

December 19, 2012

TO: Kenneth Stafford, CIO and Vice Provost for Information Technology Services

FROM: Email Upgrade Committee

RE: Final report

Background

In 2008, K-State migrated from an in-house developed and hosted email service to Zimbra that was hosted off-site. Zimbra was chosen because of the combined email and calendar features along with some collaborative capabilities. Off-campus hosting of Zimbra was transferred to Merit Network Inc. in April 2010. Since that time disruptions in service prompted the campus to again look for an alternative email solution. Outages since January 1, 2012 are summarized and available from <http://www.k-state.edu/its/emailupgrade/data/emailoutage12.19.2012.pdf>

Ken Stafford, CIO, tasked a committee of faculty, students and staff to provide a recommendation for alternatives to the current email service and sourcing solutions. The specific charges included:

- Review the literature and analyze email solutions offered or planned at Big 12 and other institutions
- Develop a list of requirements for email solutions
- Develop a list of alternatives along with features and cost of each alternative
- Discuss email service options broadly
- Develop options to be presented to the CIO to present to campus

The committee reviewed the literature provided in <http://www.k-state.edu/its/emailupgrade/references>. One of the references that might be helpful to readers is an email and calendar solution assessment matrix from the University of California at Berkeley <http://technology.berkeley.edu/productivity-suite/google/matrix.html>. Another study that mirrors many of the concerns experienced at K-State is from the University of Maryland and is available from <http://goingterpmail.umd.edu/documents/Student-email-final-report.pdf>.

An analysis of email services among the Big 12 and comparison institutions can be found in Appendix 1. Iowa State, the University of Texas and West Virginia have hybrid solutions, i.e. Gmail for students and a separate email service for faculty. Seven schools in the Big 12 offer Exchange or Outlook. K-State is the only university in the Big 12 to use Zimbra for email services. In the comparison institutions, four universities offer Gmail and four offer Outlook/Exchange for students and faculty/staff; three schools offer Google for students and Exchange/Outlook for faculty/staff. Purdue is the only comparison institution that uses Zimbra for student email services and Exchange for faculty/staff.

The committee participated in demonstrations for Google Apps for Education and Microsoft Office 365. Demonstrations of the calendar functionality for both options were provided for the President and Provost office staff on November 30 and the campus on December 12. A survey was sent to all students, faculty and staff. Since October a suggestion box has been available from the email upgrade website.

Options

The committee identified Google Apps for Education, Microsoft Office 365, and Zimbra hosted by another provider as suitable for a campus solution. All three solutions offer basic email and calendar functionality, are viewable by any browser and are operating system independent. Common features (requirements) of the three systems are listed below. A comparison of the differences among the systems is provided in Table 1.

- Integrated email and calendar functionality
- Customizable filters/rules for message management
- Capable of threaded messages
- Integrated personal contacts and global enterprise address list
- Adding contacts from received email
- Integrated instant messaging
- Search capabilities
- Ease of creation of groups to share documents, update a calendar
- Capable of out-of-office message/auto reply
- Capable of sending a meeting notice/alert
- Provide a calendar busy search
- Capable of viewing simultaneous calendars
- Provide customizable calendar access control capabilities and allow for resource scheduling
- Provide online training and documentation

Table 1. Comparison of differences among the email and calendar options

Functionality	Google Apps for Education	Microsoft Office 365	Zimbra
Availability	99.9%	99.9%	Varies with host provider
Size of Inbox	25G	25G	Host determined
Size of attachments	25M	25M	Host determined
HIPAA, FERPA, etc compliant	FERPA, not HIPAA	FERPA and HIPAA	FERPA and HIPAA by host configuration
Integration with Outlook	Syncs with Outlook	Fully integrated with all of Office	Syncs with Outlook
Ability to set up groups	Groups can be set by Administrators. Calendar groups can be set by Users	Groups can be set by Administrators, Active Directory. Calendar and Sharepoint groups can be set by Users.	Not a true groups feature.
Integration with collaboration tools	Google Docs, Google Drive, Google Talk IM Google Sites	Office Suite, Lync, Sharepoint	Briefcase, IM
Apps offered	Blogger, Docs, GooglePlus for Groups, Google Groups, Voice, Scholar, Books, Maps, Picasa Web albums – all are standards based	Web Word, Web Excel, Web PowerPoint, Web OneNote	
Provide instant messaging	Yes	Yes (most powerful IM tool)	Yes, not currently implemented
E-Discovery	Built into product (Google Vault but extra cost)	Built into product (Extra cost)	Controlled by host configuration
Cost	No charge for licensing FTEs to be determined	No charge for licensing FTEs to be determined	\$260,000 hosting & licensing services + 1.5 FTEs on campus

Google Apps for Education

Strengths

- Strong third party support for Google Apps.
- The possibility of future integration with university apps through a strong API provided by Google.
- Individuals can purchase extra space without going through K-State.
- Not a total replacement for listservs, but does have the capability to access archives.
- Calendar: Google groups in the calendar get an email address. Each user can create a local distribution list.

Weaknesses

- Limited on call support, which might require contracting with a third party vendor.
- The product life cycle of Google Apps is unpredictable in comparison to Office 365. Google makes frequent changes to its product apps suite. While Google is on the cutting edge, MS is more stable and has a longer product life cycle.
- Google will make feature changes with little or no notification and deployment process; rollout takes 2-3 weeks to process.
- With the movement to the cloud, K-State would accept whatever changes Google makes.
- May require standards and customization to manage resources (equipment and rooms)
- Google cannot guarantee that data will reside only in U.S. based data centers

Microsoft Office 365

Strengths

- Integration with MS Office Suite; documents retain formatting when navigating from web to desktop.
- MS Exchange and the MS Office Suite are the industry standard productivity applications
- Native integration with MS Outlook.
- Mobile device integration.
- Minimal learning curve for Zimbra users currently using Outlook as their email client.
- Allows granular management of resources (equipment and rooms) ownership, scheduling and management.
- Side by side calendar option for managing multiple calendars.
- Lync web conferencing tool is the best among the three options.
- Live collaboration and sharing with Office files.
- Data Centers are located in the U.S.
- Greater HIPAA security for a small subset of users.

