

Dalton, Olmsted & Fuglevand Environmental Consultants

Dalton, Olmsted & Fuglevand, Inc. *Environmental Consultants*

Environmental Consulting Firm Saves \$1K per Day
and Cuts the Time for Sending Files by 95% Using YouSendIt

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Dalton, Olmsted & Fuglevand, Inc. (DOF) provides environmental consulting services across the United States and internationally to clients in the private and public sectors. The DOF staff regularly exchanges large digital files with clients. The company's projects entail the preparation of graphics, very large computer-aided design files, geographic information system maps/data, presentations, PDFs of drawings and reports with extensive graphics that can exceed thousands of pages. Each file could range from half a megabyte to a gigabyte or more in size.

THE PROBLEM

- Using FTP proved to be difficult and time consuming for staff and clients.
- Courier services did not deliver files quickly enough for DOF's needs.
- The company's e-mail system limited attachments to 8 MB, but typical files could be a hundred times that size.

THE SOLUTION

YouSendIt Corporate Suite

- With YouSendIt Corporate Suite, staff time required to manage a file transfer has been cut by 80 percent, and the IT team's time spent on dealing with file transfers shrunk by 95 percent.
- The firm often would spend \$1,000 a day to bring in a technician to identify and fix a problem with the FTP server. YouSendIt Corporate Suite costs DOF only \$1,500 a year.
- Ease of use has become YouSendIt's primary benefit for personnel across the company.
- The firm now can be sure that specific files have been downloaded, avoiding the complexity in downloading through FTP.
- DOF principals now control the custody and transfer of files instead of needing to hand them off to IT to send, improving satisfaction and security.



YOUSENDIT™



Situation and Challenges

Dalton, Olmsted & Fuglevand, Inc. (DOF) provides environmental consulting services across the United States and internationally to clients in the private and public sectors. These include port authorities, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, numerous superfund cleanup groups and others who require services related to the design of sediment remediation and dredging projects, aquatic data collection, sediment management, soil and groundwater assessments, and related studies. Headquartered in the Seattle area, DOF principals bring in-depth understanding of the environmental and engineering issues associated with managing chemical impacts to both upland and marine property.

The 10-person professional staff of DOF regularly exchanges large digital files with its clients. The company's analysis and proposal of major projects entails the preparation of graphics, very large computer-aided design files, geographic information system maps/data, PowerPoint presentations, PDF versions of drawings and reports with extensive graphics that can exceed thousands of pages. Each file could range from half a megabyte to a gigabyte, or more, in size.

To deliver these files to clients, the firm had set up an in-house FTP site. Administering and using the site, however, proved to be difficult for both staff and clients. IT staff spent a great amount of time simply setting up user access and positioning files every time a transfer was required. The firm kept its files on a secure server; and when a staff member wanted to send a file, IT needed to move the file on the FTP server so that it could be accessed from outside by the client. The FTP server further needed consistent maintenance as passwords expired and changed for security purposes.

To bypass FTP, the firm occasionally transferred its large files to disks and shipped them to clients by commercial courier. "In most instances, that would be painful," recalled DOF Information Systems Officer Lee Barras. "When we need data, we need it now. We may be waiting for CAD file imagery to complete a design; and when it's available, we need it that night. Shipments to overseas clients could take days, and it often was difficult to predict when files would arrive by courier because the timing could be off by half a day as a result of delivery shifts."

E-mail was an even more problematical option because the firm was unable to send attachments larger than 8 MB, and any one file could easily total a hundred times that size.

DOF confronted a number of challenges that required a new solution - one that would be speedy, easily handle enormous files and allow project managers to keep control over file transfers without needing to hand them off to IT. Security was important because, when the firm's principals served as expert witnesses in litigation engagements, access to files had to be restricted only to designated individuals. Finally, Barras observed, "Some of my users weren't technical—they wanted a method that was easy to use and that they could handle themselves."

