Cloud Solution Type SaaS
Case Study Title New Media Group enables real-time collaboration, cuts costs using Google Apps for Business
Basic Information Company Name: Master Concept (Hong Kong) Limited Client Name: New Media Group Deployment Date: Sep 2012 Web Site: www.hkmci.com
Introduction **Business** New Media Group (NMG) publishes and markets Chinese-language weekly magazines including Oriental Sunday, Weekend Weekly, New Monday, Fashion & Beauty, and Economic Digest. With over $10 million HKD invested, NMG will also launch five websites by the second quarter of 2011 including an online men's fashion magazine, a dating site, and a travel portal. With a staff of 700 and growing, New Media Group is one of the largest magazine groups in Hong Kong. **Challenge** Creating five weekly magazines and publishing a wide array of websites is a demanding task. Reporters, photographers, editors, graphic designers, and others on staff must collaborate efficiently—often in real-time to meet looming deadlines. Staff also must be able to work from wherever they are using their preferred devices, including smart phones and tablets. "The media industry is very fast-paced," says Vickie Chan, graphic designer and web producer for New Media Group. "We are always pressed for time." Traditionally, NMG relied on a number of disparate tools for communication and collaboration. Documents were created using Microsoft® Office applications. Sendmail™ was the standard email system. Although it was

open-source and therefore technically "free," it presented a number of issues.
  "Sendmail was very difficult to manage and it did not offer remote access to email," says Dominie Liang IT Director for New Media Group. "We had to find a way to allow people to work from home and have remote access to all the tools they needed—and we had to act quickly," recalls Liang.

Experience Sharing

Solution

After comparing the cost and complexity of purchasing Microsoft® Exchange and operating it in-house, Liang and his team unanimously decided on Google Apps. A cloud-based solution would cut IT complexity and costs and reduce the security concerns associated with data residing on USB drives or hard disks that could potentially be lost or stolen. "On top of a secure and proven email platform, Google Apps also offers numerous applications including Docs, Groups, Sites, and more. For us, it was an easy choice", said Liang.
Liang and his team worked with Google partner Master Concept to migrate from Sendmail to Google Apps for Business in just one month. They implemented Google Postini Services for email archiving and imported the company directory into Google Contacts. "It was quite amazing, actually, how fast and easy it was to migrate 700 users to Google Apps," says Liang.

Results

The ability to access email from anywhere on any device was an instant productivity boon. But soon, staff at NMG began adopting the many powerful tools in Google Apps for Business beyond Gmail to collaborate more productively.

  "A major benefit is that we can create and read documents, presentations, spreadsheets, forms, and drawings without actually having to have the software on our computers," says Liang. "Having all our collaboration software in the cloud is easier for users, and for IT."
Today, the IT group is using Drawings in Google Docs to create flow charts for coordinating their processes and Spreadsheets to track support tickets. Editorial and production teams are using Google Docs and Google Talk to

collaborate in real-time on content and stories. "When we used Microsoft Office, we were constantly emailing documents out, and people were getting confused about which version was the latest," says Chan. "Now we can all view and edit the same document in real-time, regardless of our locations. Staff can also have instant conversations from anywhere to share ideas, saving a lot of time and expense."

Productivity has also increased through the use of Google Calendar. Scheduling and sharing events is easy, according to Liang and Chan. There is a simple way to book conference rooms, and fewer conflicts arise when scheduling meetings. "We can see each others' schedules, and we've reduced the administrative overhead that used to be required to book meetings and conference rooms," says Chan.

Forms in Google Docs are used for everything from gathering lunch and dinner orders to creating e-forms that allow customers to enter contests or respond to surveys online on one of NMG's many websites. "We launched a website celebrating our 9th anniversary on a very tight time schedule," says Chan. "We quickly created a form in Google Docs that allowed members to enter contests for gifts or club activities. We linked the form to our content management system on the back-end and all the information was collected automatically. The whole process saved us a lot of time."

"Not only is Google Apps for Business cheaper than alternative solutions, it also gives you much better value for your IT spend. Google constantly launches new features and improvements to the suite that we find genuinely useful" said Liang.

In the near future, NMG will be adopting Google Sites to build their corporate intranet. The company is also integrating Google Apps with its Business Process Management system to manage common administrative workflows such as applying for leave. "The extensibility of Google Apps is impressive," says Liang. "We initially signed up for email, but we got so much more than we imagined when we made the decision to go Google."