Weaknesses

- The current version will be upgraded before we deploy on campus. We have not had hands on access with the version to be deployed.
- Requires that administrators set up groups.
- The demo of the current product was slow (may not represent performance of production system)
- Uses SharePoint as a collaborative tool and SkyDrive for individuals who are not part of the enterprise.
- MS Office 365 is distributed across fewer data centers, so there could be more down time.

Zimbra

Strengths

- Least disruptive option
- Users familiarity with the system

Weaknesses

- Have not identified a host provider for the 52,346 provisioned accounts

Feedback Mechanisms

One of the charges of the committee was to share information broadly. To meet this charge committee members shared updates in their respective units, with the Faculty Senate Committee on Technology, Student Technology Committee, SGA, Faculty Senate and the Systems Administrator Committee.

A suggestion box available from www.ksu.edu/its/emailupgrade generated 48 comments. The committee also surveyed the campus community. One of the purposes of the survey was to educate the campus about the available options. The committee debated providing details about each option, but it was decided to include the links instead of a description on the survey. Committee members did not want to bias the judgment of the campus audience about any of the options. All survey recipients had the opportunity to click on a link and read more about each option. We understand this was a limitation of the survey.

Approximately 3,190 K-Staters completed the survey with response rates of 8% for students (1939 respondents), 24.5% for faculty (427 respondents) and 18.5% for staff (823 respondents). Seventy-four percent of all respondents report reading their email via Zimbra, Google or Outlook.

There were no differences in responses among students, staff, & faculty. Significantly more ($p < 0.05$) respondents:

- were neutral about Microsoft Office 365 than were neutral about Google
- had no opinion about Google & Microsoft Office 365
- liked Google than Microsoft Office 365 and Zimbra
- somewhat disliked Zimbra compared to Microsoft Office 365 and Google
- somewhat disliked Microsoft Office 365 compared to Google
- disliked Zimbra compared to Microsoft Office 365 and Google.

Summary tables are provided in Appendix 2. Among all respondents, ease of use received the highest preference score followed by data storage and attachment size (Table 3). Significant differences ($p < 0.05$) were found among students, staff and faculty responses for the following features: data storage, training/tutorials, collaborative functionality (tools, docs, groups), online file storage, mobility, instant messaging and shared calendars (Table 3,4).

More than 2,655 comments were generated from two questions on the survey, 1) Please explain the reason(s) for your preference and 2) Use this space for additional comments about the email/calendar options, special email needs, and/or the upgrade. The comments were organized by respondent group, categorized by theme and quantified using Excel. A recurring theme among the comments and in the suggestion box was the reliability of any email/calendar solution we choose. Many of the respondents were aware that our current host provider is the issued and not the Zimbra email service. Respondents also commented that a top 50 public research university needs an email/calendar solution that supports collaboration. Both Microsoft Office 365 and Google Apps for Education offer collaborative tools. Respondents concur that a leading edge email/calendar solution is essential for our institution. Summaries of the comments by group are provided in Appendix 2.

Those individuals attending the calendar demonstrations were sent a follow-up survey asking them to rank their preference for a calendar solution. Sixty percent of the attendees completed the survey. The top choice for calendar was Google, followed by Microsoft Office 365 with Zimbra as the third choice. A few of the unedited comments from attendees include:

“Zimbra and Google have more open protocols and easier to integrate into systems The dual client of 365 is going to be confusing and make it hard to train user. Also less cross platform.”

“Security is a factor and the simplicity and cost of having one system for all users is primary. This is for high security users as well as students.”

“I think I would be happy with either Google or Microsoft calendar options. I would definitely NOT be willing to continue with Zimbra.”

“Although the functionality of the calendar components of Google Apps for Education and Microsoft Live 365 are very similar, I prefer the look and feel of Microsoft Live 365. Furthermore, I assume that Microsoft Live 365 integrates better with other Microsoft software. For example, I like to use the mail merge feature in Word in combination with Microsoft Outlook to personalize mass email messages.”

Summary

In summary, the ultimate charge of the committee was to provide options to Ken Stafford, CIO, to present to campus. We heard the campus community with their many comments about the need for email to be reliable and provide collaboration functionality. Both Google Apps for Education and Office 365 meet these expectations. Some in the campus community did not want to switch from Zimbra; however, the committee did not find a host provider willing to assume responsibility for 52,346 accounts.

Much of the recent discussion among committee members has focused on specific functional differences between the calendars for Google Apps for Education and MS Office 365. While some concerns were captured during the product demonstrations and committee deliberations, more specific examples are needed. A business analyst is working with several "power" users to identify specific use cases to compare against both Google and Microsoft calendars. The analyst will report findings to the committee in early January and that report along with committee comments can be provided as an addendum to this report.

In discussions with vendors and campuses with email and calendar deployment experience, an overarching recommendation was to use a single solution for email and calendar. While the committee doesn't recommend splitting users on email and calendar, there could be gains from a mixed implementation by combining the email/calendar functionality of Office 365 with the Google Apps suite. This suggestion needs further investigation and would require support for both options. Resources including an application owner, operational and maintenance funds, FTE support, a cohesive support strategy and consultative services, need to be developed as part of the implementation plan. The next step should be an assessment of the total cost of ownership of the option chosen. The committee appreciates the opportunity to discuss the report with you and the campus community.

