

Accellion's Offer Helps Prepare Digital Natives for Workplace

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Accellion's free offer for students of client universities should help prepare students to enter the workforce, which has more-restrictive rules for data transmission than the consumer software most students use today.

NEWS ANALYSIS

Event

On 29 January 2008, Accellion, which offers on-demand secure file transfer solutions for enterprises, announced a global initiative that offers free user licenses to college students worldwide, if their educational institution licenses the Accellion File Transfer Solution for its faculty and staff.

Analysis

Accellion's offer is impressive in that it encourages students, so-called "digital natives," to reconsider their methods of collaboration, especially when it comes to large files. Acellion's offer isn't necessarily a tactic to seed the market with its technology. Instead, it is promoting culture change, by asking digital natives to consider their future employment and how their future employers will restrict the transmission of data.

Most free technologies and services (synchronous and asynchronous) offer little or no restriction on the size and types of files that can be exchanged. Students routinely use AOL Instant Messenger, Live Messenger, ICQ, MiRC, GMail, XDrive, Yousendit and Skydrive to facilitate all levels of collaboration, including simple music- and photo-swapping and more complex class lab, multistudent collaborations. Other vendors, such as Globalscape and IPswitch, have offered extremely low-cost or free options to college students during the last decade.

While Gartner expects that some of the products listed above will be a part of some companies' managed file transfer strategies, today less than 25% of companies have any strategy at all. Since we expect this number will increase to 45% through 2013, today's digital natives very likely will enter a workplace that has proactively deployed technologies to manage file transfer. Workers who are not acclimated to these disciplines may unknowingly break mandates and regulations.

Still, since only a small portion of the global workforce will attend universities and colleges, Accellion also should consider a noncommercial solution for all digital natives. Doing so may introduce the product to future employers and organizations.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- **Students:** Experiment with these technologies to best integrate them into your processes for collaboration.
- **Companies:** Work with prospects, interns and affiliated universities to encourage the use of these technologies.

RECOMMENDED READING

- "Revisiting the Managed File Transfer Market and Vendors That Support It" — Companies concerned with how to move large amounts of data can choose from several new options that ensure security, compliance and efficiency. **By Frank Kenney and James Lennard**
- "Taxonomy and Definitions for the Multienterprise/B2B Infrastructure Market" — Multienterprise/business-to-business (B2B) infrastructure is used to exchange data and

link business processes between a company's internal applications and systems and those of its external business partner. **By Benoit Lheureux and others**

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