



AT&T uses Cleo Integration Cloud to reliably transfer audio data en masse, maintain FTC compliance



Company: AT&T (NYSE: T)
Headquarters: Dallas, Texas
Industry:
Telecommunications
Employees:
248,000 worldwide
Annual revenue:
\$181.2 billion (2019)
Business need:
Reliable data movement and high-speed file transfer to move thousands of audio recordings daily to its data centers

Business Need

With its origins dating back to 1882, AT&T hardly needs an introduction. Millions of residents, federal and local government agencies, and mega-businesses like Ford, GM, BNSF, and American Airlines depend on AT&T for their communication and television needs. The world's largest telecommunications company by revenue, the second-largest provider of mobile phone services, and the largest provider of wireline telephone services in the United States relies on seamless data flows to provide leading digital communication services.

In addition to providing phone-based technology and support solutions that include routing, call transfers to agents, billing, and 911 offerings, AT&T houses many large customers' data centers, provides cloud services, and supports many interactive voice response (IVR) solutions within the Call Center Technologies organization. After an amendment to the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) Telemarketing Sales Rule, AT&T was mandated to maintain business records, including call center data, for longer periods. But the volume of audio data and the size of those files required AT&T to re-evaluate its data movement technology.

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IT Challenge

To stay in compliance with the FTC mandate issued directly to the company, AT&T had to store and maintain audio files from inbound calls for an undisclosed period. AT&T, however, outsources most of its call center services to third-party vendors around the world, and the telecommunications giant needed a means to securely and reliably move these audio files from its 17 call center partners (some with multiple call centers) back to its data centers in Dallas, Texas, and Fairfield, California.

But AT&T's IT personnel recognized that not just any data movement solution would work. The solution needed to move massive volumes of data and file sizes up to 100 MBs. Its network of call centers was generating hundreds of thousands of files per day, and a number of those audio files – roughly 1 to 3 TBs of data per call center – had to be transferred to a data center every night without overrunning the partner network. It was an impossible ask of AT&T's incumbent file transfer and integration architecture, which included various homegrown products, a legacy managed file transfer (MFT) solution, and a proprietary high-speed file transfer protocol.

“These FTC mandates usually come with strict dates and fines if you're out of compliance, so we had a very small window to facilitate millions of calls internally as well as recordings from these 17 external vendors,” said Robert Breivogel, IT project manager for AT&T. “We searched our internal products and our internal vendors for potential fixes, and eventually moved to external vendors in search of a solution.”



“Cleo Integration Cloud is one of the best-kept secrets in the industry.”

– **Robert Breivogel**,
IT project manager
for AT&T



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The Solution

AT&T found Cleo via a Google search of its competitors, and that led to a proof of concept (POC).

“We read about the product offerings, reviewed the Cleo website, and made initial inquiries. There were many vendors we considered. However, when we did a deep dive into the needs of AT&T, we narrowed the field to Cleo and one other vendor.”

AT&T established must-have criteria to comply with project mandate and required a solution that could provide:

- Elevated transmission speed and capacity
- Ease of use and installation
- Automation and scheduling
- Support for multiple protocols, including SFTP and high-speed transfer
- Support for multiple operating systems

“Of the vendors we spoke to, the Cleo team was the most helpful with its proof of concept and technology discussions,” said Rahul Anandani, principal technical architect at AT&T, “and Cleo quickly set itself apart.”

After its requirements were met and exceeded during the POC, AT&T chose the Cleo Integration Cloud to comply with the FTC mandate, leveraging the Cleo Integration Cloud's data movement engine and its accelerated file transfer protocol to quickly and reliably move tens of thousands of massive audio files a day. AT&T deployed a highly available solution with Active/Active clusters in each data center, and the technology supports on-demand and scheduled transfers, as well as bi-directional push-pull transfers.

Breivogel also lauded the comprehensive reporting, advanced encryption and security, various configuration options, and scriptable and customizable workflows, unexpected but welcome benefits of the Cleo integration platform.

“The Cleo Integration Cloud, along with the team, was instrumental in making the AT&T project work for the federal mandate,” he said. “Without Cleo, AT&T would have had firewall issues, vendor protocol and encryption incompatibilities, and design process difficulties. The Cleo solution is extremely robust and positions us well for future growth.

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By the Numbers

17

Number of external call center vendors for AT&T

25,000

Number of audio files vendors move daily into AT&T's data centers

3

Up to 3 TBs of data moving from a single call center vendor each night

