SouthStar Bank Takes Data Security and Control to New Heights

Egnyte helps SouthStar to locate and control sharing of sensitive information without inhibiting collaboration.

SOUTHSTAR BANK

AT A GLANCE

Industry: Financial Services
Location: Moulton, TX
Total Employees: 160
Egnyte Product: Platform Enterprise

Concrete progress for SouthStar:

- Slashed number of improperly located sensitive files from 20,000 to 0
- **$10,000 annual cost** savings by eliminating redundant software
- Streamlined access management permissions

The team at SouthStar Bank, a mid-sized financial services firm, keeps pretty busy, collaborating on countless files and sharing them externally and internally. But their technology – an on-premises file server with VPN access – was creating collaboration bottlenecks and data security risks.

"We were dealing with what I call a legacy shared drive," says Bryan Buck, Chief Technology Officer at SouthStar. "As we grew and our operations became more complex, that started showing some real challenges."

Buck knew his team would need to upgrade to a system that could facilitate their level of activity while keeping their processes smooth and their files secure. After a robust vendor selection process, he implemented Egnyte, gaining valuable benefits in content security, user experience, and overall performance.

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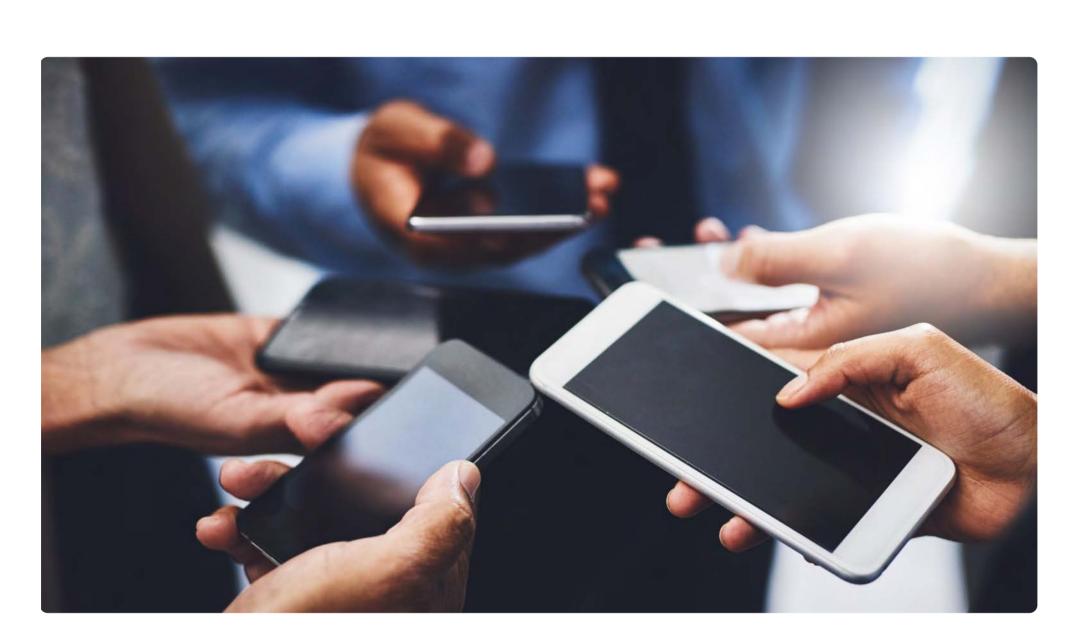> Chief Technology Officer • SouthStar Bank

Challenges: On-Premises Technology Created Security Risks and Slowed Workflows

The files SouthStar deals with every day are highly sensitive. Many of them contain customers' financial data or the bank's proprietary information. "We run a tight ship with our files," explains Buck. "We need to know where they're stored and who has access, and we need to be able to collaborate on them efficiently."

Prior to Egnyte, the on-premises system the team was using fell short of this goal in several areas:

- **Efficiency.** Only one person at a time could edit a file, which slowed collaboration to a crawl. The team also had to rely on third-party solutions to exchange files with customers and scan for sensitive data, which made those processes more costly and time-consuming.
- **Visibility.** It was difficult to see where sensitive information was stored and to view and manage access permissions. That created serious security and privacy risks.
- **Capacity.** After years of using their on-premises system, the team was running out of backup space. "The shared drive grew and grew until I couldn't keep as many backups as I needed," Buck says.

