Case Study:

Pitney Bowes

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Identity is at the forefront of the Pitney Bowes Commerce Cloud strategy

Overview

Industry

Technology and Commerce

Company Profile

More than 1.5 million small businesses and 90% of the Fortune 500 in 100 countries around the world rely on Pitney Bowes to help navigate an increasingly complex commerce environment. Founded in 1920, the company offers innovative products and services in the areas of customer information management, location intelligence, customer engagement, shipping and mailing, and global e-commerce.

Business Situation

Pitney Bowes had begun transforming its business over several years, developing and acquiring technology to become one of the largest software companies in the world. In 2016, they launched Commerce Cloud, a cloud technology platform tying all those capabilities together to solve commerce problems in an increasingly complex physical and digital world. The core challenges they faced in developing Commerce Cloud centered around identity management. Pitney Bowes leaders wanted

to create a seamless, dynamic user experience, with rich interactions between customers and products. They also wanted to enable Pitney Bowes products with API capabilities so that they could talk to each other and to third-party applications.

They wanted to capture all the data produced in those interactions and make it accessible to employees, partners, and customers. Finally, they needed to connect all the technology and data to back-office systems, streamlining and simplifying internal Pitney Bowes operations.

Solution

Pitney Bowes chose Okta as their identity management partner and began integrating the platform in three phases, with Phase One completed prior to the launch of Commerce Cloud. The team connected 35 applications together, giving the company a more simplified, reliable, and resilient approach to identity, and putting a single identity record in place for each customer. Phase Two, currently underway, pairs Okta's API Access Management product with Apigee, Pitney Bowes' API management partner. Their proven integration makes it possible for the company to securely expose its digital capabilities through APIs, so they can be delivered more broadly. Once that phase is complete, Pitney Bowes plans to connect its digital infrastructure with its postage meters and mail machines, reinventing the mail system and setting itself up for another century, powering the world of commerce.

Benefits

- Multiple systems and 35 customer-facing applications connected, without any interruption to the user base

- Okta API Access Management provides a simple, centralized, identity-driven approach to securing access to every API

- A team of identity experts focused on a future where organizations can securely open up their infrastructures to machines, as well as customers, partners, developers, and services

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Pitney Bowes' Journey

Bridge to the next Century

Pitney Bowes launches its Commerce Cloud, tying physical and digital capabilities together to solve commerce problems in an increasingly complex world.

Identity at the center

The company partners with Okta to meet the identity requirements of the Pitney Bowes Commerce Cloud, recognizing the essential role that identity plays in connecting customers, applications, data, and machines.

Improved customer success

Okta connects 35 applications together, giving the company a more simplified, reliable, and resilient approach to identity, and putting a single record in place for each customer.

An API ecosystem

Pairing Okta API Access Management and Apigee, an API management platform, Pitney Bowes begins securely creating and delivering new digital solutions, and developing a vibrant partner ecosystem.

Connecting everything

Looking ahead, Pitney Bowes plans to use Okta to enable secure connections between the millions of devices its customers use today and Commerce Cloud's digital services.

> ▶️ **Watch the video**
> okta.com/customers

Story

Bridge to the next century

In 1920, Arthur Pitney invented the postage meter, introducing the concept of metered mail to the world and smoothing the path of commerce for the foreseeable future.

Today, shipping and mailing is just one aspect of the Pitney Bowes brand. The company has become one of the largest software companies in the world. Customers include 1.5 million small and medium-sized businesses and 90% of the Fortune 500. They rely on Pitney Bowes for everything from location intelligence to global e-commerce and customer information management solutions.

The Pitney Bowes Commerce Cloud, launched in 2016, ties all those capabilities together to solve commerce problems in an increasingly complex physical and digital world. It helps organizations large and small sell goods in 200 countries, process 70 different types of payment, and make sure packages arrive predictably, whether it's across borders and time zones or between stores.

> " Okta plays a vital role in our API security. It provides the protocol as well as the context that allows services to securely talk to each other.
>
> **—James Fairweather**
> Senior Vice President of E-commerce and Technology, Pitney Bowes

The Commerce Cloud is designed to be what chief innovation officer Roger Pilc calls "the bridge to the next century"—a complete digital transformation flexible enough and visionary enough to carry Pitney Bowes, its partners, and its customers into its next 100 years.