Committee Members

- **Jonathan Bycroft**, Senior, Life Sciences
- **Chris Casey**, Enterprise Server Technologies, ITS
- **Bill Chestnut**, K-State Salina
- **Anthony Cobb**, Information Technology Assistance Center, ITS
- **Steve Coulson**, College of Engineering
- **Joel Cranmer**, Senior, Mechanical Engineering
- **Don Crawford**, College of Architecture, Planning and Design
- **Eric Dover**, Information Technology Assistance Center, ITS
- **Seth Galitzer**, Computing and Information Sciences
- **Renee Gates**, K-State Libraries
- **Heather Gordon**, Senior, Management Information Systems
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- **Melissa Morris**, Division of Communications and Marketing
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- **Scott Schlender**, Graduate School
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- **David C. Williams**, Housing and Dining
- **Marla Wood**, Division of Continuing Education
- **Rob Caffey**, Office of Mediated Education, ITS, Co-chair
- **Rebecca Gould**, Information Technology Assistance Center, ITS, Co-chair
- **Viki Horan**, Information Technology Services, Committee Support

Appendices

Appendix 1: Summary of Email Offerings Among the Big 12 and Other Institutions

Appendix 2: Summary Tables for Survey Responses and Unedited Comments

Appendix 1: Summary of Email Offerings Among the Big 12 and Other Institutions

School	Enrollment	Email for Students	Student Email provider	Number of Faculty	Email for Faculty	Faculty Email Provider	Unique email features	Forwarding	Reported outages since Jan 1, 2012	Additional Comments
Big XII Institutions										
Baylor	14,990	Yes	Exchange/ Outlook	859	Yes	Exchange/ Outlook		Yes	2 incidents (4/30, 6/21)	
Iowa State	29,887	Yes	Google Mail	1,709	Yes	Exchange/ Outlook	Instant messaging	Yes	N/A	
Kansas	29,462	Yes	Exchange/ Outlook	2,529	Yes	Exchange/ Outlook		Yes	N/A	
Kansas State	24,378	Yes	Zimbra	1,275	Yes	Zimbra		Yes	22 incidents (1/19, 2/8, 2/20, 2/26, 4/3, 4/6, 4/12, 7/9, 7/10-7/11, 7/16, 9/25-9/30, 10/1, 10/31, 11/1, 11/2, 11/3, 12/3, 12/4, 12/12, 12/14, 12/17, 12/18)	
Oklahoma	49,861	Yes	Outlook	2,937	Yes	Outlook		Yes	3 incidents (2/11, 3/27, 7/26)	
Oklahoma State	30,753	Yes	Exchange/ Outlook	1,857	Yes	Exchange/ Outlook		Yes	1 incident (9/27)	
TCU	9,518	Yes	Outlook	523	Yes	Outlook		Yes	N/A	
Texas	51,112	Yes	Google Mail	2,770	Yes	UMBS		Yes	1 incident (7/30)	
Texas Tech	24,593	Yes	Outlook	2,482	Yes	Outlook		Yes	N/A	
West Virginia	29,616	Yes	Google Mail	1,870	Yes	Novell Groupwise		Yes	N/A	
Other Institutions										
Auburn	23,547	Yes	Outlook	1,200	Yes	Outlook		Yes	1 (8/14)	
Clemson	17,309	Yes	Google Apps for Education	1,398	Yes	Exchange 2007		Yes	N/A	IT Status Archives available to students only.
Colorado State	30,647	Yes	Google Apps for Education	1,468	Yes	Google Apps for Education		Yes	N/A	
LSU	29,549	Yes	Google Mail	1,407	Yes	Exchange		Yes	N/A	
North Carolina State	34,767	Yes	Google Apps for Education	2,068	Yes	Google Apps for Education		Yes	3 incidents (4/17, 6/7, 8/9)	
Oregon State	24,447	Yes	Exchange	2,918	Yes	Exchange		Yes	2 incidents (7/6, 9/18)	
Purdue	39,637	Yes	Zimbra Network edition (hosted in-house)	2,682	Yes	Exchange (some use Zimbra)	Calendar	Yes	1 incident (2/17)	
Rutgers	43,500	Yes	Google Mail	2,718	Yes	Google Mail		Yes	N/A	
Univ. of Delaware	21,489	Yes	Google Apps for Education	1,131	Yes	Google Apps for Education, Exchange, Mirapoint		Yes	N/A	Status Required Login
Univ. of Maryland at College Park	26,876	Yes	Google Mail	3,257	Yes	Exchange		Yes	1 (4/17)	
Univ of Massachusetts at Amherst	26,693	Yes	Exchange	1,174	Yes	Exchange		Yes	1 incident (8/25-8/28)	
Washington State	27,088	Yes	Outlook Live	1,421	Yes	Exchange		Yes	N/A	

* Data regarding incidents was obtained by using University IT status pages, University RSS feeds and University IT news blogs.

Appendix 2

Summary Tables for Survey Responses and Unedited Comments

Table 2. Comparison of likes and dislikes among the three email options

Group	Email Option	Dislike	Somewhat Dislike	Neutral	Somewhat Like	Like	No Opinion
Students							
n = 1903	Google	68 (3.6)	42 (2.2)	207 (10.9)	217 (11.4)	925 (48.6)	444 (23.3)
n = 1902	Microsoft	168 (8.8)	112 (5.9)	407 (21.4)	307 (16.1)	331 (17.4)	577 (30.3)
n = 1906	Zimbra	400 (21)	304 (15.9)	345 (18.1)	281 (14.7)	306 (16.1)	270 (14.2)
Staff							
n = 784	Google	16 (2.0)	17 (2.2)	105 (13.4)	87 (11.1)	274 (34.9)	285 (36.4)
n = 785	Microsoft	43 (5.5)	43 (5.5)	134 (17.1)	106 (13.5)	164 (20.9)	295 (37.6)
n = 797	Zimbra	212 (26.6)	154 (19.3)	129 (16.2)	96 (12.0)	114 (14.3)	92 (11.5)
Faculty							
n = 410	Google	17 (4.1)	8 (2.0)	54 (13.2)	50 (12.2)	161 (39.3)	120 (29.3)
n = 410	Microsoft	50 (12.2)	25 (6.1)	72 (17.6)	48 (11.7)	64 (15.6)	151 (36.8)
n = 409	Zimbra	124 (30.3)	77 (18.8)	64 (15.6)	45 (11.0)	53 (13.0)	46 (11.2)

Table 3. Comparison of functionality preferences for an email and calendar solution