As Buck set out to find a new system, end-user experience was top-of-mind. "I wanted something that was new, different, better, and would offer a seamless transition for users," Buck says. "I wanted users to be able to do things the way they always have, with the benefits of improved security, efficiency, and control." To address the capacity issue, it was also important that whatever system they implemented be cloud-hosted. As Buck explains, "We really wanted to solve the local storage piece and not have to worry about backups."

Solution: Full Control in an Easy-to-Use Platform

Buck kicked off a search for a solution that would meet his team's criteria. When he started evaluating Egnyte, he was immediately impressed. "Initially, I attended a webinar that Egnyte hosted," Buck says. "By the end, it was clear that Egnyte could solve many of our challenges."

Buck made the decision to implement Egnyte, and to utilize its integrations with Microsoft Office and Azure Active Directory. Three features that most impressed Buck were:

- **Unified view of risk.** Egnyte provided a dashboard that gave Buck a clear picture of the risk level that SouthStar faced at any given time, and quickly flagged potential security issues. "I like the way Egnyte alerts me to unusual behavior," Buck says. "Say somebody deletes an unusually large number of files. I get alerted to that instantly. I can then log in, get full visibility into what happened, and follow up with that person." The platform also made it easy to change access permissions in just a few clicks, and for multiple stakeholders to edit a file simultaneously.
- **Ease of use.** Buck was able to implement the Egnyte system with virtually no disruption to his team. "The lightbulb moment was learning that, with Egnyte, the user doesn't even know that something has changed," Buck explains. Egnyte enabled users to store files in a centralized repository that appeared as a mapped file drive, making it easy to locate, access, and share files. They could also quickly and easily access files from any device through the cloud. Buck offers a personal example: "One week, I had COVID and was stuck working from home. I hadn't installed Egnyte on my personal laptop, but I was still able to log in via the cloud and access whatever files I needed."
- **Native integrations with Microsoft.** Buck and his team were impressed with the ways Egnyte's integration with Microsoft Office has streamlined collaboration. "Our ability to co-edit documents using the Office integration is huge for us," explains Buck. "Previously, a user would have to wait up to an hour for someone to be out of a document before they could edit it. Now, they can collaborate in real time."

Along the way, Buck had a great experience working with the Egnyte team. As he puts it: "From sales to implementation to post-implementation, the Egnyte team was willing to listen and respond quickly. They're always available for regular check-ins to help us get the most value out of the solution."

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Benefits: Better Security, Reduced Costs, and Happy Users

Since implementing Egnyte, SouthStar has gained a holistic view of their data and better control over it, leading to significant improvements in content security and the user experience. "Detecting sensitive data is a key feature for us, and we've made tremendous progress there," explains Buck. "I can see where my content is, ensure we have the right permissions set up for every file, and get alerts to any unusual behavior that could pose a security risk. All of that is so quick and easy now."

This has empowered him to manage risk at a more granular level and on a continuous basis, resulting in concrete benefits for SouthStar: "When we implemented Egnyte, there were 20,000 sensitive files stored in unpermitted locations," Buck says. "The visibility and control I've gotten from Egnyte has allowed me to bring that number down to zero."

Egnyte has gotten an enthusiastically positive response from the company's users. As Buck puts it: "Our basic users are happy that implementing Egnyte didn't disrupt their workflows. And more advanced users love that they can access files from any location using either the web-based or mobile version of the platform." Users also enjoy the ability to share files as links rather than attachments. "Rather than email files back and forth, our users can simply share a direct link," Buck says. "That has made us a lot more efficient."

The cloud-based solution has also alleviated limitations on backup space – and even created cost savings for SouthStar. "We're able to reduce annual spend by $10,000 by eliminating redundant software, because Egnyte allows us to roll file-sharing, content scanning, and so many other things into one simple solution."

Buck adds, "That's really the essence of what Egnyte has done for us. With our previous solution, there were all these steps and tools we had to use to do what we needed to do. But with Egnyte, it's all-in-one."