That's no small feat. "Customers today wrestle with the tremendous complexity associated with commerce," says Pilc. The number of necessary physical and digital technologies and processes has ballooned, along with the many ways of reaching customers.

The world has also opened up globally, which adds another set of challenges. Marketing, merchandising, and shipping to customers in China is entirely different from doing the same in Australia or Canada.

Four core challenges. One identity solution.

James Fairweather, senior vice president of e-commerce and technology, helped develop the Commerce Cloud strategy. "The journey's been about harvesting the technology we've developed and acquired over the past few years, delivering it to the cloud, securing it, wrapping it in APIs, and building new solutions and a great user experience on top of it," he says.

The company faced four core challenges with the Commerce Cloud initiative:

1. Creating a seamless and dynamic user experience, with rich interactions between customers and products

2. Cloud-enabling Pitney Bowes products with APIs so that they could talk to each other and to third-party applications, to enable a new era of innovation.

3. Capturing all the data that the company produces around location and commerce, and making it accessible to employees, partners, and customers

4. Connecting all of that customer-facing technology and data to back-office systems, streamlining billing processes, customer management and communication, and Pitney Bowes operations

Each challenge carried with it an identity-focused solution—from recognizing customers when they access resources and services, to protecting the infrastructure exposed by APIs, to securing sensitive data and protecting customer records. "Identity plays across all four of these blocks," says Fairweather.

Identity that persists across systems

Kenn Bryant, director of architecture and SaaS services, was charged with solving the identity puzzle. First, he looked at what it would cost to do identity in-house. "We quickly realized that is not our business. We are not an identity provider," he says.

That's when Bryant began an 18-month search for an identity partner, evaluating 15 to 20 vendors in a rigorous examination of the space. Many solutions were focused on an "internal employee kind of use case," says Bryant. He was looking for a solution the company could depend on for broad customer and partner access. "If I'm trying to get into my employee travel solution and I fail to get in the first time, you know what, I'll try it that afternoon," he says. "But a customer trying to access a digital asset, if they don't get in the first time, they may never come back."

Stability and reliability were also key. Bryant wanted a partner born in the cloud, with a powerful set of APIs that developers and partners could integrate with. He was looking for a team that would be easy to work with—a partner ready to join Pitney Bowes on the Commerce Cloud journey for the foreseeable future.

> **"**
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>
> **—Kenn Bryant**
> Director, Architecture and SaaS Services, Pitney Bowes
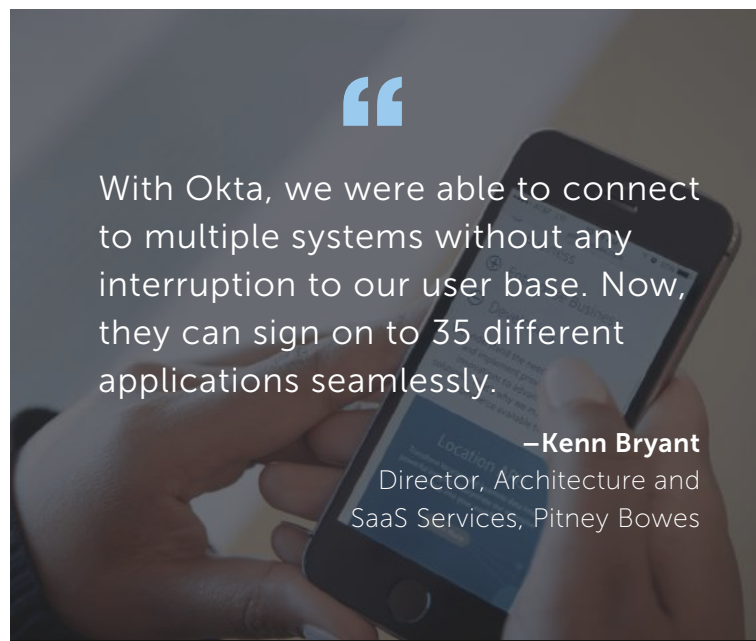
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> "With Okta, we felt we had a partner who knew identity inside-out. Even the executive team understood the use cases, pain points, and challenges we faced in advancing Commerce Cloud."

