SECURE DATA TRANSFER

HeavyMail

A secure large-file platform built in the early 2000s, when the alternative for a big file was a courier and a hard drive. Frank backed it, housed it, helped write it, and years later bought it.

2004	Palo Alto	$25,000	2
Frank joins the board	Where the servers ran, in his own data center	Paid for the assets out of bankruptcy	Original servers, still held

WHAT IT WAS

HeavyMail, also branded ByteFling, moved very large files, or groups of files, securely: without corruption and without exposure in transit. Encryption, integrity on arrival and resistance to interception were the product.

A companion application, BonPoo, was built alongside it: file transfers paid for by watching ads instead of a subscription. It briefly earned about $1,200 a month, an early test of ad-supported utility software. Frank later bought BonPoo too.

FRANK'S PART IN IT

- **Investor.** Frank invested through OakStone Ventures, the seed fund he ran.
- **Landlord.** The founders worked out of his office from around 2003.
- **Host.** The servers ran in Neopolitan Networks' data center in Palo Alto, the carrier Frank founded and ran.
- **Engineer when it counted.** When the developer was stuck, Frank helped with the code.
- **Director,** on the board from December 2004 to August 2010.

WHAT HAPPENED

Development was finished. Just before launch, a death in the founder's family meant he could not continue, for reasons that had nothing to do with the software or the market. Years later the other founder took the company through bankruptcy, and Frank and two partners bought the assets out of it for $25,000: the source code and two of the original servers.

The servers are in storage. The code is backed up. The intention is to rebuild and relaunch it. That is an owned asset and an intention, not a product on sale today, and nothing on this page is offered as available software.

WHY A PROSPECT SHOULD CARE ABOUT A TWENTY-YEAR-OLD CODEBASE

- **The problem did not go away, the tools changed.** Secure transfer of very large files, with encryption, integrity on arrival and resistance to interception, is what modern teams assemble out of object storage, signed URLs and a checksum. We have been working on that problem since before those pieces existed.
- **It shows the whole stack of what a founder needs.** Capital, space, hosting on a carrier network, code help at the moment it was needed, and board oversight, all from one person. That is the combination an early company rarely finds in one place.
- **We treat software as an asset.** We have twice acquired a codebase out of somebody else's failure and carried it forward: GateTracker, now a licensed product in production, and this one.

WHAT THIS SAYS ABOUT DILIGENCE WORK

Deciding what a dead company's code is worth is a specific skill: read it, test the claims, separate the part that still has value from the part that was the reason it died. We have done that with our own money.

WHAT WE CAN START ON

Diligence on a codebase you are thinking of buying, written so a board can read it. A secure file exchange where the compliance record matters as much as the transfer. Or a conversation about relaunching this one with a partner.

512-900-4871 · div42.com · roblesindustries.com