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“ YouSendIt is so easy to use—it’s become essential to our daily business workflow. It enables us to get critical information out faster and in a reliable, secure and cost-effective way. It needs no maintenance or attention, and all our employees are very happy with it. We’ve not had a single complaint since moving to YouSendIt.”

Lee Barras
Information Technology Officer
Dalton, Olmsted & Fuglevand, Inc.



Solution

Barras went online to search for a digital file delivery solution. During this time, two clients sent files to DOF using YouSendIt, which Barras found intriguing. He evaluated half a dozen solutions over the period of a week and consulted with others in the IT community on solutions they had tested.

After examining the pros and cons of each package, Barras downloaded a test version of YouSendIt to try it out. “I provided it to a couple people who I knew didn’t have much technical background to see if they liked it,” he said. Barras also found YouSendIt compared favorably in its pricing in relation to the amount of files that could be transferred. He particularly liked the Dropbox feature that allowed clients to leave files for DOF to receive via YouSendIt. “Many competing solutions that I looked at had limitations on their drop box or it was nonexistent,” he said. A few days after initiating the test period, DOF decided to go forward with YouSendIt.

Rollout

Barras signed up for a 30-day free trial of the YouSendIt Corporate Suite and received favorable reports from his colleagues. Then he downloaded the Microsoft Outlook plug-in for all the employees so they could send files up to 2 GB in size as easily as attaching an e-mail and simultaneously track the files that had been sent through Outlook. Previously, employees needed to separate large files from e-mail messages when they used the FTP server and they would start to lose track of which e-mails went with which attachments. With YouSendIt, everything could be sent together.

Why YouSendIt?

According to Barras, “YouSendIt made things much more efficient and much easier to administer by not having to keep track of files.” YouSendIt tracked the files automatically. Now, the firm could send multiple e-mails with YouSendIt-delivered files to clients and know that all recipients had access to the complete set of files that they needed to consider. “It was really nice getting receipts and knowing when clients picked up the files,” Barras said. With FTP, the firm could not tell if the client had downloaded the posted files or if clients had had problems with a download. “So far, I haven’t had anyone say they couldn’t download YouSendIt,” Barras noted.

Barras also found it very handy to leave files for a designated number of days on YouSendIt servers after delivery. “We used it as a short-term data repository to be sure clients had downloaded all the files they needed,” he explained. “If they lost a file, they could go back and retrieve it.”

The Outlook plug-in allowed users to keep track of files they sent right in their e-mail program. When they were traveling without access to a VPN, the executives could use YouSendIt’s Web application, which proved valuable on numerous occasions. “If your computer goes down and you have to buy an off-the-shelf system, you can still access the data via the Web,” Barras said.

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Results

YouSendIt has generated significant time and dollar savings for DOF:

- Barras said he often would spend \$1,000 a day to bring in a technician to identify and fix a problem with the FTP server. YouSendIt Corporate Suite cost DOF only \$1,500 a year, less than two repair calls.
- The time required for individuals to manage a file transfer has been cut by 80 percent, and the IT team's time spent on dealing with file transfers has been reduced by 95 percent.

DOF has benefited from other YouSendIt features as well:

- Ease of use has become YouSendIt's primary benefit for personnel across the company. "It's pretty much transparent," Barras noted. "You don't even notice it. It's a tool that works so nicely that you don't even realize it's there. It has cut the complexity of sending files enormously."
- Reliability is important and, with YouSendIt, DOF knows when a file was sent and downloaded and can check all the statistics online. YouSendIt is helping DOF ensure that all files are transferred and are done so promptly and properly.
- File management aspects of YouSendIt have enabled DOF principals to control the custody and transfer of their own files, a capability that they value and that has significantly boosted employee satisfaction.

YouSendIt has transformed DOF's file transfer process from a highly complex, labor-intensive, expensive and uncertain procedure to a very simple, economical, always reliable and secure course of action.

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