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**BUSINESS**


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Takami, a restaurant and food-service business with 180 employees based in Bogotá, Colombia.

**Goal:** Provide employees with best-in-breed corporate email and secure, easy-to-use collaborative applications in order to maintain centralized, organized, and efficient communications between service sites and the administrative office.

**Challenge:** Transition to Google Apps with minimal to no disruption and encourage employees to adopt the new services.

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**With Google Apps:**

- Google Apps was simple to set-up and is easy to scale
  - Employees enjoy anywhere access to their information
  - Google Docs simplifies employee data sharing and collaboration
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**“For us, the solution seemed ideal. It didn’t involve any investment in infrastructure or payment for large support servers, which would have been impossible for a company of our size.”**

**Alejandra Cifuentes**

Technology and Information Manager

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## Takami uses Google Apps to operate its growing restaurant business more efficiently

### Business

Based in Bogotá, Colombia, Takami conceives, develops, and runs successful eateries specializing in international cuisine. Over six years, Takami has opened seven restaurants that feature unique architectural design, high quality food, and superior service. Thirty-five employees run the restaurants from a centralized administrative office and about 150 employees work onsite at the restaurants.



### Approach

Before Google Apps, Takami had been operating with the bare necessities: a website, basic desktop applications, and corporate email accounts. “I wasn’t able to get employees to use the company email,” says Alejandra Cifuentes, the company’s Technology and Information Manager. “They preferred their personal free accounts, like Gmail, because of their larger storage capacities.”

Takami’s internal communication was also informal and scattered. Employees walked documents from floor to floor and spent a lot of time trying to communicate by phone with restaurants, where phone lines were almost always busy. Daily reports, sent by each restaurant to the management team as email attachments, often didn’t appear or took too long to download. What’s more, employees would become so frustrated by the difficulties of trying to communicate via email that they’d simply stop using any electronic format.

This situation prevented timely delivery of information and data consolidation, and inhibited the efficient monitoring of the day-to-day business. As a growing company, Takami needed to convince employees to start using email addresses with its corporate domain (grupotakami.com). “We had reached the stage where it was important to unify our communications image and be more formal. Our goal was to find easier and more efficient mechanisms that would allow the Takami management greater control without greater investment,” says Cifuentes.

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**“Google Apps lets us centralize and consolidate information, simplifying our company’s internal communication process and giving us better control over the business on a daily basis.”**

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### Solution

Cifuentes became aware of Google Apps through a recommendation from one of her colleagues. Intrigued, she contacted Eforcers, a Google Enterprise Professional partner serving the Colombia market. Together, they worked out a plan to switch Takami to Google Apps. “Eforcers explained how the features of Google Apps would benefit Takami. For us, the solution seemed ideal. It didn’t involve any investment in infrastructure or payment for large support servers, which would have been impossible for a company of our size.”

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## ABOUT GOOGLE APPS

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Google Apps is a suite of customizable applications that includes Gmail, Google Calendar, Google Talk (instant messaging and voice over IP), Google Docs (online documents and collaboration), Google Sites (team site creation and publishing), Start Page (a single access point for all applications) as well as Google Apps security and compliance products (making existing email systems more secure, compliant and productive). Google Apps offers editions tailored to businesses, organizations, schools, and project teams.

For more information, visit  
<http://www.google.com/a>

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## Results

### Google Apps was simple to set-up and is easy to scale

With the assistance of Eforcers, Cifuentes created user accounts and activated all of the applications that make up the Google Apps suite, including Gmail, Google Talk, Google Calendar, and Google Docs. Eforcers and Takami also collaborated on a simple in-house training program, which allowed Takami to fully implement Google Apps in only two days. In less than a month, the entire administrative and management group were actively using their grupotakami.com Gmail accounts.

Cifuentes notes, “The implementation and training was quick, at a minimal one-time cost. That’s because the ongoing administration of Google Apps is also minimal, and can be performed within the company. Overall, it’s really very simple and easy to understand – there’s no need to be a technician or an expert.” These capabilities will be especially helpful when Takami opens five new restaurants in 2008 and adds many new user accounts.

### Employees enjoy anywhere access to their information

The managers who are permanently out of the office may have benefited most from the transition to Google Apps. They now have the ability to access their mail from anywhere with an internet connection, even from their mobile devices. “Mobile access from any location and Gmail’s conversations feature – which groups emails in the same thread so employee records can be more organized – have made our work group very happy,” Cifuentes adds.

### Google Docs simplifies data circulation and collaboration

Takami employees have also adopted Google Docs for documents that are widely shared or frequently updated. The company had previously circulated its practices manual, consisting of administrative and service policies, via email attachments, which were slow to download and monopolized email storage. Now, policies are posted in Google Docs and available to everyone anytime. Plus, restaurant managers can complete daily reports in a single shared online document. “Google Apps lets us centralize and consolidate information,” says Cifuentes, “simplifying our company’s internal communication process and giving us better control over the business on a daily basis.”

