



## BAIRD & WARNER ADOPTS GOOGLE APPS, *curing employee* HEADACHES

**HEADQUARTERS**

Chicago, Illinois

**INDUSTRY**

Real Estate

**NUMBER OF USERS**

1,800

**LEGACY SYSTEMS**

Kerio Mail (exchange substitute)

**SERVICES RENDERED**

Data Migration

Custom Training

Mobile Integration

**COMPANY BACKGROUND**

Family owned and operated since 1855, Baird & Warner is the oldest residential real estate brokerage in the nation, with 26 branch offices servicing more than 300 communities throughout northeastern Illinois. Baird & Warner provides a full range of services for consumers including residential sales, financial services, title services and home services.

**BUSINESS CHALLENGES**

Having been in business for more than 150 years, Baird & Warner is no stranger to change. The company has adapted to all sorts of new technologies during its long and storied history, from computers to the internet to mobile phones. The firm's adoption of mobile technology helped create an efficient business model built on the concept of the mobile realtor. These realtors need the ability to do work from anywhere, at any time.

The firm had been using a Microsoft Exchange alternative called Kerio, which uses the Outlook client and provides a Webmail product, for its messaging. Mark Steward, IT Director at Baird & Warner, began

to see an increasing number of performance issues on both the front and back ends of Kerio. In addition, maintaining the infrastructure was becoming increasingly costly.

**“We are already seeing a host of benefits just from migrating our messaging system. What’s equally important, however, is that our employees like using Google Apps”**

— Mark Steward  
Baird & Warner

## OBJECTIVES

Baird & Warner needed a messaging solution that could grow with the firm for the long-term, and would work well for all employees. Another consideration, being a real estate brokerage, was the economy. The firm needed to be cautious with its IT expenditures, and did not want to take a risk on such an integral part of its communications.

For a company with a vast network of employees working remotely, mobile access was an important

consideration. Baird & Warner was using IMAP for mobile email, but IMAP isn’t truly real-time, which is critical in the real estate brokerage business. The ability for mobile agents to have real-time push email and access to their entire inbox from their mobile device was important.

Many Baird & Warner employees had reported their #1 IT problem as having to manage a small inbox, since each employee had only 100 MB of space. The last thing that Baird & Warner wanted was for employees to spend time managing their inboxes when they could be doing real work, so the issue of storage was taken into consideration as well.

## RESULTS

Baird & Warner initially deployed Gmail, Calendar, and Chat. They currently have a small team reviewing the firm’s existing intranet and determining how they can migrate it to Google Sites and Docs in the future. For now, Steward says “we are already seeing a host of benefits just from migrating our messaging system.”

Cloud Sherpas did all of the setup and configuration of Google Apps, and trained Baird & Warner on how to migrate their old mail, contacts, and calendar data. After they learned the processes, the Baird & Warner team migrated the rest of the company’s data. Cloud Sherpas also provided train-the-trainer services and webinar training for remote offices. According to Steward, “[training] was critical for us because some users had never used web-based email, so transitioning them to a new way of working took extra time but was critical for our success.” Cloud Sherpas also provided specializing training for Outlook, teaching users how to perform Outlook tasks in Gmail.

Employees were very happy with the Google Apps transition as well. While the firm as a whole has experienced faster performance and infrastructure cost savings, Mark Steward says that “what’s equally important, however, is that our employees like using Google Apps.” The Google Apps solution solved the inbox storage problem, and gave employees access to push Gmail on their mobile devices, both of which were high priority requests.

Cloud Sherpas successfully assisted Baird & Warner in making the transition to Google Apps, providing critical training and guidance in addition to flawless migration services.

## FIND OUT WHAT CLOUD SHERPAS CAN DO FOR YOU

To learn more about how Cloud Sherpas can help your organization adopt Google’s cloud platform, contact your sales representative, visit us online at

**[www.cloudsherpas.com](http://www.cloudsherpas.com) or 888-260-7660.**



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