

Dropbox for Business helps KIPP Houston Public Schools better manage its bottom line

KIPP, the Knowledge Is Power Program, is a national leader in the movement to provide all children with access to an excellent education. Founded in Houston, Texas, the organization aims to help underserved children develop the academic skills, intellectual habits, and qualities of character necessary to succeed in K-12 classes, college, and beyond.



A Lesson in Efficiency

With 22 institutions throughout Houston and Galveston, KIPP Houston Public Schools employs more than 1,000 educators, administrators, and support staff members, and teaches more than 10,000 students. Given the size of its organization, KIPP Houston manages a hefty administrative load and processes massive amounts of paperwork each month.

One of the many groups that feels the weight of this workload is the Accounting and Finance team. Before Dropbox for Business, expense sheets and invoices came into the department via email or were hand-delivered by individuals. When Director of Accounting and Compliance Son Han suggested moving to an online system that would allow employees to submit, store, and share documents in one place, the organization agreed to start investigating options.

"Dropbox for Business saves us time, which saves us money."

Son Han, Director of Accounting and Compliance, KIPP Houston

Because KIPP Houston staff and office managers have varying degrees of computer literacy, it was important for Han and his colleagues to choose a solution that would be easy for all users to master. They looked at Dropbox for Business and another solution, and ultimately selected Dropbox. As Han remembers, "A Dropbox tutorial takes about two minutes, but it took the other guys about thirty to explain how to use their solution. We chose the system we knew would be more user-friendly."

Saving Time and Money

After setting up the staff with Dropbox for Business, Han laid out a clear rule to employees who would be submitting expenses to the main office. "We told everyone outright that if their invoices weren't on Dropbox, they wouldn't be considered

Organization: KIPP Houston Public Schools

Requirements

- Technology that's easy to master
- Centralized storage for financial and other files
- A system that allows for telecommuting

Solution: Dropbox for Business

Results

- Greater transparency into financial processes
- Easier troubleshooting for individuals
- Reduced strain on the IT department

submitted," he explains. With features like deletion recovery and version history at the ready, transparency throughout the organization reached a new level.

Now, Dropbox for Business not only prevents school office managers from having to drive to the organization's headquarters to deliver paperwork, it saves the staff from having to hunt down misplaced documents. As Han says, "Dropbox for Business saves us time, which saves us money."

Another area in which KIPP Houston has begun using Dropbox for Business is in its dealings with foundations, including a nonprofit that's helping fund the construction of KIPP Houston's new schools. Dropbox serves as a fast, convenient way for the foundation, construction contractors, and KIPP Houston's bank trust manager to pass documents back and forth to one another. "Dropbox lets all parties stay up-to-date on project progress and know when checks have been cut," Han adds.

As other teams throughout KIPP Houston began noticing how well Dropbox for Business worked for the Finance and Accounting department, many of them asked to be set up with it as well. For instance, the Operations department, which manages janitorial services, requested licenses so their vendors would be able to submit invoices directly into the system rather than sending them via email. "Pull marketing really kicked in and people have been contacting us asking to be added to the Dropbox account," says Han.

As part of this pull, many teachers have also been added to KIPP Houston's Dropbox for Business account, and use it as a storage space for educational files and videos. According to Han, "Several of our schools record instructors teaching and then upload the videos via smartphones into Dropbox. It's a huge luxury for us to be able to do that."

Using Resources Wisely

Because Dropbox for Business offers a flexible, accessible-from-anywhere platform, it has helped KIPP Houston's sprawling network of staff members cut down

"The amount of time I spend dealing with problems has probably gone from twenty hours a week to less than one. And that's true for everyone on the team."

Son Han, Director of Accounting and Compliance,
KIPP Houston

on stress and more easily do things, like telecommute. The application acts as a central portal that lets everyone stay connected and productive, no matter where they are throughout the city.

It has also cut down on the number of calls the Finance and Accounting team receives around payment statuses and problems. "The amount of time I spend dealing with problems has probably gone from twenty hours a week to less than one," Han notes. "And that's true for everyone on the team."

In addition, both employees and the IT department are able to save time now that many computing challenges can be addressed with self-service and corrected by individuals. If a computer crashes, its owner is now able to set up a new computer, re-sync Dropbox for Business, and retrieve files in a flash. "One of the biggest reasons we love Dropbox is that we don't have to get anyone involved to solve problems," explains Han. "We're reducing the strain on IT, and making life easier for ourselves."

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.