

SuiteBox on Oracle Cloud

Suitebox - revamping the virtual workplace with video meetings and paperless transactions.

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If you want to revolutionize the virtual workplace market, a cloud-native approach makes perfect sense—and lets you refactor your approach until you get it right. When New Zealand-based SuiteBox launched six years ago, it started out supplementing annual company meetings with online video. But a few years in, the startup had the foresight to pivot. The new target? A market that Skype, FaceTime, Google Hangouts, DocuSign, and WebEx had missed: virtual meetings in the financial world, providing broad (and legal) identity authentication via real-time digital signatures and video.

SuiteBox built a financial-grade communications and collaboration solution on Oracle Cloud technology that makes it possible for financial advisers to hold virtual meetings via connected devices, record all or part of their encounters, share and digitally sign electronic assets, and embed or white-label the interactions for any relationship management platform.

Cloud-Native and Global from the Start

SuiteBox focused on using the internet to think global from day one. The key idea: to meld video meetings with paperless transactions. The choice to go global was a natural one, but SuiteBox had other requirements as well: a cloud-native software stack and financial-caliber components.

In addition to scalability and bank-level security, the goal of deploying straight to the cloud attracted SuiteBox to Oracle technology—but it was an unusual move, according to Craig Meek, founder of SuiteBox.

“It was not an easy decision for a startup company to choose Oracle instead of open source, because there were a lot of people saying that would be a very expensive journey,” says Meek. “It was kind of like choosing Rolls-Royce first, but we realized that if we were truly going to be a global player in the financial services space, we had to make that call. When we stand in front of the CIOs and go through this technology stack, they give us their business.”

Ian Dunbar, CEO at SuiteBox, agrees. “We preferred Oracle platform-as-a-service [technology] because of its robustness, scalability, and bank-grade security features,” he says. “Partnering with a reputable vendor such as Oracle is also an automatic guarantee of credibility, giving our customers absolute confidence.”

Choosing the Oracle Cloud Stack

For its logic tier, SuiteBox, whose customers range from small businesses to global banks and insurance companies, is using Oracle Java Cloud Service to provide easy implementation and integration with video and Voice over IP (VoIP) communication layers.

Oracle Cloud Database Service stores SuiteBox communication metadata in a simple and efficient database structure that links users to their meetings and their storage. The

integration layer is enabled via Oracle SOA Cloud Service, which lets SuiteBox REST-ify existing and new services as JSON APIs.

That's an additional selling point, according to Isaac Young, chief technology officer at SuiteBox. SuiteBox provides its customers with a breadth of programming interfaces for advisor platforms, enterprise resource planning, mobile apps, and customer relationship management systems. Its PDF-authoring API, for example, allows third-party developers to merge multiple PDF documents and to place images (signatures, for example) on pages at specific X and Y coordinates. Its middleware APIs let those developers work with users, authentication, meetings, documents, and more.

"We have a set of APIs that we built using the Oracle suite of tools," says Young. "Our RESTful JSON API is predicated on Oracle technologies, such as Oracle API Gateway."

Another Oracle solution, Oracle Traffic Director, optimizes SuiteBox' application-to-application communication for high throughput and protects back-end applications from malicious attacks.

"Oracle Traffic Director is a really cool feature that allows us to ensure that we have business continuity in our service," Young says. "We also use it to whitelist and blacklist a client's IP addresses and allow only specific partners to access our API. It's fundamental throughout SuiteBox' architecture."

Key Oracle developer services enable SuiteBox to optimize development processes. SuiteBox uses Oracle Developer Cloud Service to refactor applications to meet new customer requirements and Oracle Java Cloud Service to rapidly provision testing and production environments. The company also counts on Oracle SOA Cloud Service to ensure seamless integration with third-party applications, enabling its customers to easily integrate with SuiteBox.

Future Plans: More Oracle Cloud, AI, and BI

SuiteBox currently uses Amazon Web Services for hosting, but that will soon change, according to Meek. "We're now doing a full migration to Oracle Cloud, to clean up the whole architecture from top to bottom," he says. "We didn't really appreciate at the time we launched that Oracle Cloud would be so competitive. Now we're very comfortable in terms of stability with the way in which the platform is operating, and it's giving us a lot of credibility with our customers."

More insights into utilization and productivity are on the horizon as well. "We're looking at Oracle Business Intelligence Cloud Service and specifically the cloud analytics services to provide transparency to our customers around how they're using SuiteBox," says Young. "How many meetings are they having? How many documents are being signed? What browsers are people using?"

The most important lesson for success, according to Young, is that you don't have to go it alone. "One of the key things we learned is, engage with Oracle early when embarking on a new project or on using Oracle technology that you're not familiar with," he says. "Oracle was pivotal in helping us deliver and succeed in what we're trying to achieve."

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