



**rackspace**

Customer Case Study – Automotive

# Expertise evolves Pickles' cloud strategy

Pickles invests in a multi-cloud strategy to futureproof against the changing asset remarketing industry.

## Our customer

Pickles is Australia's No. 1 auction and valuation specialist and a trusted asset remarketing partner. In the last financial year, Pickles sold over \$2.6 billion in assets, with 41 percent of purchases made online through PicklesLIVE.

## The obstacles they faced

With customers increasingly demanding more from digital services, Pickles' existing managed private cloud service was limited in its interoperability and flexibility in connecting to current public cloud services for optimal scalability.

## How we helped

IT Transformation; Managed Hosting; Managed Hybrid Cloud; Managed Private Cloud – VMware®; Managed Public Cloud – Microsoft® Azure®; Ecommerce Hosting

## What we achieved together

Pickles partnered with Rackspace to deploy a hybrid cloud strategy that combines the benefits of a private cloud utilising VMware's software-defined data centre (SDDC) and a Disaster Recovery solution employing Rackspace and Microsoft technologies.

**Pickles**

## A family run business since 1964

Pickles is Australia's No. 1 auction and valuation specialist and a trusted asset remarketing partner. On behalf of vendors, Pickles sells cars, motorbikes, farming and agricultural equipment, mining, earthmoving and mobile plant, truck and transport, salvage assets, caravans, boats and other recreational goods. Pickles' major clients include the Australian government, local councils, fleet and lease companies, insurance companies, financial institutions and not-for-profit organisations. In the last financial year, Pickles sold over \$2.6 billion in assets, with 41 percent of purchases made to online buyers through PicklesLIVE.

## Rethinking the approach to cloud in evolving landscapes

As a direct result of investing in technology at an early stage, Pickles' application environment was aging by the year 2010. The rapidly evolving digital environment, particularly in the automotive and fleet space, was changing the way businesses and consumers buy and sell. Pickles recognised the need to provide more digitally-led customer experiences as a priority.

According to Simon Meyrick, CIO at Pickles, Pickles was previously heading down the path of a traditional and expensive enterprise resource planning (ERP) structure.

"We quickly realised that the world was rapidly changing in terms of technology and the cloud space. We needed to seriously rethink our approach, knowing a big part of our new digital strategy would be cloud-first and mobile-first," Meyrick noted.

Pickles is taking a holistic approach to proactively managing disruption in the asset remarketing space – from aggressive development and adoption of new tools and technologies, to actively addressing emerging trends such as autonomous cars, and a commitment to continual improvement of its customers' online experience. Technology has been instrumental in the growth of Pickles.

*"One of the things that I've absolutely learned in this digital transformation journey is to partner with the right people. Rackspace is a single vendor with skills across cloud offerings, including areas such as automation, that are vital to Pickles' digital transformation."*

SIMON MEYRICK, CIO, PICKLES

"We have a couple of key systems that were developed in house that are very innovative, and have really set us apart from our competition, including our long-standing auction system which enables buyers to bid from anywhere using a real-time simulcast solution and PAIRS, a vendor portal that gives clients the ability to manage their assets in real-time. These systems have given us a great springboard to attract and manage clients nationally," Meyrick added.

However, the Pickles team realised that to continue to combat market disruption and remain a leader would require further investments in technology to meet market demands and futureproof the business. It had

an incredible amount of data to leverage but needed the right technology in place in order to embrace new digital offerings.

Pickles had been operating in a hybrid private cloud/on-premises system for several years. This restricted environment meant it lacked the flexibility and scalability required to meet increasing customer expectations. It had been experiencing steady growth in the number of online buyers and Meyrick knew the solution would come down to a more robust cloud approach.

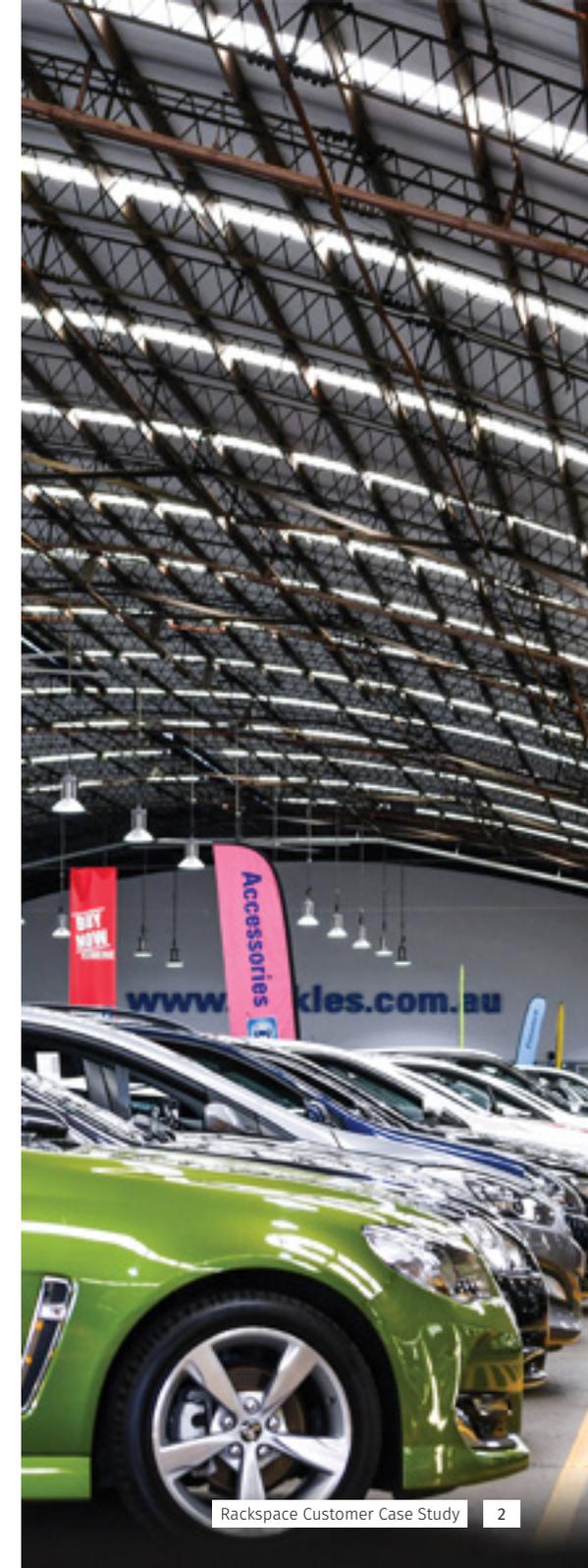
Following a review of the core business drivers and strategy, in the context of a rapidly changing technology landscape, Pickles went to market seeking a flexible, scalable partner who could address the current challenges and also provide expert guidance into the future.