Group	Ease of Use	Attachment Size	Data Storage**	Training/Tutorials**
Students (n= 1718-1806)	4.56	3.95	4.02	2.84
Staff (n= 773-783)	4.53	3.97	4.30	3.32
Faculty (n = 409-415)	4.53	4.06	4.38	3.17

*Scale: 5=essential to 1= unimportant

**Significant differences between groups for these features (p<0.05)

Table 4. Comparison of enhanced functionality preferences for an email and calendar solution

Group	Docs Collaborate**	Collaborative Tools**	Online File Storage**	Collaboration Groups**	Mobile**	Instant Messaging**	Shared Calendars**
Students (n=1715-1767)	3.87	3.62	3.88	3.76	4.23	3.39	3.97
Staff (n= 716-753)	3.34	3.30	3.56	3.55	4.09	3.29	4.33
Faculty (n = 398-404)	3.32	3.31	3.64	3.54	4.10	2.96	4.06

* Scale: was 5=essential to 1=unimportant

**Significant differences among groups for all features (p<0.05)

Analysis of Student Comments to Email and Calendar Option Survey

The Email and Calendar Options survey was sent to **24,223** students with one follow-up reminder, **1,939** students began the survey, three dropped out after starting, resulting in an **8%** response rate. The following is an analysis of the **1,504** comments made in response to Question 2: “Please explain the reason(s) for your preference [for an email/ calendaring solution for Kansas State]” and Question 5: “Use this space for additional comments about the email/calendar options, special email needs, and/or the upgrade.” Comments are categorized by major theme. The number of comments in each thematic category is indicated in parenthesis. Selected unedited comments are posted below.

The full report along with all comments is available from the URLs listed below. Note that the survey was sent out in five different batches due to volume.

<https://online.ksu.edu/Survey/PublicReport?offeringId=201825>

<https://online.ksu.edu/Survey/PublicReport?offeringId=201839>

<https://online.ksu.edu/Survey/PublicReport?offeringId=201840>

<https://online.ksu.edu/Survey/PublicReport?offeringId=201841>

<https://online.ksu.edu/Survey/PublicReport?offeringId=201842>

CATEGORIES

Not Familiar/Not Used (175)

I do not know enough about the differences between the systems to have an opinion.

I have little knowledge for comparison of these platforms.

I don't have any information to have preference for those solutions. You'd better give some summary for each solution.

All good (20)

I like them all equally as long as they are easy to use and work properly.

I have looked into these things and like them all.

Google Positive (577)

I have a lot of experience working with google apps. I have used both user and administrator portals and find both to be very intuitive and easy to manage. Along with this the user side is familiar to some people already. Google apps also allows calendars to be synced seamlessly to android phones and very easily to computer applications and other phones. I also had a large role in the transition of an Internet provider from a self-hosted email system to a google apps hosted system and the transition went flawlessly. Google makes the process simple and easy to do. My vote would be to go to google or stick with Zimbra but please please please don't use a Microsoft solution... It isn't going to be as user friendly as either of the other two options

Google's basic package is free and familiar, and has many of the same feature as other site while also provide students access to the professional tools that everyone else outside of academia is already using. Additionally, the university where I did my undergrad paid for Microsoft, but lo and behold most of the student I knew were still forwarding to gmail or yahoo and not using many of the additional features of the Microsoft sweat, so it seemed like a waste of money.

Both Google Apps and Microsoft Office 365 can be easily integrated into systems like iOS, Windows Phone, and Android. This makes it easier as students have access through a well-developed app rather than a dodgy web interface. Also, they are updated far more frequently, are far more secure, and have a range of features that Zimbra doesn't have. Another thing is that, especially if Google Apps are used, it will cause students to consider using the whole range of apps, for example, using Google Drive in place of Microsoft Word and also using it to backup all-important information easily. Many students are OK with how things are now, but that's because most don't realize how much better it could be if something popular and heavily used such as Google Apps were to be used.

Google is a leading company is user-based apps and programs that are sleek and appealing to the eye of a college student. The lead smartphone operating systems are Apple's iOS and Google's Android. Using google would be very beneficial to those who already use Google, which are many as well as to those who have Android Smartphones, which are many. Google is moving forward in streamline consumer usage and making it extremely easy for users to experience what they have to offer.

Google Apps is very universal and welcomes cross-collaboration between students on all devices.

Google is accessible and easy to use. I think it would be an easy transition as many students already have gmail accounts and use google docs, calendar, etc.

I use google for everything from email, to the drive, and the calendar. They are all synchronized and all sync to my phone as well. It is very easy to use whenever I am working on my computer or on another computer with internet.

Gmail is a popular webmail solution that many people already use and are familiar with. It is also highly integrated into all mobile platforms and provides ease of use across multiple devices by the same user. Google also provides more space for mail storage and their cloud drive than Office 365. Zimbra has had far too many breakdowns and issues in the time that it has been our email provider. With Google or Office 365, you have a much larger infrastructure behind the company to have a better up-time guarantee, and with an organization of 25,000+ and with many basic operations being dependent on email, calendar, and mobile access, having outages and slow operation is not acceptable.

I would recommend the University chooses Google Apps for Education. This will be a fantastic way for Kansas State to increase collaboration and productivity--all while saving the university tens of thousands of dollars. Google is an incredibly reliable service that maintains itself on the cutting edge of the latest web technologies. Google has a commitment to furthering education and keeping their services free of charge.

Google Negative (31)

Google is not secure and Education requires confidential data be transferred on a secure network. Microsoft Office is a software that not all want to use given it is cumbersome on the PC when used for email, requires extra technical support and money for licensing. Zimbra is not one that is standard software. I like the email and calendars KSU has right now, why fix something that isn't broken?

I enjoy the system and functionality of Google mail, but their privacy rules are of a concern to me. Microsoft Office 365 I am unfamiliar with. Zimbra mail is nice to locate other students, but

My school district uses google apps for education and I absolutely hated it. We had many problems and it constantly was unavailable because of maintenance. I will be very disappointed if we change to Google Apps for Education.

When utilizing the google mail services on mobile devices, all of the features do not function correctly.

