rackspace.

Challenger cuts lead time by 95%

Rackspace aids Challenger, Singapore's largest IT retailer, in digitally transforming its business to meet changing market needs, follow its customers and remain a market leader.

Our customer

A dynamic retail market leader in consumer electronics based out of Singapore, known for its strong brand name, attractive ValueClub member privileges and strong product partnerships with major global brands.

The obstacles they faced

Challenger was faced with rapidly evolving market expectations and needed to transform its retail business into a true Online to Offline (O2O) model that provided a more integrated shopping experience.

How we helped

Managed Public Cloud - Amazon Web Services (AWS); Professional Services – Application Services / DevOps; Ecommerce Hosting; Security, Compliance

What we achieved together

Ability to easily automate and scale infrastructure, cutting lead times from 6-8 weeks down to 1-2 days, in addition to increased security and compliance and more IT resources to help the business innovate and increase revenue.

Challenger

IT retailer delivers quality, value and service

Challenger is a dynamic regional IT retailer known for its strong brand name, attractive ValueClub member privileges and strong product partnerships with major global brands.

Since its founding in 1982, Challenger has expanded to over 45 stores across Singapore, including superstores, mini stores and music stores. In 2012, the company started a private label, Valore, bringing affordable lifestyle and mobility accessories to its customers.

With one of the most distinguished loyalty programs in the retail scene, Challenger's ValueClub offers more than half a million (and growing) members discounts on the latest IT products, while being assured of quality, value and service.

Achieving a more integrated shopping experience

The Singaporean consumer, which traditionally enjoyed a more brick-and-mortar-based shopping experience, was gradually moving online to make their purchases. Challenger used this late adoption to catalyze its move online, as well as to optimize and enhance its entire IT environment.

Moreover, traditional and new disruptive businesses selling competing goods online were quickly gaining traction. Challenger was faced with the need to transform its business quickly to maintain a leadership position in the market.

Challenger was using an on-premises, in-house data center that wasn't providing the infrastructure needed to scale quickly.

The company's goal was to move from an offline mindset to an online one, creating a digital lifestyle ecosystem that would move its whole business platform to the cloud to better serve its customers and exceed expectations for information gathering, ordering, fulfillment and service.

This was not something Challenger took lightly, as it meant moving its core operational systems, including its point-of-sale, ERP and entire online marketplace onto the cloud. Because of this, infrastructure was a primary concern for the retail chain.

"We're eager to leverage all aspects of the cloud to support our entire business. We expect the cloud will be the platform for us to grow."

Joshua Woon Chief Technology Officer, Challenger

While running its own infrastructure, Challenger was occasionally forced to react to security concerns, mitigating after the fact any potential issues, such as its website being under DDoS attack. This prompted the organization to bring security concerns to the forefront of architecture conversations when beginning its journey to the cloud, ensuring that all monitoring and security could be proactively managed from the start.

When considering cloud services, Challenger was wary about which provider to choose, having heard a number of technical support horror stories. Challenger needed a partner that would not only manage the infrastructure the company needed to scale, but also could respond quickly, implement without downtime and account for all security concerns in the architecture.

The journey to digital transformation

Challenger was advised by Gartner® that Rackspace could potentially be a good fit for its transformation program. With its expertise in AWS migrations and strong managed services portfolio focusing on compliance and security, Challenger appreciated the guidance and assurance Rackspace was able to provide from the proposal stage onward.

Challenger's rapid growth — it had nearly doubled its number of stores in less than five years – required that its infrastructure be very responsive to the changes of its stores and outlets.

Moving core components of Challenger's business – like its ecommerce marketplace platform and payment gateways – required high levels of security. With its 24x7x365 monitoring and technical expertise, Rackspace was able to ease security concerns from the beginning.

Migrating to a cloud environment with Rackspace allowed Challenger to not only commit to its creation of a digital lifestyle ecosystem, but also accommodate the demands of the Singapore marketplace by improving its speed and agility in responding and making changes.

Scaling with the market

Challenger has already begun to see results from its partnership with Rackspace including:

• The ability to scale and meet demands of new stores, cutting lead times from 6-8 weeks down to 1-2 days

- A high level of security and compliance (including backup and disaster recovery) from the architecture up, allowing Challenger to move its entire business model to the cloud and transforming the company's business to an all-digital strategy.
- The ability to make the best use of its internal IT team's resources by alleviating previous demands of managing its on-site infrastructure, network, software, patching, and hardware repairs and replacement.

"Rackspace has had a great impact from the beginning," said Joshua Woon, Chief Technology Officer, Challenger. "The architect and operational teams have really provided us with valuable insights and technical advice, and they actually do the work and solve our issues. Rackspace can handle the architectural piece of things," he added.

As Challenger continues to scale, the partnership with Rackspace becomes even more imperative. While many organizations move only a few operations to the cloud, Challenger's migration of its entire business model was a landmark moment for the company, signaling a new era of a digital lifestyle ecosystem.

"We're not just going in simply to claim we're in the cloud," said Woon. "We're eager to leverage all aspects of the cloud to support our entire business. We expect the cloud will be the platform for us to grow."

Migration and management of AWS infrastructure can be filled with nuances and uncertainty, particularly in Singapore where compliance issues are a major concern for businesses. With Rackspace's guidance through the migration process, day-to-day management and knowledge of the Singapore market, Challenger can focus on continuing to grow and build the digital ecosystem that its customers have come to rely on.

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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 maximize their IT investments. As a recognized 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 honored by Fortune, Forbes, Glassdoor and others as one of the best places to work.

Learn more at **www.rackspace.com** or call **1-800-961-2888**.