



## Enriched email experience differentiates Frontier's broadband service for 2.5M customers

*Zimbra's Zimlets and open platform enable Frontier to deepen customer engagement with unique features like integrated maps, videos and TV.*

### FRONTIER COMMUNICATIONS



#### About

Frontier Communications is a telephone company in the United States, serving mainly rural and small communities. It offers local and long-distance telephone service, broadband Internet, digital television service, and computer technical support to residential and business customers in 24 states in the U.S. In December 2009, Frontier had \$120 million of revenue, 5,400 employees and 1.25 million residential customers.

- ▶ One of the largest rural local exchange carriers
- ▶ Offers local and long-distance telephone, broadband Internet & digital television services
- ▶ 1.25 million customers in 24 states; \$120 million revenue

#### Goals

- ▶ Deploy an open source email and collaboration system
- ▶ Provide a highly differentiated email service to their customers
- ▶ Constantly upgrade services to increase customer retention footprint and save on costs



Photo by Deutsch Fetisch, via Wikimedia Commons.

#### Challenges

Frontier wanted to provide their customers with a richer email experience. Their existing email system based on Lazlo lacked some of the key features they desired in their email service such as easy user interface, good search facility and a good calendaring system. Most importantly, they sought a new email service that would allow them to differentiate themselves from their competition and provide a unique offering to their broadband customers.

They had realized the importance of providing a compelling and customized email service to their broadband customer, both to increase customer time spent on their site, as well as to increase customer retention (when broadband service was accompanied with a good email service, customers were less likely to leave). As Guy Philosoph, VP of Marketing explained, "If email is a strategic asset [as we believe it to be], you need to have control over it." But they also wanted a solution they could "drop-in" – an email solution with a UI so intuitive, it could work immediately without any need for technical support. Hence, the email program had to have very good web interface which could be customized and controlled by team at Frontier.

#### Zimbra Solution

Control was a big reason why the team at Frontier chose Zimbra. First, the Frontier team believed in Open Source technology. "Having source code is an advantage – it gives us control for adding new features, easy maintainability and to integrate with other systems", said Philosoph. Second, the team really liked Zimbra's customizable state-of-the-art Ajax web client. By increasing the functionality through *Zimlets*, Frontier was able to provide a truly differentiated email experience. Third, Zimbra's white-labeling enabled Frontier to fully brand the experience. "The Zimbra deployment gives us full control to maximize our branding and advertising possibilities" Philosoph said.

In the initial migration, which took 90 days, Frontier moved about 750 thousand existing customers from old legacy systems. Recently Frontier migrated an additional 250 thousand customers obtained through acquisition, and it has plans to migrate another million customers acquired through Verizon. All told, Frontier will serve more than 2.5 million mailboxes on Zimbra. While migrating such a large number of customers is a complicated and risky maneuver, Kitt Diebold, Product Manager for Email Services, believes Zimbra helps make the process relatively painless.

#### Deployment Overview

Frontier has rebranded the Zimbra Collaboration Suite with its own color scheme and deployed it as Frontier Mail. Frontier customers use many of the standard ZCS features including Email, Calendar, and Tasks. The first page after login displays news powered by Yahoo! and advertisements. Philosoph commented that "the advertisements have made the deployment cost effective quite early."



"If email is a strategic asset, you need to have control over it ... Zimbra has allowed us to control it"

Guy Philosoph,  
VP of Marketing,  
Frontier Communications

## CUSTOMER CASE STUDY: Frontier Communications

Frontier has used extensively used Zimlets to provide their customers with many innovative and exciting features in their email. For example the 'TV Zimlet' highlights the name of a TV shows in an email: when the mouse is placed over the name of a TV show, the logo of the show pops up. The user can click on the name to open a page on Frontier's web based TV service *myfitv*, where customers have access to over 100,000 video titles. The 'Video Zimlet' launches an online video platform when customers click on a highlighted movie name in an email. Another zimlet enables Yahoo *Emoticons* in email, while a 'Maps Zimlet' allows users to render a Yahoo! maps simply by hovering over an address.

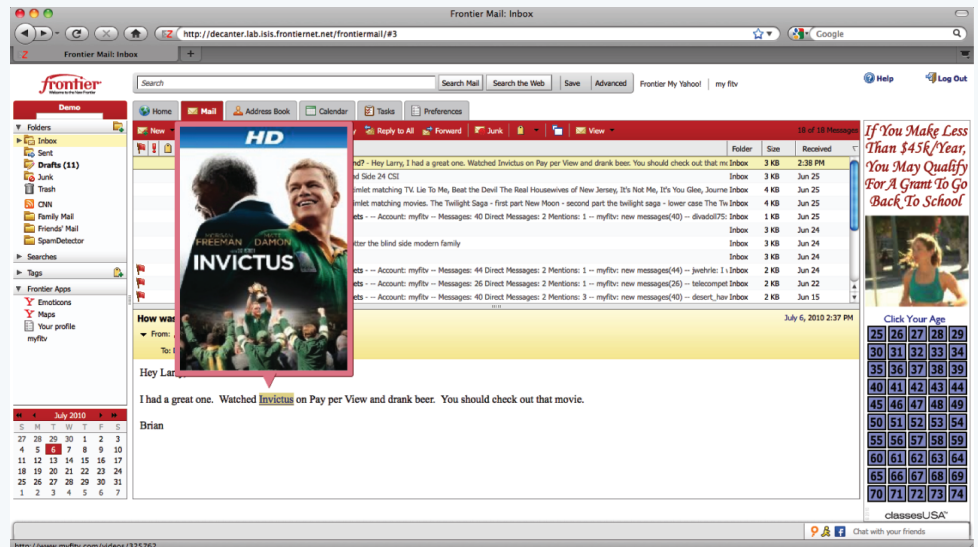
### Key Benefits

Frontier believes that customization and providing a differentiation service is the key to staying ahead of the competition. Zimbra has increased Frontier's customer retention rates, as well as increasing the time customers spend on their portal. Starting in July 2010, customers will be also able to synch to their smart phones. According to Diebold, "All customers are getting Exchange synch for free, and that is pretty amazing!"

Following on the success of the Zimlets, Philosoph also wants to implement a social media zimlet so that customers can access apps such as Facebook and Google talk through the Frontier Messaging System. In the future, they are aiming to develop a Frontier Unified Messaging System where customers can integrate their voicemail, send text messages and email. Philosoph closing remarks were "[Zimbra and] Zimlets have helped us unveil the value of a custom email service. Zimlets allows us to provide a unique experience."

### Favorite Feature

Zimlets.



Snapshot of the Video Zimlet

### About Zimbra

Zimbra, a division of VMware, is the leader in next-generation, open source email and collaboration. Zimbra supports both private on-premises and hosted public cloud deployments and is popular with universities, business, government and services providers.

Learn more at [www.zimbra.com](http://www.zimbra.com).