

Eight Criteria for Selecting a Digital File Delivery Service

In the new economy, pressures are mounting on IT managers, who must cut costs while simultaneously serving a global workforce and combating the expanding pool of ad hoc solutions that can threaten data security. The need to prove ROI and shore up network defenses is greater than ever when delivering digital files. FTP often has proved to be both insecure and confusing to non-technical users, while e-mail is incapable of handling large attachments with certainty and security.

Web-based digital file delivery has emerged as a solution for many of these issues, but these online services differ in many respects. This white paper offers eight criteria that IT managers can use to evaluate and select the best digital file delivery service to ensure that file transfer remains secure, dependable, convenient, cost-effective and compliant with regulatory requirements. The paper specifically measures YouSendIt against each of these criteria and the specific advantages and benefits that YouSendIt offers IT professionals.



Managing the New Realities of Business

The demands on corporate IT departments have never been higher, prompted by a sharp economic downturn and factors emerging for the past several years, including globalization, niche marketing and a mobile workforce. Just when IT has become absolutely critical to the world's new, nimble business models, IT departments have found themselves hobbled by a number of factors, not the least of which is more employees needing to share more information back and forth among more locations.

Pressure to Cut Costs

The current economic situation is forcing budget cuts; and IT, like most departments, must do more with less. IT managers are under pressure to demonstrate ever greater returns on existing investments before top management will consider additional resources. This trend is reflected in sales of on-premises software, predicted to grow at a single-digit pace through 2013, while more cost-efficient software-as-a-service (SaaS) application sales will increase at a double-digit pace¹. Adoption of SaaS applications among midsize companies is particularly strong, according to a report by research firm AMI Partners¹. In fact, market research firm, Gartner, predicts the global enterprise market for software as a service will rise by nearly 22 percent this year, as companies turn to hosted applications to reduce capital costs during the economic downturn. Digital content creation remains one of the fastest-growing segments, with SaaS delivery of content, communications and collaboration applications generating \$2.5 billion in 2009².

Dealing with a Distributed Workforce

Globalization requires IT to distribute and troubleshoot software updates and new applications anywhere in the world, on a 24-hour schedule. With limited resources, IT personnel constantly are diverted to put out technological fires in the headquarters suite and field offices. As a result, SaaS adoption has become more widespread, with adoption fastest among distributed workforce teams and within Web 2.0 initiatives³.

Rogue Data Transfer

Users are seeking ad-hoc solutions, which drain IT resources and put data security at risk. With user demand outpacing the company's willingness to put additional technology in place, employees are adopting ad hoc software or other file-delivery methods that generate potential data breaches while degrading the IT department's ability to track, trace and audit files. According to a study by Palo Alto Networks, charting 900,000 users on 60 large corporate networks, users on 92 percent of the monitored networks used P2P software, and users on 76 percent of the monitored networks used browser-based file-sharing and cloud-storage tools³.

FTP — Poor Fix for a Common Problem

Staff members regularly resort to copying large files onto disks and delivering them via expensive and slow courier services. In 2006, more than 650 million envelopes containing CDs and DVDs were sent via overnight courier, an agonizingly sluggish and costly method in a world operating at digital speed.

IT may attempt to patch the problem by creating an FTP site. However, the department must train internal and external clients to use FTP, manage access to the site and ensure its security, with more opportunities for breaches to occur in the network as individuals outside the company are added.

For their department's own productivity, IT managers are searching for a replacement for FTP sites and a way to stem the e-mail burden that necessitates ever more servers, storage, maintenance and power costs. For the users in their organization, they want a file-delivery method that is easy to use, easy to deploy and easy to manage. Today, they are able to meet all of these necessities with YouSendIt, a secure, reliable, easy online system.

The Benefits of Web-based Digital File Delivery

More and more IT professionals are finding value in Web-based services for file transfer. Employing SaaS online file-delivery methods offers exceptional benefits, including nearly instant ROI. Since no software installation or user training is required, digital files can be uploaded rapidly by the sender and downloaded quickly by multiple recipients.

E-mail attachments and their ensuing bounce-backs are eliminated, and IT managers no longer need to set up, manage and provide training for FTP sites as a file delivery application. As a result, large amounts of data are lifted from the IT department's servers, with information maintained on the host's secure servers for access from anywhere at any time via the Web.

