Google Apps On Steroids

Extend Google Apps to your directory services

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Google Apps On Steroids

There has never been a better time in history to start a new business or run a small to medium enterprise (SME). With IT advancements such as cloud-based infrastructure and SaaS-based applications, startups today can build their businesses faster and more cost-eectively than ever before. Tens of thousands of new startups are taking advantage of these new technologies and innovations.

Google Apps
- The Center
of Team
Collaboration

Google Apps for Work is leading the charge in this sector by providing cost-eective hosted IT solutions for SMEs. Google Apps is delivering hosted email, file sharing, and productivity apps such as word processing, spreadsheets, and others. For a low monthly fee per user, Google has changed the game. No longer do SMEs need to purchase expensive hardware and software to run their business. Historically, organizations would purchase Microsoft software such as Exchange for email and once for their productivity suite. Today, startups can simply leverage Google Apps for Work. And they are: over 5 million businesses use Google Apps. IT admins approve of this shift to Google Apps as it reduces the complexity of their operations. Google Apps is available from anywhere in the world and on any platform. There is little software to install on each device and Google Apps can be managed centrally. IT admins don't need to purchase and install any servers to sit on-premise. Even their file storage can be done at Google. Google Apps for Work is a SaaS-based service which means that the solution is automatically updated and doesn't require IT intervention for upgrades. All users are always using the latest production versions of Google's software.

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What Can't Google Apps Do For You?

Although Google Apps is transforming much of the back oce IT function, **there are still a number of gaps that organizations need to fill**. Google Apps does not provide IT admins with a mechanism to manage their on-premise devices. Those devices need to be managed separately. If the organization is using Infrastructure-as-a-Service solutions such as AWS, SoftLayer, Google Compute Engine, or others their cloud servers will need to be managed separately too. Internal applications and other SaaS-based applications also will have their own separate management. Although Google enables IT admins to centrally manage their use of Google Apps, the central management does not extend to other devices and applications.

While Google Apps has taken on many of Microsoft's solutions, the central one missing is directory services, or an alternative to Active Directory. It is not surprising that Google Apps does not include a directory to authenticate, authorize, and manage devices and non-Google applications. Google's focus is on building management technology for their suite of solutions. In addition their authentication focus has been on OAuth and not on LDAP, SAML, Kerberos or other protocols. LDAP and Kerberos for example, are core to authenticating and managing non-Google technologies.

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Do I Need a Directory?

For very small organizations, the addition of directory services may not be necessary. As startups even grow past ten people, the number of connections between users and the IT resources that those users need explodes. The connections include devices, servers, internal applications, and SaaS-based applications. Managing those connections is imperative for productivity and security. IT's role is to facilitate the business's ability to move more quickly with access to the right IT resources and to ensure that the business is protected in an era of online security breaches.

Traditional Directories Don't Fit The Cloud Era

Unfortunately traditional on-premise software solutions for directory services such as Microsoft Active Directory or OpenLDAP are an anathema to IT admins that are seeking cloud-based solutions. A cloud-based infrastructure coupled with an on-premise directory defeats the purpose of leveraging cloud technology and reducing the overhead on IT. **Modern organizations are turning to cloud-based directory services called Directory-as-a-Service solutions**. By connecting DaaS with Google Apps, IT organizations are taking full advantage of cloud-based solutions in order to create a more agile, modern IT organization.

The benefit of connecting Directory-as-a-Service with Google Apps is central control over user access. Through a single set of identities, an organization's users can access their devices (desktops, laptops, and servers), Google Apps, other applications, and their wireless network. While users gain single sign-on capabilities, IT admins gain incredible control when adding, deleting, or modifying users. Through a central console, a user can be added to the IT resources that the user needs or immediately terminated from accessing IT resources. The power and security that Directory-as-a-Service provides complements the productivity and cost savings that Google Apps for Work drives.

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Regain Central Control of Your Infrastructure

Just as Microsoft tightly aligned Active Directory and Exchange, Directory-as-a-Service and Google Apps can be tightly connected. For organizations already leveraging Google Apps and interested in utilizing DaaS, the starting place is to quickly and easily import in all of the users in Google Apps into the cloud-based directory. This is accomplished via an automated import process. Once users are in the Directory-as-a-Service solution, it becomes the authoritative, central user directory for the organization. All changes are made within the DaaS console by the IT admin or where appropriate, the end user. Those changes are propagated to Google Apps and elsewhere. For instance, a password change is made inside of the DaaS solution and it is automatically replicated within Google Apps, on an end user's device, and inside of the applications they are authorized to use. New users added to the cloud-based directory are automatically provisioned in Google Apps as well, if desired.

By including central directory services into the IT architecture, IT admins augment their ability to connect users with IT resources and increase security. Managing identities separately in Google Apps, on devices, and in applications is no longer required. The Directory-as-a-Service centralizes control and management of user access.

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Looking for more information?

Click these guides to learn more about DaaS:
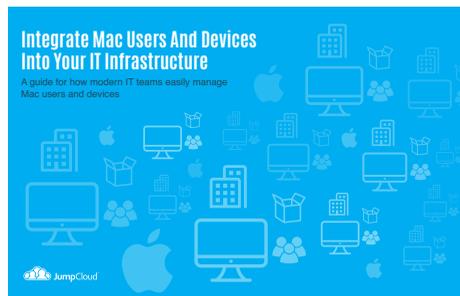
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If you would like to learn more about how Directory-as-a-Service complements Google Apps for Work, drop us a note at sales@jumpcloud.com.

About JumpCloud:

JumpCloud®, the first Directory-as-a-Service® (DaaS), is Active Directory® and LDAP reimagined. JumpCloud securely manages and connects employee identities to IT resources including devices, applications, and networks. Try JumpCloud's cloud-based directory free at JumpCloud.com or **contact us at 720.240.5001.**

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