Zimbra Positive (103)

Zimbra is the only system I have ever used, and I think it works very well.

The current system, Zimbra, works just fine for how I use it. The email is simple to understand and use.

Zimbra is simple and easy to use

I think that the Zimbra email is professional and easy to use. Zimbra is easy to organize, which is important to me. I absolutely hate the Google email program.

Zimbra Negative (174)

Constant issues with Zimbra and our k-state network indicate that there is clearly an issue with what services we currently are using. We are one of the top schools in the nation and we manage to have our main resource for communication go down consistently. No good.

There are some features in Zimbra that work well, but there are many areas that have been frustrating to work with. The main problems I have had with Zimbra is its use with mobile devices, it's taken alot of work to get devices to sync and work well together. There are many features that zimbra doesn't have, or what they do have doesn't work well, a message board and document sharing come to mind.

Zimbra is slow and not user friendly

The main reason I'm not pleased with Zimbra is because of the frequent downtime and errors. I don't have a problem with the features.

I refuse to use Zimbra. It crashes all the time. I forward everything to google and use Gmail and Google Calendar anyway.

Zimbra is not very efficient for sharing documents or following calendar events across devices and software.

Microsoft Positive (135)

I use Microsoft Office 365 at work and I think it would be very beneficial to have as a tool to organize my school tasks and assignments (the calendar is WONDERFUL) and the e-mail is great to work with as well. It's nice having the calendar actually work well in the same program as e-mail and it allows for great organization such as color coding, reminders, task lists, etc. instead of everything just blending together. It's fabulous for At-A-Glance planning and time management.

My last university switched from Zimbra to Microsoft for our email and was a great change. The features for Microsoft and Google email/calendar are much more up-to-date and user friendly. They also allow for more storage space and have better organizational systems for the email and a more easy to follow calendar. Zimbra is too out-dated and does not function well with some computer operating systems. It also does not allow for large documents to be sent or opened like the other email options do. All around, Zimbra is not a good email system.

Microsoft Office 365 seems more appropriate and will integrate with Microsoft products already being used by the majority of students.

When using Microsoft office this last summer I enjoyed the calender feature because I could easily schedule my own free and down time as well as see the free and down time of my peers. This tool allowed for more effective time planning and communication between my coworkers and myself.

Microsoft Office 365 should be the obvious choice. Everyone uses Microsoft products for daily tasks, Word and Excel. So everyone is already familiar with MS Office. And when the students, who we are charged with educating, get into the work force, there's a better than 98% chance that they will be using

Microsoft Office products for their job. Why not give them the extra value added skills. Zebra was a horrible choice from day one, it needs to go away. Google Apps is good but not everyone is familiar with Google Apps, and Google is constantly changing their products and policies. Microsoft has consistency and regularly scheduled and announced changes, and they have a well-developed portal for suggestions of changes. Google's mail platform is not near as easy to use as Outlook.

Microsoft Negative (35)

You have to pay for Microsoft Office 365 whereas Google Apps is free and we are already using Zimbra. MO365 would be too costly to switch over for students and faculty.

I use Google Apps in my job. Microsoft Office 365 ties us to a particular platform.

Google is more universal, it is generally easy to use. I do not know enough about Microsoft Office 365 to choose that, but that would be nice too. However, mac users often have trouble with Microsoft products.

Wanted Features (146)

Some of these ideas are great in theory but often would be rarely used. I want my email to just be an easy way to view my email. If people want all these additional features they can get them themselves.

An App for your smart phone would be ideal. Would make things a lot easier! *Stated many times

Just be sure it works across all platforms without the need for extra programs like Java, Adobe, etc..

I strongly recommend an application that will have features that can integrate with mobile email/calendar options.*Stated many times

I would like a email system where I can store documents. Such as the Briefcase in the current one. And I would also like an IM site in the email. So for group projects I can just im the document to them and be talking about the document. I do not always want to add group members to facebook. I am not picky about email. I just need it to email, save documents, and do a variety for formats based on who I am talking to.

Sharing and managing calendars is crucial for the university. The administration has so many important meetings, so many conferences, that they have to be organized. That's why there are administrative assistants. But for them to do the best job they can, they have to be able to schedule and manage the collaboration suite easily. Otherwise, they spend more time creating one appointment than the actual appointment (I've seen it - 40 minutes to finally create a 30 minute meeting appointment.)

Size of attachments is very important, as well as the calendar!

Cloud storage is a perfect way for students to collaborate in the 21st century.

Works well with MACs and Safari

There are pros and cons to each. Here is what I think we need: Stability, Reliability, Ease of use, and Enterprise-wide email, calendar and file sharing. Calendars should be very accommodating of power users, the people who manage calendars for locations, resources, and other people.

No Preference/No comment (60)

I am not that concerned because I already have an email service that I use. Since being a student is temporary, I won't be keeping this the kstate email service anyway. Currently, I have my mail forwarded to gmail.

I do not have a preference on which one is available as long as it is free, and easy to learn how to use.

Don't Change (47)

Changing the university to a new system at this point in time would be a substantial and needless waste of time and money.

This is a horrible idea. Nobody wants to re-learn how to use all of this. Leave it that way it is.

I think Zimbra is functional and has no major problems. If it ain't broke, don't fix it is my opinion in this case.

Zimbra has always worked really well for me, and I like it a lot. I say keep it the way it is for sure.

Miscellaneous (86)

I'm honestly okay with any of the potential email upgrades as long as the server is more reliable. I'm glad that this is being looked into because I'm very tired of dealing with Zimbra and its issues.

If the web server for internet is down we can't use these anyway. Fix the server first

The biggest issue I have with the University's calendar system is that the Professors/Instructors I've had for the classes I've taken so far just don't use it. It would be really nice if they would post assignment due dates, exam dates etc. on the calendar. As a distance student who's juggling work, family and student life I need all the scheduling help I can get.

Anything would be better than the current situation.

