



## Fast-growing communications agency gains reliable access, streamlines IT with Google Apps Premier Edition



### At a Glance

#### What they wanted to do:

- Increase availability and reliability of online communications
- Ensure access to information regardless of employee location
- Reduce the complexity of hardware needed to empower employees while in the field

#### What they did:

- Allowed “anytime, anywhere” access to information across borders, media and devices
- Protected online information by using Google Sites’ password-protected publishing functionality
- Reduced spam volume and measurably enhanced email efficiency and storage

#### What they accomplished:

- Facilitated mobile communication and collaboration
- Streamlined expansion into new locations

### Business

Smile Communications is a telecommunications company providing affordable communication to low income consumers in Africa and the Middle East. Its business model is enabled by using new technologies to reduce operating costs and pass on savings to its customers. Smile Communications has its registered headoffice in Mauritius with country offices in South Africa, Uganda and Nigeria.

### Challenge

When Smile Communications set up business in 2007, it required a flexible and easily scalable IT infrastructure. Two years on, it has to make sure its staff are able to collaborate effectively from multiple widely dispersed offices and on the move, while keeping operational costs down and availability high.

Another major challenge is to expand to new countries fast without its technical infrastructure, or lack of, impeding development. “Procuring hardware, technical services, licences and support in another country is a huge inhibitor to the speedy expansion of our business,” said Paul Carter-Brown, CIO of Smile Communications. “We want to start working on the spot, so we need technical infrastructure that is easy to set-up and works without boundaries.”

### Solution

The company became an early adopter of Google Apps Premier Edition when it was looking for a way to start using email quickly. “We were under pressure to get started quickly, and Google Apps was easy to implement. Even though we have grown considerably since then, we have had no reason to change, and are very pleased with the service,” said Bryan Nelson, General Manager, Products and Services at Smile Communications.

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*“Thanks to Google Apps, we are able to pass cost savings on to our customers and provide cheaper, better value services to people that would not have normally been able to afford communications services.”*

**—Bryan Nelson, General Manager, Products and Services**

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As Google Apps was introduced in the company from day one, everybody has embraced the technology and a large number of features are used. “Google Calendar, for example, is very useful for having an overview of who is travelling for business and who is on holiday,” explains Bryan. “We also use Google Sites as an extranet for collaborating with partners, Google Chat internally and externally, and Google Docs internally, particularly Google Spreadsheets, when it is important for many people to collaborate on a document without the hassle of version control.”

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## About Google Apps Premier Edition

Google Apps Premier Edition offers simple, powerful communication and collaboration tools for enterprises of any size – all hosted by Google to streamline setup, minimise maintenance, and reduce IT costs. With Gmail, Google Calendar, and integrated chat, voice, and video IM, users stay connected and work together with ease and security, within or beyond enterprise domains. Google Docs, which includes word processing, spreadsheet, and presentation tools, enables real-time collaboration and file sharing, keeping versions current, organised, secure, and available wherever and whenever users work. Google Groups enhances information-sharing among specific groups or project teams. Google Sites makes it easy to create and publish web pages on intranets or public sites, and Google Video supports the easy, secure sharing of enterprise video content. Google Apps Premier Edition minimises IT costs and complexity, provides built-in spam filtering, and includes a 99.9% uptime SLA.

For more information visit:

[www.google.com/a](http://www.google.com/a)

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**—Bryan Nelson, General Manager  
Products and Services**

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## Benefits

Google Apps Premier Edition has the benefit of being easy to manage. "We don't have to spend a lot of time looking after Google Apps. It is so easy to manage that our junior IT staff have responsibility for it," says Paul. "So far we have never had to call Google for support and rarely experienced an outage. If we've had any problem, it has been down to the reliability of our Internet services in Africa, but we have always been able to keep working no matter what, either by using 3G data cards or our mobiles."

"It's also little things that make a big difference," says Bryan. "I travel often and use the mobile interface and sync every day. I also switch PCs a lot and don't ever have to worry about migrating my office email. Other great features include offline access, the ability to send and archive an email at the same time, and obviously powerful e search. Google's effective spam filtering cuts down our need to browse through junk email, saving us valuable time that could be spent waiting for unnecessary email to download from our relatively slow Internet connections. Gmail also reminds you when you have forgotten an attachment, and you are able to undo a sent email a few seconds after pressing the send button, all Gmail Labs features which are used often."

"We also use Google Apps for security. For example, we use Google Sites as an extranet service to collaborate with vendors and third parties to make sure only authorised people have access to certain information. In addition, we use Gmail as an off-site back-up service for important information. It is also comforting to know that we have access to a user's information even after he or she leaves the company."

