

## Case Study: State of Colorado Saves \$100,000 With BetterCloud

by Rachel Wilson

Government agencies are not typically seen as technological innovators, but Brandon Williams is breaking the mold with his Google Apps deployment and BetterCloud implementation.

As Director of Google Operations for the State of Colorado, he focuses not just on the typical day-to-day tasks of an IT administrator, but in addition he strategically examines the big-picture processes in his organization and asks, “How can we do this better?” With this mindset, Brandon’s team and BetterCloud make for a perfect match.

### Government Innovation in the Cloud

Google Apps provides the State of Colorado with a steady foundation and the opportunity for long-term organizational change. Brandon’s office (OIT) keeps a close eye on Google Apps adoption rates across departments in the State. While some departments’ policies provide an initial barrier to moving to the cloud, solutions like BetterCloud aid in overcoming the reluctance to opt for Google Apps over legacy systems.

One area where Brandon sees tremendous adoption is with Docs and Drive. In the last two and a half years, they’ve gone from very low numbers of files to millions of documents in Drive. That growth has driven the IT team to consider making Google Apps the standard productivity suite across all departments in the State. “That’s a big shift, because now you’re talking about moving from a place where legacy office productivity tools are purchased by exception rather than as a rule,” says Brandon.

In fact, the State of Colorado has seen the biggest area of growth in Sheets usage, most likely due to its familiarity to users who are accustomed to traditional desktop-based spreadsheet tools.

Executives in the Office of Information Technology (OIT) have set goals over the next two years to increase adoption of Google Drive (even more than the great strides made already) and Hangouts, which will be instrumental in keeping the workforce collaborating even when issues like inclement weather keep them away from the office.

For an in-depth look at how the State of Colorado used cloud technology to bring together residents in a weather-related crisis, see “[The Rising Tide: How One IT Team Redefined Emergency Communications.](#)”

*“It’s sane, intuitive, and the dashboard is really great for getting those quick metrics.”*

*– Brandon Williams on BetterCloud*

## Securing Data and Lowering Costs With BetterCloud

Clearly, security will always be a major focus for a state-run organization. BetterCloud's security solutions enable Brandon's office to highlight key issues for their leadership. For example, the team [monitors Drive sharing](#) and [types of information stored in Drive](#) to ensure that rather than violating any policies, employees are actually utilizing the tools at their disposal in a collaborative, safe way.

Brandon is quick to point out that not only does BetterCloud meet State of Colorado's security needs, it is actually a functionally useful solution that goes beyond security. BetterCloud allowed the State of Colorado to uncover cost savings opportunities by understanding agency use cases in a very detailed manner. [Reporting on Organizational Units](#) is key: in the absence of Google Drive for teams, the State's departments, like many organizations, use shared accounts. Those shared accounts—over one thousand in total—are part of a shared accounts Organizational Unit that, until BetterCloud, Brandon wasn't able to report on accurately. Now, he can give the departments an accurate understanding of their usage of shared accounts, and charge them appropriately.

"It was the first thing we did," says Brandon, "and it saved OIT right out of the gate somewhere in the neighborhood of \$100,000 in terms of being able to reallocate the funding."

BetterCloud arms Brandon with the information he needs to bring to executives in order to give the widest view of the state's technology expenditures and usage. With BetterCloud providing crucial security and control, Brandon and team are able to dedicate time to strategy and longer-term projects.

*"Worth every penny." – Brandon Williams on BetterCloud*

## Elevating Cloud IT to New Heights

BetterCloud's solution set, particularly its security focus, allowed the State of Colorado to take Google Apps "from this organic neat and shiny tool to a legitimate business operations tool." And the department continues to evolve technologically.

One initiative the State of Colorado is looking forward to is using Google+ as an intranet complement, since they already use it heavily, especially among their remote workforce. Google+ offers a two-way community wherein state employees from all levels can interact, an executive can post a presentation, users can vote in polls, and so on.

The State of Colorado also takes advantage of BetterCloud's audit capabilities to closely [examine third-party cloud applications](#) that end users request. Brandon's team holds weekly review sessions which, in combination with BetterCloud, let them determine which applications are useful, cost-effective, and safe for end users.

BetterCloud is like a weather vane, Brandon says, that gives them metrics "to be able to say, 'All right, the weather's blowing that way, and that's a good wind.'"

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