Analysis of Faculty Comments to Email and Calendar Option Survey

The Email and Calendar Options survey was sent to **1,742** faculty with one follow-up reminder. Four hundred and twenty-seven faculty began the survey, two dropped out after starting, resulting in a **24%** response rate. The following is an analysis of the **414** faculty comments made in response to Question 2: "Please explain the reason(s) for your preference [for an email/ calendaring solution for Kansas State]" and Question 5: "Use this space for additional comments about the email/calendar options, special email needs, and/or the upgrade." Comments are categorized by theme and many comments included multiple themes. The number of comments in each thematic category is indicated in parenthesis. Selected unedited comments are posted below.

The full report along with all comments is available from:
<https://online.ksu.edu/Survey/PublicReport?offeringId=201829>

CATEGORIES

Not Familiar/Not Used (90)

Not even sure what this stuff really is or what it means for me.

Google Positive (158)

We can't make that mistake again. We will be so much more productive as a campus if we drop Zimbra, and I feel strongly that Google Apps has the edge on Office 365, especially in the e-mail / calendar functionality. Most importantly, and not covered in this survey, is that Google Apps for Education have tremendous classroom collaboration possibilities and can and should be integrated with KSOL. There is also a rich online community continually innovating new uses for Google Apps for Education.

Google has become ubiquitous for cloud email and calendaring. Their platform supports open standards and does not promote lock-in to any one software vendor for client access. As we have users on campus that use more than just Windows (Mac OS, iOS, Android, Linux), adherence to open standards is important. With Microsoft, things work "better" if you use all Microsoft clients on Microsoft OS, and support for other platforms is usually behind at best, or poor to non-existent at worst. I mostly do not use a web browser to check my email, so I want to make sure that I can keep using the client of my choice when we change providers.

I wish I had time to go over all the reasons, but I'm racing a grant deadline. In short, Zimbra is just terrible compared to the other two, so I'll leave that aside. This is a 2-horse race, so please, please, please do not think otherwise. Tech writers do not even bother to make the comparison, and we should not either. Office 365 would seem to have the advantage since it puts people in a familiar Office environment, but Google has several major advantages that I think are too big to deny or pass up: 1. Google allows for real-time collaboration without the need for any desktop software. Office 365 requires that you create the document in Office, save to SharePoint, and then share with collaborators. Way too clunky and time-consuming, and some people don't understand it. If one person on your team doesn't get it - you can't use it. 2. Google calendar / Gmail / etc. are way more useful, flexible, and powerful than the alternatives. 3. Android/iOS mobile integration way better

Google Negatives (21)

Google acquires your personal data without your consent. They hacks into your computer/s and do changes that you have NOT Authorized. I do not like Google to take over my email account.

I dislike the aggressive activity tracking and subsequent ad displays by Google. I know there are to be no ads on the Educational Tools, but using Google at K-State will lead us to use Google for outside activities. I like the new Window interface and want to see them compete successfully, just to keep things active.

Microsoft Positive (67)

I believe that Microsoft Office 365 will allow better integration into the current infrastructure and I like that it would permit for file sharing and cloud storage in an easy to use form.

I don't know enough about the pros and cons of each to make an educated assessment. However, I already use Outlook and Office, so it seems like the Microsoft solution might be easily integrated into what I already do. (Currently I use the Zimbra connector with Outlook and it's working fine, but if the Zimbra connector ever goes away, I'm going to be in a pickle.)

Biggest reason is that Office 365 would be that we already have a Microsoft Campus agreement so we should use what we have and integrate everything together. - Can't open Google presentations without internet - unable to record lessons without third party tools with Google Apps - Microsoft has Linc - Syncing errors and Data loss with Google cloud connect - Google has limited capabilities with creating Google docs offline

Microsoft Office is much more user friendly, and is compatible with business. Even Google will be more compatible than Zimbra, which is compatible with nothing.

Microsoft Negative (58)

I hesitate to trust in Microsoft, given the global vulnerabilities of its software in general and the barriers I experienced trying to learn about its 365 product ("you must download Microsoft Silverlight to view this video..."). Google's presentation and design make the product look like a good match. Have all security/legal concerns around Google cloud storage been resolved, though? Zimbra itself is fine. If we could change service providers away from Merit to a more stable provider, we could stick with Zimbra.

As we have users on campus that use more than just Windows (Mac OS, iOS, Android, Linux), adherence to open standards is important. With Microsoft, things work "better" if you use all Microsoft clients on Microsoft OS, and support for other platforms is usually behind at best, or poor to non-existent at worst. I mostly do not use a web browser to check my email, so I want to make sure that I can keep using the client of my choice when we change providers.

Zimbra Positive (56)

Zimbra is fine except for the stability, which just kills this program for me. Nothing matters unless that can be fixed.

In general, Zimbra handles everything that we need. The problem hasn't been Zimbra - THE PROBLEM HAS BEEN THE SERVICE PROVIDER. Why can't we just dump Merit and go with a reliable service provider? (please?!) In addition to this, many people have already spent a SIGNIFICANT amount of time transitioning from our previous e-mail/calendaring systems to Zimbra; various K-State faculty/staff/departments are also using collaborative features in Zimbra that may very well be unavailable in another product. Why should we waste time transitioning to yet another system when the system itself isn't the primary issue?

Zimbra Negative (166)

I was deeply disappointed with the Zimbra decision. It seems to me that the poor decision was made primarily because the committee made a list of what people *said they wanted* and then gave them that. What the committee failed to realize is that people can only request what they know and have already seen. As such, we ended up with Zimbra which replicated many of the ills of previous systems and bypassed the Google system which was a decade ahead. We can't make that mistake again.

Zimbra is really inferior, always crashing, and annoying to access.

Zimbra's unreliability is frustrating beyond description. I noticed both Google and Microsoft publicize 99.9% uptime. Sadly, Zimbra's outages can take chunks of productive time out of the day. I have been

very unhappy with Zimbra's contact list. It takes forever to autofill, and there are times that the address is somewhere in Zimbra's memory but you can't find it in the list of contacts. It simply isn't there in any of the contact folders. I haven't used the Microsoft Office 365 mail but I have used G-Mail. I'm not thrilled with the interface of G-Mail, but at least it works all the time. I'm sure I would adjust to it and like it better as I got more familiar with it. I do like the large storage capacity and believe it is important. I'm sure it would be speedier and more responsive than the sluggish Zimbra. It is SO frustrating to sit and wait for Zimbra to do something like autofill or simply open things when it is in a slow-down period. The cost in productivity is awful.