Overall revenue flow improves, since projects are completed more quickly and can be invoiced earlier. Businesses can also handle more jobs—producing more revenue—within a given time period, since delivery delays on mission-critical information are minimized.



Criteria for an Effective Digital File Delivery Service

While most digital file delivery services reflect these important benefits, services differ in a number of ways. When IT professionals are examining service offerings, they should evaluate eight specific criteria to ensure that file transfer remains secure, dependable, convenient, cost-effective and compliant with regulatory requirements:

1. **Flexibility and Assurance:** The ability to transmit digital content in all formats and sizes. The service should also verify the delivery of every file with receipts and automate this process to provide the business with a way to ensure compliance with regulations impacting publicly held companies, healthcare organizations and other organizations transmitting sensitive files.
2. **Ease of use:** A digital file delivery method that is powerful, yet simple to use, requiring no special training. It should also be easy for customers and other external users to employ while communicating and collaborating with the company.
3. **Workflow integration:** A service that is available directly from the productivity and professional tools of business users, becoming part of the natural, everyday process of the user's workflow and activity. An effective file delivery system should be available not only from the Web but also directly from computer-based applications and the desktop.
4. **Branding and Personalization:** A service that can carry the branding of the business that is using it and is personalized to the company's needs. It should appear to be part of the company's own processes, not an add-on or standalone application.
5. **Proven Technology:** A technology that is robust and proven and that has been widely adopted both in the marketplace and within the company infrastructure.
6. **Security:** A service that employs highly secure protocols, with encryption and password protection for users that securely stores files between transmissions. The service must also protect the privacy of transmitted files in compliance with governing regulations.
7. **Scalability, Reliability, Availability:** A system that is easily scalable, reliable and widely available through the Web, with 24/7 access anywhere around the world to meet the needs of global companies and independent professionals. The service must have a record of near-perfect uptime and should operate with several networked data centers so that files are backed up in separate locations.
8. **Minimal costs:** No hidden costs or overhead. Beware of companies that draw you in with a reduced monthly cost only to hit you with additional hidden charges for bandwidth and storage. Select a service that can grow with you. Businesses should pay for only the level of service they need and not be required to buy, install or maintain software. The user should be able to take advantage of the best level of service for his or her business and then grow to higher service levels as the business becomes increasingly successful and larger.

The YouSendIt Score Card

Achieving the Ideal Criteria

Each of these criteria is critical to consider when researching and implementing a digital content delivery service. The leader in digital file transfer, YouSendIt, has a service that has been adopted rapidly by nearly ten million registered users and businesses in 220 countries.

YouSendIt has created an easy-to-use product employing proven software as a service so that all the heavy lifting involved in file transfer is handled behind the scenes on YouSendIt's servers.

Flexibility and Assurance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Easily upload and send files and folders up to 2 GB No e-mail bounce-backs
Ease of Use	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use via the Web, your desktop or popular applications, with no training required
Workflow Integration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Designed to fit your workflow, not the other way around, YouSendIt is integrated into Microsoft Outlook and Office, Adobe Illustrator, and other popular applications—even your desktop
Branding and Personalization	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Customize messages with your company logo and messaging Branded dropbox for individuals or you can embed in your own Web site for receiving large files securely from customers, clients and other constituents
Proven Technology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Nearly 10 million people in 220 countries are using YouSendIt More than 12 million files sent each month
Secure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> SSL encryption Firewall friendly HIPAA compliant Secure data centers in two countries Additional security options, such as password protection and return receipt All files encrypted and file names scrambled while stored on servers Authenticated retrieval option
Scalable	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sends more than 12 million files a month for nearly 10 million users Only one instance of the software on YouSendIt server cluster No need to install additional local software as the number of users increases New users have immediate access Expands with your company as you move to larger locations or as you open more branch offices
Reliability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Redundant file storage centers in five locations across North America and Europe Redundant power sources High-speed connections from separate providers with provisions for automatic switchover
Availability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Uptime of 99.97% 24x7 access, eliminating time-zone barriers As SaaS, available from anywhere in the world—or in the cloud.
ROI	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Replaces the need for FTP and courier services and significantly reduces e-mail burden.