James Fairweather
Senior Vice President of E-commerce and Technology, Pitney Bowes

Fairweather was in agreement. "We wanted a partner that would work with us across the breadth of technology solutions we were implementing to make sure that identity was everywhere," he says. "Facilitating integration across the ecosystem, making sure identity persists across systems, and having identity be the central way we're relating to the customer, with a high degree of reliability and availability—that was really important to us."

Okta met all the requirements and became the clear choice. "We felt right from the start that Okta understood what we were trying to do," says Fairweather. "It was a matter of working with them on roadmap, and the delivery's been very strong."

Improving the front door experience

Phase One of Okta's integration with Commerce Cloud gave customers improved access to Pitney Bowes digital assets without interrupting their current access. "Pitney Bowes was anything but a single-sign-on ecosystem," says Fairweather. "We had multiple identity providers in our environment. Multiple solutions that had been used in a myriad of use cases, each with their own internal federations. The environment had gotten increasingly complex."

Okta gave the company a more simplified, reliable, and resilient approach to identity, putting a single record in place for each customer. "With Okta, we were able to build on the platform connectivity to multiple systems without any interruption to our user base," says Bryant.

"Now, they can sign on to 35 different applications seamlessly."

Customers move from service to service, across locations and data centers. The context of their work sessions passes smoothly and securely from one service to the next, and Pitney Bowes can clearly track the activity and keep its resulting data secure.

An interconnected API ecosystem

The team is now working on Phase Two, which involves exposing Pitney Bowes digital capabilities via APIs so that developers and partners can build on them. For API management, the company partnered with Apigee, which integrates seamlessly with Okta API Access Management. Thanks to this partnership, Pitney Bowes is pairing its industry-leading identity solution with top-of-the-line API management to achieve a secure, unified set of shared services for developers.

Soon, with Okta securing its APIs, Pitney Bowes will deliver its capabilities in a much broader fashion.

Services such as address validation and revolving credit, which rely on cross-platform or banking. partner interactions, become the norm rather than an obstacle. "This API ecosystem is important to all the solutions we build," says Fairweather. "We've gotten great support building out that integration and showing that it can work. We're working on that very actively with Okta right now."

> "
> We found the Okta team to be very responsive, with the same client-centric culture we have. The team has worked well with our technology and engineering team.
>
> **—Roger Pilc**
> Chief Innovation Officer, Pitney Bowes

> "Okta brought the same level of understanding we had, that Commerce Cloud is a broad protocol with multiple parts, and we would need a road map for full implementation."

James Fairweather
Senior Vice President of E-commerce and Technology, Pitney Bowes

The role that identity plays in that vision is vital, says Bryant. "Without identity, the whole system breaks down. It is the front door, the glue that holds these pieces together."

That's why identity is at the forefront of Pitney Bowes' Commerce Cloud strategy as they open up the Commerce Cloud first to customers, then to developers and services, and finally, to machines.

Reinventing mail once again

From here on out, the Pitney Bowes Commerce Cloud roadmap gets even more interesting. The company is already starting to connect physical devices to its digital services – a vision it will continue to drive forward in the coming years.