I don't have any experience with 1.1 or 1.2 above, so I can't say. At first, I was reluctant to fully adopt Zimbra, email/calendaring but now that I have, I use it fully. It is now fully integrated into how I work, so if the transition to one of the other programs will be difficult and time-consuming, I would be very unhappy about that. Of course the big issue is that the email server goes down with some frequency. Let me say this clearly: a slow or non-functioning email server is NOT ACCEPTABLE at a major university. (Also, I think IT's practice of just blaming this on an external company is somewhat cowardly). If the email server issue cannot be remedied, then I would think we have to migrate.

Wanted features (475)

If we want to be a top 50 public research institution we need to facilitate collaboration through shared calendars, shared document editing, instant messaging, and shared storage spaces. We also must have something that is stable and reliable. Let's go with the option that best supports collaboration - it will be worth the expense!

Your questions miss the biggest issue: the email server has to function all the time!! Please understand this. Thousands of faculty and student work hours are lost every time the server goes down! That is way more important than a stupid briefcase.

Important features for me: very fast response, tags, filters, IMAP, mobile device sync, good spam filter, HTML editing, ability to share folders/calendars/docs broadly/narrowly with control of access privileges, global address list, multiple address books. Ability to schedule assets (rooms, equipment) is important. Would like to be able to send/receive signed and/or encrypted email

Ability to store emails in archive files. As I stated above, make sure it is going to be compatible with all systems that it will come in contact with, and make its use mandatory with no exception university wide.

Integration with mobile device apps is absolutely essential, since that is how students access their email. It needs to be a platform that is easy to set up with multiple devices.

Don't change (7)

Miscellaneous (30)

We need to move this forward and quickly. Whole days of productivity lost to a system with frequent outages and slow response times is no way to run a university.

The University should stop providing email accounts for students. Students come to campus with email accounts via their own service providers and frequently do not use the accounts assigned to them.

How do you read your email (3)

The question below is dumb on how I read my email. I have different accounts. Zimbra for work, yahoo for general, and gmail for family and close friends.

Analysis of Staff Comments to Email and Calendar Option Survey

The Email and Calendar Options survey was sent to **4,438** staff with one follow-up reminder. Eight hundred and twenty-three staff began the survey, one dropped out after starting, resulting in an **18%** response rate. The following is an analysis of the **737** staff comments made in response to Question 2: "Please explain the reason(s) for your preference [for an email/ calendaring solution for Kansas State]" and Question 5: "Use this space for additional comments about the email/calendar options, special email needs, and/or the upgrade." Comments are categorized by theme and many comments included multiple themes. The number of comments in each thematic category is indicated in parenthesis. Selected unedited comments are posted below.

The full report along with all comments is available from:
<https://online.ksu.edu/Survey/PublicReport?offeringId=201828>

CATEGORIES

Not Familiar/Not Used (235)

An office shared calendar is essential to people who answer the phones. It needs to be able to have colors associated with people or sections. The Zimbra does have that feature. The Zimbra calendar looks sort of a mess if you have to know the calendar of 8 or 10 people or more at once. Don't know what alternatives there are.

I have been a Pegasus user for a long time. I think it is easier on the "eyes" to read and navigate than Zimbra. I am and have been using Zimbra only because I need the calendar to keep track of agents and don't want to keep jumping back and forth. I figure Pegasus will eventually "go away" so I might as well change. Need support getting distribution lists converted from Pegasus to Zimbra. Whatever you choose is fine with me, but I don't have free time to keep "re-learning" how to use a program. If we are to be productive, stop changing everything. Don't know enough about the other choices, so can't really comment on pros and cons.

All Good (6)

I have worked with both Microsoft Office (if it is the same as Outlook anyway), Google Apps, and Zimbra, and each have their positives and negatives and I really do not have a preference of one over the others. Although, I am a little less familiar with the Google Apps and do still have somewhat difficulty navigating it sometimes. I could easily get used to it if needed.

Google Positive (211)

1. I just need something that is RELIABLE, fast (no waiting to contact server or auto-complete failed on the GAL), no down time; 2. It would be nice to have something that had instant messaging & other methods to communicating; 3. If students are moving to Google, seems to make sense to be on the same system; 4. Shared calendars (whether ability to see others calendars OR for others to schedule on my personal calendar) is very important to my office.

We need a much more reliable email system that allows easier collaboration and mobile access. I see Google Apps as being the best solution to this.

Google Negative (21)

I already use Google docs with several clients. I use Google Groups to communicate with groups of clients. I use Google Forms in my personal work. I enjoy Google and usually find it easy to use. Google Docs sometimes has a delay when typing within the doc. I would hope the email and calendaring solutions would not have this issue. I don't know much about the other option other than I have a Hotmail acct and it's not as user-friendly as my yahoo acct or Gmail acct or Zimbra acct.

I've been pleased overall with Zimbra other than the down time which wasn't the program, but the server/host. From what I am seeing online, Office 365 looks alright - haven't used it. I've used some Google products - I've not been overly impressed with what it will allow me to do.

Zimbra Positive (91)

I know we've had problems with Zimbra in the past, but it is my understanding these problems were more hardware based (from our Zimbra provider) than software based. I use shared calendars a lot and have found Zimbra to be easy to setup, use, and integrate with a variety of mobile clients, both Android and IOS.

I use Mozilla Thunderbird for address books, screenshots, color coded tags, signature etc. I like Zimbra just don't like all of the issues we have been experiencing way too many when we live in a world where most of communication is via email with the university.