After shortlisting several organisations, Pickles selected Rackspace based on its depth of cross-cloud skills, and its breadth of knowledge to assess and tailor a solution for Pickles' particular digital transformation requirements.

"Rackspace was the ideal fit for our hybrid public cloud strategy and a good, strong partner to help with our transformation," said Meyrick.

## One cloud doesn't fit all in the journey to digital transformation

The transformation needed to occur over a few phases. With many of Pickles ongoing projects in Office 365, a move of core, default workloads to Microsoft Azure made sense. Pickles also moved from its legacy private cloud/on-premises VMware environment into a Rackspace VMware platform, with a software-defined data centre (SDDC) for more flexibility. Rackspace then designed a



solution that allowed Pickles to have more connectivity between the new VMware environment and Microsoft Azure, including Disaster Recovery, which resulted in an immediate reduction in cost.

“We quickly learned that a single cloud wasn’t going to work for us. We had our existing application environment for a long time; it had been developed over many years and was not easily transferable into the cloud,” noted Meyrick.

The fully managed multi-cloud solution, a combination of hybrid cloud in both Microsoft Azure public cloud and VMware private cloud, gives Pickles the security and stability of hybrid cloud with the flexibility of public cloud. It also gave its IT team a single control centre across all environments, providing full insight and multiple touchpoints into control, access and reporting. On Rackspace’s recommendation, Pickles chose to leverage ‘managed’ and ‘un-managed’ environments within the SDDC to provide a test-and-develop environment with interaction from Rackspace as needed with standard SLAs.

## Solid partnerships and expertise on the road to digital transformation

With this bespoke multi-cloud solution, Pickles is now able to scale quickly, particularly around pace and onboarding infrastructure. According to Meyrick, simply being able to buy new workloads and commission new environments is significantly faster than it used to be. There is also a new ability to build elastic and scalable architecture, which is proving to be a huge benefit to Pickles by supporting a growing number of visitors to its digital platform, which exceeds 10 million page views each month.

Pickles has also leveraged the ability to scale applications and workloads, with a net result of significantly better-performing and more reliable applications.

“We’ve had a massive amount of improvement in terms of performance, such as page load times. We benchmark ourselves against competitor and industry websites and we’re definitely now one of the leaders in our market in terms of performance,” said Meyrick.

According to Meyrick, the small size of the team at Pickles driving the cloud journey was another reason Rackspace’s involvement was so crucial.

“We required a whole bunch of new skills. Rackspace removed the need to recruit or up-skill our staff to gain these new skills. We can now leverage Rackspace’s expert capabilities.”

As Pickles continues to execute its business strategy and tackle its market competition head on, the long-term plan is to move more of its applications into Microsoft Azure with Rackspace at the helm. It is investigating how to enhance the digital offerings for its wide range of buyer personas.

## 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.au](http://www.rackspace.com.au)

This case study is for your informational purposes only. RACKSPACE MAKES NO WARRANTIES, EXPRESS OR IMPLIED, IN THIS CASE STUDY. All customer examples and the information and results illustrated here are based upon the customer's experiences with the referenced Rackspace services and are not necessarily indicative of the future performance of Rackspace services. Rackspace detailed services descriptions and legal commitments are stated in its services agreements. Rackspace services' features and benefits depend on system configuration and may require enabled hardware, software or additional service activation. Actual cost of specific hosted environment and performance characteristics will vary depending on individual customer configurations and use case.

Copyright © 2019 Rackspace - Rackspace®, Fanatical Support®, Fanatical Experience™ and other Rackspace marks are either registered service marks or service marks of Rackspace US, Inc. in the United States and other countries. All other trademarks, service marks, images, products and brands remain the sole property of their respective holders and do not imply endorsement or sponsorship.

February 22, 2019 / Rackspace-Case-Study-Pickles-Case-Study-AUS-VMW-13524