



Background information

The National Federation of the Blind (NFB) is the oldest and largest organization led by blind people in the United States. With a non-profit structure, it has affiliates in all of states, including Texas. Board members and other volunteers in the National Federation of the Blind of Texas (NFBT) work from different locations. Accessibility plays an important role in the choice of the technology they use, as does security and affordability. All of these factors formed the backdrop to the NFBT's search for the right online solution for centralizing, sharing and synchronizing files between members and volunteers.

Challenges

As more people join the NFBT, the need grows greater to organize information and make files available to the right members at the right time. Norma Crosby, a member of the Human Resources & Office Management Team for the NFBT, explains the problems being faced at the time. Although some board members and volunteers were using Dropbox accounts, centralization was lacking and it was difficult to track down all the information. Among the range of possibilities considered were an extension of the use of Dropbox, Microsoft Office 365 and SharePoint, and a VPN (virtual private network). However, each of these options had one or more drawbacks for the NFBT, including lack of control and security, high costs and poor digital accessibility.



The Essential Role of Accessibility Guidelines for Software Vendors

When software has good accessibility, it can be used by blind users and sighted users in the same way. Blind users may use screen reader applications that interpret what is displayed on the screen, converting text to speech or to Braille output, for example. File sharing and synchronization software should then work seamlessly with such screen readers to facilitate information access. Both the NFB and the NFBT encourage software vendors to design in accessibility from the start. Enhanced accessibility and screen readers can also help people challenged in other ways, including illiteracy and learning disabilities.

The Solution

A technology expert from the Louisiana Center for the Blind recommended FileCloud to the NFBT, as an option that could meet all the NFBT's criteria. There were three strong reasons for the recommendation:

- + Accessibility. FileCloud file sharing and synchronization is accessible to users with screen readers.
- + Data security and control. FileCloud allows on-premises private cloud file sharing, reinforcing good data management and security.
- + Affordability. Non-profit organizations must often work with limited budgets. Entry-level pricing is an important factor as is overall cost-effectiveness.

Easy Deployment, Flawless Interworking and Great Support

The reasons above were already enough to convince the NFBT to choose FileCloud. Uploading data from different people's PCs to centralize files on a server was simple and flexible.



Users now find that the FileCloud mobile apps are straightforward and work flawlessly with the VoiceOver screen reader, as well as the PC-based screen readers JAWS (Job Access With Speech) and Window-Eyes. Blind board members and blind and sighted volunteers can now all access the information they need easily and efficiently. Besides confirming the effectiveness of FileCloud for the NFBT, Norma also found that in terms of support and customer service, FileCloud staff worked tirelessly to insure that the NFBT had a great experience using the product.



Perhaps the most important feature we have found in FileCloud is its people.

Norma Crosby, IT Manager

How FileCloud Can Help You Today?

FileCloud software and support fully meet the expectations of NFBT, while also making financial sense. The same advantages of accessibility, data security and affordability make sense for many other organizations too. Besides universities and learning establishments, FileCloud also makes an excellent online file sharing and synchronization solution for hospitals and clinics, with full compliance with HIPAA and HITECH Act legislation among others. And FileCloud also serves other sectors, such as finance, utilities and consumer and business services. Automatic back-up and recovery facilities, and easy integration with existing application applications and access control systems keep installation and deployment simple for all.