

Kayak puts travel in the spotlight with Dropbox for Business



Kayak is a travel website that was co-founded by Expedia, Travelocity, and Orbitz to provide one convenient place for consumers to get the widest range of choices in flights, hotels, rental cars, and other travel deals. Results from hundreds of travel sites can be compared in one comprehensive, intuitive display at kayak.com.

Paddling Upstream

With a vast inventory of continually changing travel options and opportunities, the content on Kayak's website is in perpetual motion. Dozens of employees on the product development team work to keep the site up-to-date so that users have the most seamless experience possible. Product designs are updated regularly as they pass through the hands of designers, product managers, and developers on the team.

Initially, the company tried to use a server to support this cycle, but according to Bill O'Donnell, Chief Architect and SVP of Mobile Products for Kayak, "The VPN was slow, difficult to connect to, and, frankly, just a pain in the neck." Kayak's Linux server wasn't right, as it didn't allow files to be easily edited, organized, and reloaded. O'Donnell adds, "We have an enormous website filled with manually created files. Over time, we've ended up with hundreds of thousands of designs on the server that are hard to navigate through, because you can't sort or search through them."

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Bill O'Donnell, Chief Architect and SVP of Mobile Products, Kayak

The company needed a simple solution that would let team members access and update files without friction. Having used Dropbox since its early days, O'Donnell realized that it might be a good fit for Kayak and when he discovered the business version, the decision was clear. "We thought it was great that Dropbox for Business was built for organizations," he says. "We were sold on it instantly."

Organization: Kayak

Requirements

- A simple-to-navigate file storage repository
- Freedom from complicated sharing processes
- File editing without uploads and downloads

Solution: Dropbox for Business

Results

- Improved organization of files
- Shorter, more seamless project cycles
- Significant reductions in workflow friction

A Shift in the Currents

With Dropbox for Business in place, web page production has become much simpler. Designers, developers, and quality assurance specialists can now access and approve design assets and mock-ups in one place before they go live on kayak.com. And when the marketing team needs artwork for ads or collateral, they too can go right to Dropbox to retrieve files. “I don’t have to grant special access to anyone,” explains O’Donnell. “Dropbox for Business is like a giant, shared super mainframe. You just tell users where to go and they can get what they need from the shared folders.”

Mobile access to files also helped Kayak simplify processes. Because Dropbox for Business allows employees to open and present files right on their iPads or smartphones, they never have to waste time or worry about connecting to a server. “With Dropbox, we always have the right file versions, and everyone can pull them up on their various devices,” O’Donnell notes. “Even when someone updates a file with a native app on their desktop, we can seamlessly access it on a mobile device. It’s great.”

In addition to the many ways Dropbox for Business helps Kayak with the externally facing development projects, it also helps the company manage its internal staff directory website. All Kayak employees are featured on the site, and their high-res photos are housed on Dropbox. “It’s a pretty complicated database and probably 200GB of pictures,” explains O’Donnell. “But even when we decided to put the whole set of photos into Dropbox, it still worked! It’s pretty amazing.”

Going With the Flow

Given the number of product designs Kayak produces — and the quantity of revisions required — the ability to quickly navigate through Dropbox has become invaluable to employees. Not only does this feature enable designers

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to make edits more quickly, it also ensures that their work will always be backed up. O’Donnell adds, “When you’re working on Dropbox, your files are stored across your computers and devices. And if you’re sharing with people, everything is on about fifty computers. That’s a lot of peace of mind.”

In the past, if employees had computer issues, they ran the risk of losing their work if they hadn’t manually backed it up somewhere in the office. But with Dropbox for Business, they never have to worry. “If someone’s laptop gets toasted for some reason, now they just get a new one, plug it in, and log into Dropbox,” says O’Donnell. “Everything syncs through the LAN and they can be back to work in no time at all.”

The improvements to workflows, organization, and file protection Dropbox for Business provides have come together to create more fluid processes across Kayak’s product development — and overall operations. As O’Donnell states, “Dropbox for Business gives us a secure, unified place to store all of our work, and helps reverse the friction that can come with having hundreds of computers in one company.”

About Dropbox

Dropbox lets you bring your docs, photos, and videos anywhere and share them easily. Keep files up-to-date across multiple devices and stay in sync with your team—effortlessly. Dropbox for Business also offers administrative tools, phone support, and as much space as you need.

To learn more about what Dropbox for Business can do for your organization, please visit www.dropbox.com/business or email us at sales@dropbox.com.