Google
Executive Summary

At Accenture, we are often asked two questions from potential customers: why do enterprises go Google and how do enterprises go Google? We addressed the first question in our white paper entitled Top 5 Reasons Why Enterprises Are Going Google. Now, we will answer the second question of how enterprises actually make the move to Google Apps for Work.

Using Google’s proven migration methodology, and also adding some of our own “secret sauce,” Accenture has migrated over 3,500 companies and 2.5M users to Google Apps. This whitepaper will help you understand how Accenture helps customers go Google.

Prep Steps

The first step in any project is to make sure you are properly prepared and have a good plan for executing your project. For Accenture, there are two main workstreams on which we focus during the preparation phase: inventory and staffing.

INVENTORY

Before you migrate from your legacy messaging system to Google Apps for Work, you must first understand exactly what you have in place with the existing solution. Often times, organisations do not have the correct data for key details such as user count and email-dependent applications. However, having the right information for these areas is essential to ensuring a smooth migration. Using incorrect information can also lead to higher costs during the implementation process. Thus, the more of this legwork that can be done ahead of the project kick-off, the better, as this will allow everyone involved to focus on the details of the project itself during the actual implementation.

Here are a few common areas where we often find discrepancies when working with customers:

Employee/User Count: Double check the number of employees you have and try to cross-check that number against other inventory systems to get a good count. Also understand what other types of accounts you have that might require a Google licence, such as generic or shared mailboxes (e.g. info@company.com).

Email-Dependent Applications: Work with your application team to inventory all applications that potentially “touch” the current email system. This usually includes applications that route mail through your current platform. In addition to identifying these applications, you also need to understand how these applications communicate with your current system (Authenticated SMTP? MAPI? etc). One good way to think of it is, if we turned off your current email system, what would break?
Change Management: The change management portion of the project will be more effective if we understand the type of users that are in your organisation, as this allows us to identify what type of training plan they will need to best adopt Google Apps. Distributing surveys is one way to better understand your users. By surveying employees, we can identify who is familiar with Google, who uses it at home, what Google services they use (Email, Drive, Chat, etc) and more. This readiness survey allows us to categorize the users into different training programs, such as high-touch, low-touch or no-touch, based on their current Google experience and interaction with messaging applications.

Support: In addition to the support provided by Google, you should determine what level of ongoing support your organisation will need after your implementation. At Accenture, we offer Standard, Silver and Platinum Support.

STAFFING
Another key component of preparing for a Google Apps migration is staffing the project team. During this portion of the engagement, we want to make sure that we have all of the correct people required for a successful migration.

Here are a few of the key roles we want to be sure we engage with prior to starting the project:

Executive Sponsor: Identifying an executive sponsor is critical to any successful IT project, as it ensures we have support from corporate leadership and have access to a key decision maker during the project lifecycle. The executive sponsor serves as a key point of communication to the entire organisation and is responsible for communicating to the employees why the company is going Google and the benefits everyone will gain as a result of the move.

Technical Staff: Ensure that you have all of the proper technical resources involved in the project to address any key decisions that need to be made. Technical staff might include individuals from the networking team, application owners, the current mail administrator, a Single Sign-On expert, etc. It is important that individuals who understand each of the systems are involved with and responsible for their portion of the project.

Internal Project Management Team: As a best practice, we encourage organisations to have their own internal project management team. This team serves as a point of contact for Accenture and is the go-to source for all communications, scheduling meetings and more.

Internal Training/Communications/Marketing Team: Often times, organisations have their own internal teams that are responsible for user communication and training. Accenture needs to interface with this team to help provide guidance on the training and communication examples that we find most successful.

Execution
The next phase of a successful migration project is the execution phase. During this phase, Accenture takes all of the information gathered in the preparation phase and applies it to the customer’s environment for a successful deployment.

DECISION MAKING PROCESS
During the decision making process, Accenture works with the customer to determine a number of key technical decisions that reflect how Google will be configured and implemented. The outcome of this process creates the blueprint for how the solution will be deployed and what services and technologies are in scope of the project.