Zimbra Negative (240)

Please change from the existing Zimbra system. I do not see it as an option at all anymore since I have had so many negative experiences with it. Sharing of documents, schedules, access to info on my mobile device are all critical to me being able to conduct business on a daily basis, and currently I mostly do it on Google since it is much easier to use, more reliable and my clients are familiar with it too. Not having these critical components makes our group appear unprofessional to clients, most of whom are outside of K-State. It reflects poorly on K-State as a whole. It gives a bad impression when I have to repeatedly say "our email is out for the day". Not responding to my clients quickly means potential loss of business which in turn negatively affects our program and graduate student opportunities. Email, calendar and document sharing are must haves in today's world of business and continuing to use a system that doesn't provide them is not acceptable.

Want the ability to edit emails before printing...Zimbra waste to much paper. Also want the ability to add to a received email's subject line; to personalize the email so it is more meaningful to me.

Microsoft Positive (139)

Office 365 is a much better solution for the University than Google Apps for Education. I use MS Office Word, Excel and PowerPoint every day. I want to be able to use Track changes in Word to write papers with students and colleagues. Google Apps won't let me do this. I also trust Microsoft more than Google when it comes to security. Also, the fact that I can input Students' grades and attendance in Office 365 which can then be accessed by the student is a very nice feature of Office 365 that Google does not have.

Active Directory and Exchange interoperability would be very desirable.

Microsoft Negative (36)

In terms of partners, Google is the way to go. Microsoft is struggling in the market and hasn't been able to innovate for some time. I applaud Microsoft's efforts with Windows 8 and the Surface Tablet, but Microsoft is still trending in the wrong direction. Hitching our horse to the Microsoft cart doesn't make a whole lot of sense if we're trying to build a strong reputation for K-State research and innovation. Looking ahead, Google Fiber will soon be available in the KC area. The K-State Olathe campus should be in a position to capitalize on the fiber network within the next couple years. Of course, we are hoping that Google will expand the fiber network to include Manhattan and Salina at some point.

Wanted Features (704)

Of the 151 responses to the open-ended question on the staff survey, many of them listed items that fit into multiple categories. In reviewing the opinions, several categories emerged and they are as follows: reliability (192), security/privacy (11), efficiency/ease of use (127), instant messaging (17), mobile access (60), file size/storage (14), shared calendars (39), calendaring specifics (94), e-mail specifics (46), collaboration (48), platform compatibility (44), and tutorials/training (12). Selected comments include expressed views addressing each of these areas at once, if not more.

Biggest need is for a stable platform to support e-mail communications and shared calendaring. My main concern is a system that allows ease of scheduling for multiple people simultaneously. I am what would be considered a 'power user' when it comes to this, as I schedule constantly for 12-15 people, and frequently for 65+. Zimbra allows sharing of calendars and viewing of non-shared blocks of time WHEN the system is working properly. The system that K-State chooses needs to address this need as a high priority. Online file storage/briefcase is a nice feature of Zimbra AND would be nice to have, however, it's not a requirement

We use the current calendar for ALL of those who work in our office so it is very important that the security only stays within those located in our office and that others across campus do not have access to those calendars.

I don't currently use the collaboration tools because they seem limited with very little "help" tutorials. If the tools were easier to use, then yes, I see a way to boost productivity. As more and more faculty/staff begin using tablets, smart phones, etc., the email/calendar/collaboration apps need to allow multiple application programs. i.e. Microsoft suite AND other apps.

Access to email and calendars, Office Web Apps, instant messaging, conferencing, and file sharing is everything I need and want. It makes working with multiple projects with different groups a breeze. Shared calendars is an essential tool in my office! We use our shared calendars on a daily basis.

I use outlook on my computer and an I-Phone. The ability to sync to these devices is the most critical thing to me, as I really don't want to quit using outlook.

At times I send large file, greater than 50 MB, and started using DropBox for file sharing. If the University system had something similar this would be a big plus and help when sending large documents.

Being able to use the calendar and share the calendar in our district is the most important to me. Doc. sharing would be nice, but it is not that hard to open an attachment to be able to work on it or change it and send it back. The more complex the system, the more training that is going to be necessary and our wide array of users around the state are not always known for being tech savvy!

Important to me: Email: Advanced email searches Ability to tag Folders Importing of existing folder structure/emails into new email system Filters Listserv management Auto-population of contacts Availability Speed Calendar: Importing of existing calendar into new email/calendar system Reserve rooms/resources Calendar sharing Mark appts private Custom recurring appts Auto-population of contacts Pretty much everything that Zimbra calendar offers

Departments need the ability to have group calendars and e-mail accounts. A lot of departments currently use briefcase sharing as an integral part of their office management. Departmental Zimbra accounts have been heavily used as communication hubs (e-mail, calendar, briefcase) allowing department functions to be centralized without being tied to an individual. This minimizes the impact of staff turnover. When staff responsible for maintaining these resources change, simply changing the password/ownership of the account, keeps the existing department communications hub functioning.

We use Dropbox and Adobe Connect to collaborate on documents in real time. I don't view this as an email or calendar item. Syncing calendars and email on my phone is essential.

I can't stress enough how important it is for the system to support ALL mobile devices and email clients properly. Also, shared calendars are a MUST for the university as a whole, since it is how many offices operate (in order to avoid the old, inefficient paper calendars to schedule meetings).

Have it compatible with iPads. Please provide on campus training sessions to use any new system you choose. Do not just rely on online training and tutorials.

No Preference/No Comment (13)

I do not have a position that make the above things essential.

Don't Change (14)

Zimbra would probably be fine, with a new host.

Miscellaneous (59)

Ability to connect to apple mail and ical, also when I file or delete a message on my computer it goes away when I look on my phone or ipad, etc. Security is a MUST based on the current university policy. Local hosting might make this issue easier to deal with when we're blacklisted or have connectivity issues. Not sure about cost effectiveness another MUST is NOT HAVING TO CHANGE FROM KSU.EDU for the email portion -- too big a hassle to deal with that with all the things that would have to be changed.

No matter how many calendar offerings, I feel it is essential that I pick the one I like best and others should be able to be consolidated into my choice. To have to refer to more than one calendar is confusing and a waste of time. We all should be able to convert to whatever system we choose or just make one available!