



# Mobile enterprise cloud

## Beyond file sync and share



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THE ENTERPRISE FILE SYNC AND SHARE space has gotten a lot of attention over the last few years – and for good reason. But it is important to not lose sight of the ultimate goal – enabling your corporate users to do their jobs, to increase productivity, to be more responsive to customer needs – and ultimately to make more money.

The proliferation of mobile devices means that more and more enterprise users expect to be able to get access to their corporate data at any time, from anywhere.

It’s easy to lose focus on what really matters and fight over BYOD vs corporate-owned devices, or on-premises versus public cloud topics. These are easily resolved once the priorities are clear.

### A path to success

So here is one path that you might want to follow:

- Be clear on your priorities. Flexible data access vs. data security? Cost vs. business agility? Enabling your sales force or make your engineering department deliver products faster?
- Are there any “hard stops”, i.e. are there areas where compliance, privacy laws etc. might force you to exclude data from being accessed away from corporate devices, networks or buildings – or even geographies? Think patient data in health care, for example.
- What is the data being used for? If you want to improve the CRM workflow for the sales team, does it help them to share files such as sales collateral? Or should they get access to the CRM tool so they can get customer details, send quotes, follow-up on action items? Maybe both?
- Identify the most impactful applications and user groups and start there. That will get your users to actually embrace the system. In the previous example, for many sales people the CRM tool is what makes them successful, so they will want that. The rest of the organization doesn’t care

(well, until it is time for their annual bonus that may be based on revenue...).

- So once you know your target group and application(s) – select a focus group and make sure you understand the requirements. Often I have seen IT departments rolling out a solution that they thought would work. They meant well, but without a focus group you are just guessing.
- Now go back and re-evaluate your focus group. Using marketing as an example – do you have the group that cares about lead generation? Web site stats? Creating collateral? They all use different applications. One group will want to create slides and PDFs, another group may just want mobile access to a web portal (that may not support mobile devices today).
- Hopefully as an outcome of the focus group you now know the applications you need to provide – whether that is CRM, an office suite, a better mobile browser, a mobile virtual desktop/application, access to a bug tracking system – or an application to sync files across devices, make them available from mobile devices and share files with internal and /or external constituents.

So after you have done all this work laid out above, remember that the devil is in the detail. For example – it’s great to be able to share files with members of your own organization, but what about customers or partners? How do you prevent certain data from being shared with the wrong person or organization? Again – think about patient data in healthcare, how to enable mobile productivity without running afoul of privacy and compliance rules.

### Wait – is this just like cloud?

By now you might be thinking – “hey, this sounds just like the cloud conversation I just had” – and you would be right. These types of services are often provided using cloud concepts, whether through on-premises infrastructure, hybrid or public cloud.

The good news is that there are now a number of very good choices to enable mobile enterprise users, whether you are using systems that authenticate in the cloud while keeping all data on-premises (in your data center), or going with end-to-end encryption in the public cloud – the options are there.

So don’t get caught up in the BYOD versus corporate devices discussion. Follow the path above, identify the user requirements, perform a detailed analysis of the relevant vendors, maybe speak to an industry analyst or two, possibly run a pilot and then make a decision. I think you will find that in the end you will find one solution that fits better than the others.

### Data is important - and think about a data fabric

Here is my parting thought – data is important. Data is also “heavy”; it’s hard to move petabytes of data from one cloud provider to another. So think carefully where you move your data and who you trust storing your data for you. Is there value in some kind of “data fabric” that enables you to retain control of your data as you move it around?

Another aspect to consider is how to store data on-premises. SAN and NAS are well understood and established, but current object storage offerings are also an interesting option, especially for larger and/or geographically distributed data.

These are exciting times, your users will (typically) thank you for enabling them to work with mobile devices, so let’s get started.

As an industry organization, SNIA, and its industry subject matter experts, provide you with vendor-neutral information about the latest Ethernet storage technologies.

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