Cross-agency teamwork, anytime and anywhere

Dan McCrae, director of IT service delivery division, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA)

I've been working for the U.S. government for more than 30 years: first as an infantryman in the Marine Corps, then managing IT networks for the Department of Defense in Japan, and today, directing IT services for the NOAA CIO. I've learned that when you're working on complex projects – especially ones that involve teams across agencies – sharing information quickly and easily can improve chances for success.

I recently was part of a team tasked with evaluating IT services for the Department of Commerce. The team comprised people from different bureaus within Commerce. Managing a project that spans agencies requires that you stay on top of what team members are doing, when and where you're meeting, and ensuring the right people have access to the information they need.

Google Apps helped keep our project on track. Within hours of being assigned to the project, we created our own website in Google Sites and a shared calendar for meetings. We also set up a document repository on Google Drive so everyone could find current project materials.

While on the project, I worked from Commerce headquarters in downtown Washington D.C. I took only a Chromebook with me from my usual Silver Spring, Maryland office. With our meetings and documents all stored in Google Apps, the Chromebook was all I needed to get my work done and stay in touch with my project team members. The team used Google Apps to coordinate our schedules, share documents, and create our final report – much easier than emailing attachments back and forth.

Whether it's for ad hoc collaboration or for my everyday work at NOAA, Google Apps helps to eliminate barriers of time and place. It makes it easy for me to collaborate with my colleagues, no matter where they work.

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