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MANAGED SERVICES PROVIDER METAPHOR IT PARTNERS WITH RACKSPACE TO PROVIDE BESPOKE IT SOLUTIONS AND A BETTER SERVICE TO ITS CUSTOMERS

BUSINESS

Based in London, UK, the managed services company provides virtualisation services, threat detection and prevention and the provision of outsourced and managed support. It has a range of customers, from major enterprises to SMEs.

CHALLENGES

Challenged to give clients a seamless journey to new and better solutions, Metaphor IT needed to find a hosting provider that could help it deliver best-in-class solutions including desktop-as-a-service, without the risk of down time.

SOLUTION

VMware® dedicated infrastructure, developed by the managed services company and its customers.

OUTCOME

As a business, Metaphor IT now benefits from 100% uptime. Previous hosting companies only guaranteed 97%. It now has the confidence to grow and add more advanced hosted solutions to its portfolio. Metaphor IT signed up around £1million worth of re-occurring revenue that it wouldn't have done previously – almost 25% of its total revenue.

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UK-based managed services company, Metaphor IT, provides virtualisation services, threat detection and prevention, and the provision of outsourced and managed support. Formed in 2015, the business has grown fast and now generates organic revenue in excess of £4.5 million.

From large enterprises, including a number of the FTSE100, to small businesses, Metaphor IT works closely with clients to seamlessly ensure transition to new solutions.

HOSTING WAS A MAJOR BUSINESS PAIN-POINT

According to Stuart Grist, the Sales Director at Metaphor IT, the company has always worked with external hosting providers. He says, "When we went out to market, we had a strategy to be 'asset-light' – we're not looking to construct our own datacentres, or own lots of kit. It was a philosophy to run our business."

Metaphor IT offers desktop-as-a-service, in which it provides a virtual desktop infrastructure (VDI), in which the back-end is hosted by a cloud service provider. Some of its competitors offer a 'one-size-fits-all' approach, where customers fit into their VDI model rather than have a solution designed specifically for them. The managed service provider has a unique selling proposition in that it provides a bespoke solution for each client, delivering a tailor-made solution each time.

"For our customers, we will create a unique solution, building it from scratch every time," says Stuart. "It's about doing the proper user analysis, and seeing how clients and individual users use technology to work flexibly. Then we can create a design which is perfect for the business.

"With our virtualisation service, we design the VMWare environment, which delivers a flexible working environment. We'll use cutting edge technology to deliver a solution which will give clients the biggest bang for their buck."

The hosting provider is key to this business model. With all clients

having critical systems, the hosting provider needs to provide high availability at the back-end, as well as maintenance and response, however small the issue.

Initially, Metaphor IT allowed its desktop-as-a-service clients to dictate which hosting provider they wanted to use. This very quickly became a problem and clear business pain-point, as often, the provider didn't share the managed service provider's philosophy around quality of service.

Stuart says, "Because uptime was only at 97%, outages became a real pain point, with lots of finger pointing from clients stuck in the middle. It brought to light that we wanted to deal with a hosting provider that thinks as much about their customers as we do about ours."

A CONFIDENT PARTNERSHIP

Before Metaphor IT was formed, members of the team had previously worked with Rackspace in a previous business, as a client chose to host an environment that they had built. The experience was very good, and compared very favourably to many service and datacentre providers they previously worked with, where there were huge issues with customer service and responsiveness.

Metaphor IT also looked at public cloud platforms like Amazon Web Services (AWS) and Microsoft Azure, but decided that using a Rackspace private cloud datacentre for VMWare environments was better than going down the public cloud route. After less than a year of allowing clients to choose their hosting providers, Metaphor IT decided to work solely with Rackspace.

Stuart says, "We now use the Rackspace solution architecture quite heavily with the VDI designs we put together with our clients, and we talk about technical solutions every month. We've developed a mutual respect – because we both know where the expertise lies. We'll work collaboratively on a solution, find out what the best fit for the client is, and deliver the platform to the end users."

With Rackspace, the managed service provider very quickly developed a level of confidence where it could easily recommend the Rackspace datacentre and infrastructure over any other provider.

Stuart added, "We explain to clients that we haven't chosen the first provider that came along – we've chosen Rackspace for a number of important reasons."

It has also meant that Metaphor IT's business model has changed for the better. Stuart says, "Because of the confidence we have in our hosting, we're more focused on getting that desktop-as-a-service business. There's less competitors in this space, and we're confident that clients will be very happy with what we and Rackspace can provide.

"When we drive customers towards Rackspace-hosted solutions, our clients are really seeing value, and therefore spend more money!"

"Rackspace actually cares, and goes above and beyond. Metaphor IT is all about delivering a proper solution and quality product for the end-user. Rackspace has that philosophy – it makes the cultural fit between our organisations great, and means we can show flexibility in both directions."

STUART GRIST :: SALES DIRECTOR, METAPHOR IT

£1 MILLION WORTH OF REVENUE

Stuart has nothing but praise for his company's partner. He says, "Rackspace actually cares, and goes above and beyond. Metaphor IT is all about delivering a proper solution and quality product for the end-user. Rackspace has that philosophy – it makes the cultural fit between our organisations great, and means we can show flexibility in both directions."

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The support service has been 'exceptional'. Because Metaphor IT works so closely with Rackspace, it doesn't have to constantly chase for support, and has a partner which is pro-active and communicates effectively.

Stuart adds, "It enhances the customer service we offer to our own clients and helps us keep that relationship cemented in place. The technical team from a support level works with us very successfully."

In terms of service-level agreements (SLAs), Rackspace has always exceeded Metaphor IT's requirements. One SLA that particularly matters is uptime – the platforms Metaphor IT has built with clients in collaboration with Rackspace have had no downtime whatsoever. It now delivers 100% uptime, whereas before when it sold services using other hosting providers, it was only 97%.

"We meet regularly with the team at Rackspace to show our business growth plans, and we always take advice from them.

Every opportunity we feel to grow in the cloud, we'll run it by Rackspace. They're the first port of call for expertise, and help in creating commercially viable opportunities."

STUART GRIST :: SALES DIRECTOR, METAPHOR IT

In nine months after Metaphor IT started working with Rackspace to date, it has signed up around £1million worth of re-occurring revenue that it wouldn't have done previously – almost 25% of its total revenue.

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ABOUT RACKSPACE

Rackspace, the #1 managed cloud company, helps businesses tap the power of cloud computing without the complexity and cost of managing it all on their own. Rackspace engineers deliver specialised expertise, easy-to-use tools, and Fanatical Support® for leading technologies including AWS, Google, Microsoft, OpenStack and VMware. The company serves customers in 150 countries, including more than half of the FORTUNE 100. Rackspace was named a leader in the 2017 Gartner Magic Quadrant for Public Cloud Infrastructure Managed Service Providers, Worldwide and has been honoured by Fortune, Forbes, and others as one of the best companies to work for.

Learn more at www.rackspace.com/en-gb or call us at **0208 734 2600**.

ABOUT VMWARE

VMware, a global leader in cloud infrastructure and business mobility, helps customers accelerate their digital transformation. VMware enables enterprises and service providers to master a software-defined approach to business and IT with VMware Cross-Cloud Architecture™ and solutions for the data center, mobility, and security. With 2015 revenue of $6.6 billion, VMware is headquartered in Palo Alto, CA and has over 500,000 customers and 75,000 partners worldwide.

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JULY 20, 2017