



5 Key Reasons MSPs Need Multi-Tenant Management for Managed Cloud File Sync

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Introduction

Mobility growth, bring-your-own device trends and consumer adoption of file sync tools are driving fundamental changes in how business users sync and share files and collaborate in the workplace. These trends have opened up a tremendous business opportunity for the sale of file sync and sharing tools, with analysts at Osterman Research predicting a rise in the market from \$79.8 billion in 2012 to \$106 billion by 2017.

It's an opportunity that managed service providers can hardly avoid, but one for which they should carefully evaluate their vendor partnering options, including the potential profitability of various choices. While managed services providers (MSPs) may be tempted to resell big, brand-name business-grade file sync solutions, these services may not be the best fit. Unfortunately, most business-grade file sync services are designed for enterprise users—not MSPs. Most of these services lack a true multi-tenant management portal, preventing MSPs from scaling client deployments, controlling labor costs, providing excellent service and driving profitable growth.

Here are five reasons why it pays for MSPs to think twice about the type of cloud file sync solution they deploy to their clients:

Reason No. 1: Multi-tenant Management Allows MSPs to Easily Scale Client Growth

Cloud file sync services such as Box are geared for individual enterprises and lack the infrastructure to track and manage users across multiple businesses or organizations. Even a task as simple as managing login credentials for users across multiple clients becomes quickly onerous for MSPs trying to resell these cloud services. Resellers utilizing a cloud file sync tool with a built-in multi-tenant management portal can simplify the process of scaling out a solution across all of their clients. This kind of purpose-built portal, designed with MSPs in mind, makes it much easier for service providers to simply add value through management without a lot of custom development or manual work on the back end. In turn, partners with access to multi-tenant management can not only scale up the number of clients added to that MSP's managed cloud file sync client roster, but they can also scale according to individual client growth. This allows the MSP to sell and scale growth without worrying about investing in a lot of front-end infrastructure to support early growth.

A purpose-built tool designed for MSPs gives them greater visibility and control at the user and organizational levels. It helps them identify technical or security problems at either level, and can be used by any type of user or company. This provides a significant amount of elasticity and flexibility in how MSPs choose to sell these services and accept new customers, making it easier to take on customers who have difficult situations, such as distributed branch management models, without a lot of added expense from the MSP for on-site engineers and unnecessary in-person visits.

Reason No. 2: Multi-tenant Management Portals Provide Better Security Control.

Consumer-grade file sync solutions may be very handy for users, but they've proven a security nightmare for many organizations. Without enough visibility into what users are doing with these programs, organizations face problems with the loss or theft of sensitive corporate data and compliance issues with data synced to personal devices. Without oversight, these solutions are also mixing personal data such as family photos with corporate data such as research and development documents.

Business-grade solutions return a measure of security and control while maintaining user-friendly functionality. More importantly, a business-grade solution with multi-tenant management allows MSPs to set different types of security controls depending on an individual client's corporate data security and privacy policies.

Reason No. 3: Multi-tenant Management Provides the Means for More Seamless Client Support.

One of the biggest selling points of the MSP model is the client's assurance that the buck stops with the service provider. The partner is not only responsible for deployment, security configuration and ongoing monitoring and management, but it also provides the troubleshooting backstop when things go wrong.

When an MSP depends on cloud file sync services lacking in true multi-tenant management capabilities, it becomes difficult to offer timely and quick problem resolution to end users. Login credentials may be difficult to find, and it will require more work from the client to dig those up, along with information about their account that may be readily available on a multi-tenant portal. All of this adds up to two choices: either a lower-quality support experience and ultimate negation of the MSP value proposition, or higher support costs resulting from a substitution of technician labor instead of a sophisticated client management framework.

Choosing cloud file sync with multi-tenant management built in avoids this unsavory choice for maximum profit and customer satisfaction.

Reason No. 4: MSPs Can Reduce Technical and Labor Costs Using Multi-tenant Management.

The profitability of any service for an MSP is the function of revenue, the gross margin and the labor inputs. When a cloud file sync solution is difficult to manage and causes undue cycles of support calls and troubleshooting, it increases labor costs. That burden of labor costs invariably cuts into service profitability.

Partners would do well to consider this as they make their calculations on the profitability of a particular cloud file sync solution—multi-tenant management is a key requirement for profitable deployment of a service across all clients. As MSPs consider which cloud file-sync provider to select, partner-specific features should be a key part of the equation. Partners should also consider potential infrastructure and additional service costs that they must incur to make clients happy, along with the speed and ease of deployment in delivering services.

Reason No. 5: Multi-tenant Management Gives MSPs Better Value from Professional Services Automation Tools.

Tools like ConnectWise, Autotask and Tigerpaw are the lifeblood of many an MSP operation. But when an MSP uses a cloud file sync solution that doesn't have multi-tenant management, professional services automation integration is next to impossible, and critical service information such as alerts, outages or billing information can't be imported automatically in the MSP's PSA software of choice.

Why eFolder Anchor?

eFolder Anchor is the only cloud file sync solution built from the ground up for MSPs and value-added resellers. Anchor is unique in that respect, and delivers multi-tenant management, partner branding and flexible pricing to IT channel partners.



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