And as Pitney Bowes continues on its Internet of Things journey, says Pilc, mail will evolve from a destination and end-point-centered business to a cloud-centered business.
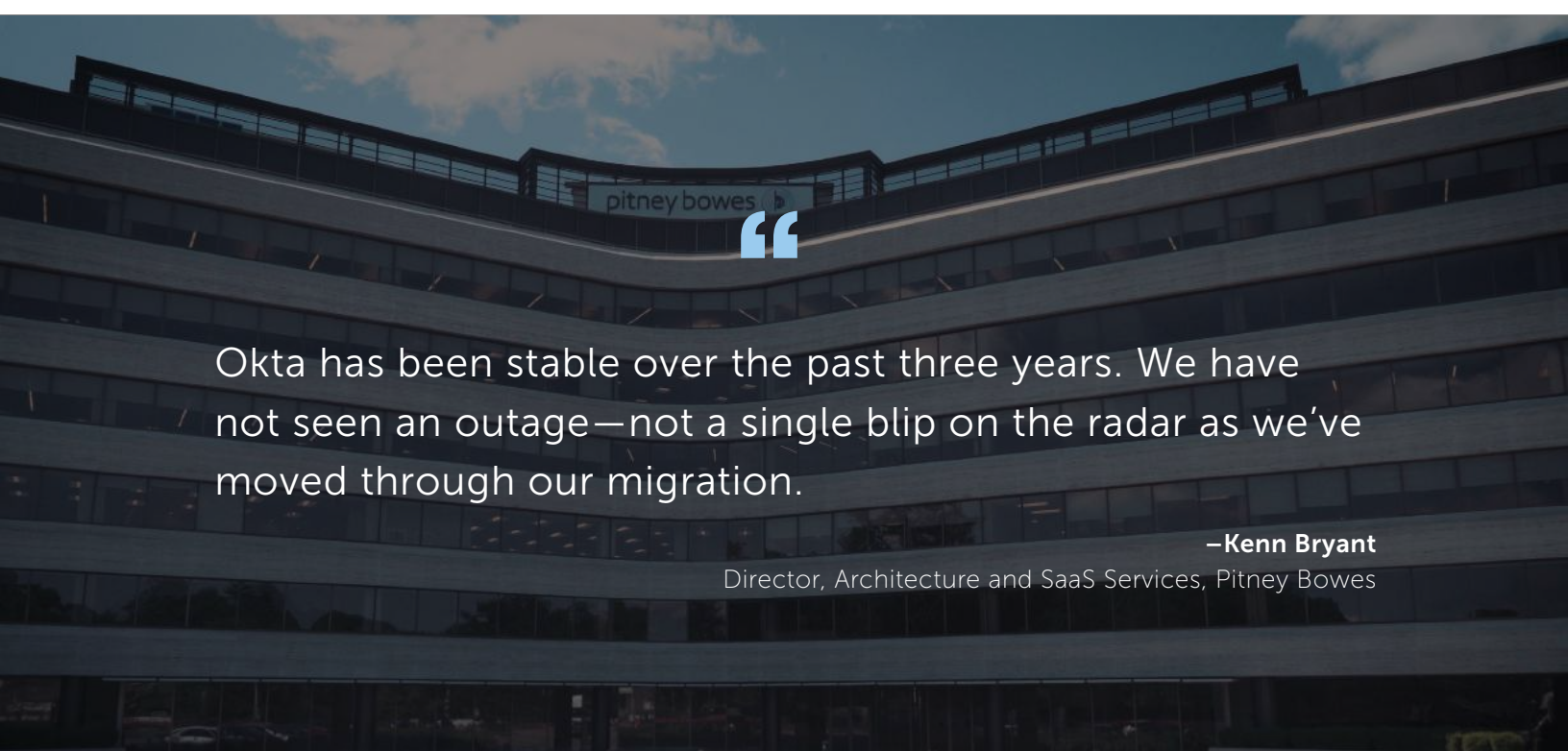
> "
> Okta has been stable over the past three years. We have not seen an outage—not a single blip on the radar as we've moved through our migration.
>
> **–Kenn Bryant**
> Director, Architecture and SaaS Services, Pitney Bowes

"Okta was born in the cloud. It's where it resides, where it lives, what it knows. There's no other solution that could possibly be branded the Identity Cloud."

—Kenn Bryant
Director, Architecture and
SaaS Services, Pitney Bowes

About Okta

Okta is the leading provider of identity and mobility management solutions for the cloud and mobile enterprise. By harnessing the power of the cloud, Okta allows people to access applications on any device at any time, while still enforcing strong security policies. It integrates directly with an organization's existing directories and identity systems, as well as 4,000+ applications. Because Okta runs on an integrated platform, organizations can implement the service quickly at large scale and low total cost. Thousands of customers, including Adobe, Allergan, Chiquita, LinkedIn, and Western Union, trust Okta to help their organizations work faster, boost revenue and stay secure.

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