A few key decisions made during this process include:

- What Google services (Gmail, Chat, G+, Drive, etc.) will be enabled?
- Will Single Sign-On be in scope and deployed as part of the migration project?
- How much data needs to be migrated? This may seem like a strange question at first, but many organisations use this migration as an opportunity to clean up a lot of their legacy data.
- Will you follow the three-phase migration recommendation with a Global Go-Live or do an N-phase migration?
- Will directory and/or password synchronisation be utilized?
- Will two-factor authentication be implemented?

Once these decisions and more are made, you have a blueprint for how Google Apps will be implemented and behave, as well as how you will train and migrate your end users.

BUILD PROCESS
Once the decision process is complete and the blueprint is agreed upon, we move into the build process. This process puts the blueprint to work as we physically configure and implement the new system.

Some key steps in this process include:

- Configuring all technical details based on blueprint. Items can include:
  - Directory Sync
  - Password
  - Migration consoles
  - Google services

- Migrating the core IT team to Google Apps to get them familiar with the platform so they can help support the remainder of the migration.

- Building out the remaining migration templates based on the agreed upon three-phase (recommended) or N-phase migration approach.
• Beginning to execute change management activities, whether they are led by Accenture or your organisation's training team. These activities include:
  
  • **Communications:**
    Executive-level communication to employees about what is happening, what to expect and what is in it for them.
  
  • **Training:**
    End-user training based on the needs identified through user surveys.
  
  • **Support:**
    Communications to users about how they will be supported during the migration and where they can go for information or support for any questions they may have.
  
  • **Cutover plan:**
    Communications to the users about when they will be trained, when they will be migrated and what, if any, action by them is required.
  
• Validating the Google Apps configuration and ensuring that all connected systems are working by migrating early adopters. The early adopters group should include about 5% of your total user population. This phase also executes on the following:
  
  • **Change Management:**
    Survey early adopters to make sure they were properly trained and to learn what could have been done differently to better prepare them for the migration.
  
  • **Process Changes:**
    Make any necessary changes to the migration and/or training process based on early adopter feedback.
  
  • **Go-Live Prep:**
    Ensure that the migration process scales. Now that you are going to be migrating and moving users en masse, make sure that all of the systems you have previously configured can handle the higher workload and meet your project deadlines.
  
• Preparing for the Global Go-Live. This is the most crucial point in the project, as you are now moving all of the remaining users over to Google Apps and eliminating your dependencies on the legacy messaging system. This phase builds on what was learned during the early adopters phase and applies it to a larger scale of users. Additionally, this phase includes migrating groups to Google Apps to make sure that all distribution groups are populated for go-live.

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**Post Go-Live/Closeout**

Once the Go-Live phase is complete, you have reached a major milestone in the project. At this point, all of your users are now on Google Apps, all of your email-connected systems are now routing through Google Apps and you are ready to begin the final phases of the project.

First, check for any open items such as shared mailboxes that may have been missed or the rogue application that is still routing through your legacy mail system. Once you are reasonably certain that you have removed all dependencies on the legacy system, you may begin to deprecate that system. You may want to do this gradually by turning off individual services, rather than turning off the entire system at once, to ensure you have a good backup of the entire system prior to shutting it down. Once you have shut down the system and all other applications and mailboxes seem to be in place in Google Apps, you can safely remove the system entirely.

The last phase in the project is your introduction to the Accenture Cloud Management Team. This will be your first line of support for all things Google Apps. You will be introduced to the support team and all of your support benefits, such as the Accenture support portal (where you can see tips and tricks and what's new from Google and Accenture and gain access to CIO and Customer forums and a script library), Google escalation services, admin phone support, case management and monitoring and support from Accenture, which comes in addition to the 24/7 support provided by Google.

Congratulations and welcome to the cloud! You are now a Google Apps and Accenture customer!
About Accenture

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