



rackspace

Rackspace Customer Story – IT Service Management

Giving Alemba the building blocks to future proof its business

Rackspace is helping IT service management leader Alemba broaden its offering and reach new customers.

Our customer

Alemba is an enterprise IT service management (ITSM) software provider with customers across the world operating in a range of sectors, including education, healthcare, financial services and government. Founded in 2007 and headquartered in the UK, it also has a significant focus on Australia and the US.

The obstacles they faced

In a competitive market, Alemba needed to be able to support existing customers and attract new ones in order to maintain its market leadership. As demand evolved, it needed to shift from selling on-premise to delivering Software-as-a-Service and cloud offerings.

How we helped

Alemba used Rackspace Service Blocks for Managed Public Cloud to design a customised infrastructure that could support both SMB and enterprise customers, while keeping costs – and in turn prices – manageable.

What we achieved together

With a single platform, Alemba is now better placed to capitalise on emerging innovations to deliver a wider range of services to customers of all sizes.

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Simon Nugent
CEO, Alemba

Rackspace helps Alemba bring IT service management into the cloud era

Alemba is a leading provider of IT service management software (ITSM). A set of best practices for running an IT organisation, ITSM covers everything from service desk ticketing to protecting physical infrastructure integrity. For Alemba, that has translated into working with customers across most sectors, including banking, professional services, the public sector and manufacturing.

It is a competitive market, and one which is becoming more cut-throat as software delivery models change. Traditionally sold

as on-premise licences, more customers are now looking for cloud and SaaS-based setups. This demand is also causing a growing number of small- and medium-sized businesses (SMB) to look towards cloud.

To cater for both evolving demands in the market and new types of customers, Alemba needed to develop a SaaS solution that met the demands of both SMBs and enterprise organisations. Working with Rackspace, and using Rackspace Service Blocks for Managed Public Cloud, the company has developed an infrastructure capable of offering ITSM templates aimed at smaller businesses, while still having the flexibility to develop more bespoke services for larger companies.

From data centres to cloud

Alemba was founded in 2007, initially as a reseller of IT service management software. In 2014, however, it took over the full development and support of what is now known as Alemba Service Manager.

Traditionally, the solution was offered as on-premise software. However, as the market evolved, more customers were looking for cloud and SaaS-based offerings. “We’re in a competitive marketplace,” explained Simon Nugent, CEO of Alemba. “If we’re to protect and grow our customer base, we need to be offering solutions that will take our customers forward. As their expectations

changed, it was strategically important for us to develop a secure cloud or SaaS-based service.”

Migrating from on-premise to a cloud model is no small undertaking. Initially, Alemba invested in its own data centre and hosted the solution itself. “It soon became clear that we needed to offer a lot more than we could feasibly provide from our own setup,” said Simon. “Key to our offering is the guarantee of availability and security, so we needed a platform that does this day-in, day-out.”

Alemba first chose Amazon Web Services (AWS). With a small team led by Alex Madgwick, IT services manager at Alemba, this shift meant a lot of time learning

about the new platform. “I spent roughly four months studying how AWS works and what would be best for us,” Alex said. “Once that was done, we were able to build a solution that suited us, but we also needed to validate it.”

It soon became clear to Alex and his team that while the move to cloud came with many benefits, there was still room for improvement when it came to cost management. “We were benefitting from improved scalability and availability, but at the same time, the financial model wasn’t suitable.”

Faced with the possibility of needing to invest more time in getting to grips with AWS, Alemba decided to turn to an experienced partner. For Alex, it meant being able to outline the parameters of what Alemba needed and it all being taken care of. “If we carried on doing it ourselves, any change, any amend, would be time our engineers were spending on the solution, and not helping current customers. We needed to get away from the daily grind of running a cloud service. With Rackspace, we make a call and they work to quickly devise a solution.”

The building blocks to a true cloud offering

All partnerships must start somewhere. With Alemba and Rackspace, the relationship began with a simple request to help build ASM Essentials, an affordable SaaS offering aimed at SMBs allowing them to take advantage of the benefits of a cloud-based ITSM solution.

