



## Kogan.com centralises IT infrastructure with Google Apps



### At a Glance

#### What they wanted to do:

- Centralise IT infrastructure to ensure that IT provisioning came from one location
- Enhance global communications and collaboration among vendors, partners and colleagues
- Ensure no downtime with respect to emails or work documents

#### What they did:

- Used Google Drive for real-time collaboration across departments and offices
- Leveraged Google Hangouts and Google Chat for “face-to-face” discussions
- Continued use of Gmail to ensure flexibility and efficiency of emails

#### What they achieved:

- Implemented smooth BYOD programme with new centralised device management
  - Enabled more efficient workflow process with real-time review and document sharing via Google Drive
  - Reduced cost previously incurred from travelling and cross-countries calls with Google Hangouts and Google Chat
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### Organisation

Kogan.com (Kogan) is an Australian designer, manufacturer, and online retailer of consumer electronics and lifestyle goods. The company, founded in 2006 by Chief Executive Officer, Ruslan Kogan, sells various consumer technology items such as LED televisions, smartphones, tablets, kitchen appliances and more. Kogan has a mission to make the latest technology more affordable for everyone. It bypasses traditional middlemen and physical stores by only selling its products online, delivering direct to the shopper. The company remains one of Australia’s fastest growing businesses, and has shipped over three million products, saving shoppers tens of millions of dollars. It now operates in over ten countries, has offices in four continents, and is one of the most efficient retailers in the world.

### Challenge

The convenience and growing popularity of online retailing led to Kogan growing rapidly over the years, even reaching an expansion rate of 300% yearly[1]. The Internet has definitely made the world a smaller place, and Kogan’s business was no exception. Dealing with partners, third-party vendors and manufacturers from all over the world became part and parcel of the business. To cope with the rapid expansion and globalisation of its business, the number one e-retailer in Australia required a solution that would improve employee collaboration and communications beyond their office in Australia.

“Being an online-retailer basically means that there is no chance for downtime. We need constant connectivity so that we are notified of any alert or changes. For the longest time, Gmail was a paramount technology that our core business relied on,” explained Mr Goran Stefkovski, Director of Technology at Kogan.

Originally, with their small team of founding employees, Kogan used a corporate address on top of standard Gmail accounts. It was one of the first businesses to use Gmail to run its entire business. Once Google Apps for Business was made available, Kogan made the switch from their standard Gmail account to Google Apps.

“Moving our infrastructure to the cloud contributes to the efficiency of our business. Rather than managing hundreds of individual accounts, we can now provision all users from a central place with Google Apps. As our business continues to grow, it also made more economic sense to take advantage of the full suite of Google Apps’ products,” said Mr Stefkovski.

This move was especially important as the technology team at Kogan has always focused on feature development, website innovation, equipment and network provision, rather than an IT support.

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## **Solution**

Before deciding on Google Apps for Business, Kogan evaluated some options that were available in the market. However, many solutions were not simple and required end user training, which would have resulted in additional costs or time to be incurred by the company.

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The move provided Kogan with the ability to manage the whole company's corporate profile through one central interface. This means less time spent on IT administration, whether it be creating, disabling or suspending new accounts, resources or sharing of calendars

## **Result**

Day-to-day connectivity and collaboration among employees has significantly improved with Google Chat. It works as an efficient information exchange medium, allowing employees to correspond with colleagues instantaneously.

Google Hangouts is another way that Kogan's employees communicate with vendors, partners, and fellow colleagues. With Google Hangouts, teams are able to save a lot of travelling time and meet with multiple people from different locations face-to-face.

“The quality of Google Hangouts is so good that we have no problems having multiple people all talking at once on one call. We are also very impressed that we can share visuals, which is above what a normal conference call enables. Cost savings were apparent, especially when communicating with our international affiliates and partners. As we have numerous vendors that are based overseas, we can now reduce the cost previously incurred for travelling and international calls,” elaborated Mr Stefkovski.

The company also uses Google Drive to create, store and share spreadsheets throughout the organisation. With Google Drive, teams are able to collaborate together, review documents, and make edits simultaneously or at their own time. It can also be shared easily as employees no longer have to email these documents to each other, translating into a smoother workflow.

“The centralised integration has allowed us to implement smoothly a company-wide Bring Your Own Device programme. IT can now manage any device on the network remotely. If the device is compromised, IT can easily conduct a wipe, ensuring that only the Google Apps account is erased and not the contents of the device,” said Mr Stefkovski.

Gmail has been a fixture for Kogan since the beginning, and employees cannot do without it. Kogan's employees like Gmail for the easy search aspect, the huge amount of purchasable space in the mailbox, and the way all emails are organised into one conversation thread. Efficiency is enjoyed when employees do not have to continually archive their emails or can communicate freely without the overhead of having individual messages that traditional mail systems present.

“Our CEO travels widely and he loves the ability to access Gmail offline. He can get on the plane where there is no Wi-Fi available and actually read through his emails as well as draft replies which will get sent out on touchdown. It's not critical but it makes things a lot easier when you can access all your emails on your phone. Because we are moving in the online retail business, our store is open 24/7/365. Equipped with a powerful, efficient workflow internally and easy access to our business mail, we are able to always stay one-step ahead when dealing with our customers and market trends,” said Mr Stefkovski.

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## About Google Apps

Google Apps is a cloud-based productivity suite that helps you and your team connect and get work done from anywhere on any device. Google Apps includes Gmail, Google Calendar (shared calendaring), Google Drive (online content storage and sharing), and Google Docs, Sheets & Slides (document creation and collaboration).

For more information, visit  
[www.google.com.au/apps](http://www.google.com.au/apps)

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Kogan is very happy with Google Apps, believing that hands-down, it provides them with the best way of doing things. Whether a prospective employee has Gmail is actually one of the criterion that Kogan looks at when hiring.

“It is our mission to make technology affordable for our customers, and thus we believe wholeheartedly in always finding better, more cost-effective ways of doing things. Having Google Apps has given us a much more integrated system that improves our workflow and allows us to communicate on a global level seamlessly. In eight years we’ve grown from a garage in Melbourne to a global business. However, our efficiency and flexibility has been able to scale with us. If our office burnt down today, we could still be up and running immediately from any internet café or Wi-Fi connection if we had to,” concluded Mr Stefkovski.

