

SOGo

Testimonial

About The TSSWCB / The Texas State Soil and Water Conservation Board (TSSWCB) is the Texas state agency that administers Texas' soil and water conservation law and coordinates conservation and nonpoint source pollution abatement programs throughout the state. / The TSSWCB is the lead state agency for the planning, management, and abatement of agricultural and silvicultural (forestry) nonpoint source pollution, and administers the Texas brush control program.



/ A central part of its work is providing technical assistance to the state's 217 soil and water conservation districts. / Due to the size of the state and the nature of its work, the TSSWCB maintains several regional offices located in strategic areas of the state. / For more information, visit the official website of The Texas State Soil and Water Conservation Board at www.tsswcb.state.tx.us.

Groupware Needs / Gone are the days when being out of the office freed an employee from the need to stay connected to coworkers via voice and data services. / To better equip its mobile workforce, the TSSWCB began providing employees with smartphones in 2009 so they could continue to manage email, calendaring, contact and task lists even while they worked at distant job sites or were in travel status. / As smartphone deployments grew, the agency found itself in need of a groupware that would keep up with the new needs of smartphone-using employees and yet integrate well with its open source network service infrastructure. /

Making Smartphones (and PCs) Smarter With SOGo / After considering several groupware products, the agency chose the open source groupware SOGo to provide the backend for its calendaring, contact and task management. / As the agency had standardized on the open source Mozilla Thunderbird client for desktop email management, the groupware field was narrowed considerably. / SOGo integrates very tightly with the Thunderbird email client on the desktop and quickly won praise from users during early trials. / SOGo uses the open source Funambol server to provide PIM synchronization

capabilities with smartphones, thus providing a complete over-the-air solution that also allows for a wide range of smartphone clients. /

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- > The flexibility SOGo provides for in the choice of client devices was also widely appreciated by TSSWCB network users who are currently running a mix of Mozilla Thunderbird and Microsoft Outlook PC clients and RIM BlackBerry and Apple iPhone smartphones.
— Clay Wright, Network Specialist, TSSWCB
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The Deployment with Support From Inverse / In late 2009, the TSSWCB contracted with Inverse to develop the capability for SOGo to synchronize multiple network calendars with smartphones. / This feature was quickly developed by the Inverse team for a very reasonable sum. / This positive experience added to the other positive experiences of agency staff working with SOGo users and developers through the SOGo mailing list. / Though additional support from Inverse is available, the TSSWCB IT staff has not required it... /

Conclusion / The agency's IT department began working with SOGo primarily as a way to aid the users of smartphones. / What it ended up with was a powerful groupware platform that has significantly expanded the capabilities of all desktop PC users. / During a time when every administrative dollar is being highly scrutinized, the TSSWCB found in SOGo a means of providing its programs with a powerful tool for PC and smartphone users while holding the line on budget caps and freezes on new IT expenses. /