It was through these initial conversations that Alemba realised Rackspace could support it across several different areas. “We very quickly concluded that Rackspace had the ability to assist in a whole host of functions. And understanding that our



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IT services manager, Alemba

future plans would introduce new support needs, we decided that it made sense to have Rackspace manage it all, rather than just limit ourselves to support for ASM Essentials,” said Simon.

Rackspace’s breadth of knowledge and consultancy has proved invaluable. “We’re using eight different systems through Rackspace and their AWS experts recommended an Infrastructure-as-Code (IaC) approach using a single AWS CloudFormation template,” explained Alex. “We had previously thought that we would need eight different templates, so to get that insight is vital when you’ve got a small team like ours.”

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Alex Madgwick, IT service manager, Alemba

Rackspace was able to support this through Rackspace Service Blocks, a subscription-based cloud consumption model which allows customers to select, combine, add or change on-demand cloud services to address their unique needs. Through Rackspace Service Blocks, Alemba has designed exactly what it needs, building a tailored and detailed breakdown of the work, as well as how much it will cost. As Alex points out, this approach “works really well for us. It means we can select services as and when we need them, customising depending on the demand we’re seeing. The model means that we only pay for what we actually need and adjust

accordingly, rather than having to go in for a fully managed service solution.”

For example, the Service Blocks model has allowed Alemba to tap into Rackspace’s security expertise and enhance its own security credentials, and along with Rackspace’s AWS expertise Alemba have been able to deploy a secure multi-tenant SaaS service for their SMB customer base. In addition, Alemba have been able to meet the extremely strict security needs of its customers, including a bank in Barbados. “Having backing from Rackspace means we’re able to deliver the solutions customers want via the cloud, without compromising on areas such as security,” said Alex.

Growing Alemba’s confidence

Combining Rackspace’s support and the flexibility of Rackspace Service Blocks has boosted Alemba’s offering to customers in a cost effective way. Rackspace has helped Alemba enable automation and quicker deployments leading to improved customer experience. Alemba has been empowered with the ability to offer basic templates to businesses that need only a certain level of support, while at the same time enabling the company to tackle bigger, more complex projects. According to Simon, this means being able to tackle a broader market with confidence. “We now have a clearly defined, universal offering for customers of all sizes, and we can meet their requirements in a way that’s scalable and sustainable for our own business.”

Alemba’s long-term goal is to move all customers onto a fully managed environment, helping Alex and his small team to free up more of their capacity. “What’s exciting is that we’re less than a year into working together and we’ve already achieved a huge amount. As we move fully

across, we’re going to see even bigger benefits, which means as a team we’ll be able to spend more of our time on supporting customers,” Alex said.

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Simon Nugent, CEO, Alemba

A foundation for the future

The migration to the cloud is, for Simon, a big move towards future proofing the business. “We’re about to release a major new version of our software, and the plan is for all our customers to move onto it. It’s been designed specifically for the cloud, and if we can get people away from legacy environments and using the latest versions, the opportunities for further development, and to use the likes of containerisation, are significant. Being able to migrate to a flexible cloud model on Service Blocks gives us a platform that will evolve as we do. It’s a great foundation for future growth, both for our customers’ ambitions and our own.”

About Rackspace

At Rackspace, we accelerate the value of the cloud during every phase of digital transformation. By managing apps, data, security and multiple clouds, we are the best choice to help customers get to the cloud, innovate with new technologies and maximise their IT investments. As a recognised Gartner Magic Quadrant leader, we are uniquely positioned to close the gap between the complex reality of today and the promise of tomorrow. Passionate about customer success, we provide unbiased expertise, based on proven results, across all the leading technologies. And across every interaction worldwide, we deliver Fanatical Experience™ — the best customer service experience in the industry. Rackspace has been honoured within the top 100 Great Places to Work for more than a decade.

Learn more at www.rackspace.com

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