Rackspace Technology manages Basware's cloud native transformation to meet the demands of over 150 million annual transactions

Financial supply chain solutions leader has modernised its platform and is shifting to AWS public cloud for SaaS delivery, freeing up resources to accelerate innovation.

Our customer

Basware is a Finland-based provider of purchase-to-pay solutions. Its employs around 1,300 people across 14 countries, and serves 1.5 million buyers and suppliers in over 100 countries. In 2019 it had net sales of €148m.

How we helped

Managed Public Cloud — Fanatical Support® for AWS, Rackspace Service Blocks, VMware CloudHealth, Managed hosting: Dedicated Servers, VMware Private Cloud and AWS Marketplace.

The obstacles they faced

To complete its journey from on-site customer installations to cloud native service delivery, Basware needed an experienced MSP to collaborate with on an AWS proof of concept before adopting a longer-term support role.

What we achieved together

Basware now powers over 150 million customer transactions annually which accounts for over €800+ billion. The migration to the AWS public cloud has accelerated Basware's adoption of cloud native ways of working and modernised the way it serves customers, allowing the company to focus internal resources on innovation rather than infrastructure management. Along the way it has automated many operational processes, reducing the time taken for some from days to just minutes.

basware

Simplify Operations, Spend Smarter.

> *"We've had great value from Rackspace Technology's experience as we've made our journey from a dedicated environment to becoming more cloud native."*
>
> Klaus Andersen,
> CEO, Basware

A platform for mission-critical service deliver

Basware provides networked purchase-to-pay solutions that help companies solve inefficient invoice processes. Through features such as automated matching and payment approval, these solutions improve cashflow visibility, simplify operations and allow customers to manager spend, smarter.

And it's a market leader: its 1,300-strong workforce across 14 countries serves 1.5 million buyers and suppliers in over 100 countries, generating net sales of €148m in 2019.

As Basware CEO Klaus Andersen explains, customers consider Basware's solutions to be mission critical: "They're at the core of their finance function, managing suppliers and paying bills for the goods they need to run their businesses.

As such, they demand 100% uptime and constant innovation from us to ensure they maximise efficiency and benefit from more intelligent business processes."

To help Basware deliver this to customers, Rackspace Technology™ recently supported the company as it migrated its solutions to the AWS public cloud. "99% of our business is now in the AWS public cloud," says Anderson.

The move has accelerated Basware's transformation towards cloud native ways of working, further modernised the way it serves customers and allowed it to focus internal resources on innovation rather than platform management.

Along the way it has automated many operational processes, reducing the time taken for some from days to just minutes. It can also now spin-up testing environments more quickly, with more than 50 running at any given time compared to one or two previously. And the ability to take advantage of cut-price compute in the shape of AWS Spot Instances has halved its continuous integration spend.

There from the beginning

Rackspace Technology has been a constant support partner throughout Basware's cloud journey, which began in 2010 with the development and launch of the first SaaS version of its solutions, hosted in a Rackspace Technology dedicated environment.

Alistair Gilbert, Director of DevOps and Basware's Research & Development (R&D) leader says: "Moving into the Rackspace Technology dedicated environment was our first real move into the SaaS world, and they helped us to take full advantage of the raw infrastructure, to keep it secure and make

sure that we had the required levels of availability and operability."

However, as their SaaS platform grew in scale and complexity, Basware found their internal R&D resources increasingly tied up with developing and maintaining operational platform components. In response, they engaged Rackspace Technology to initiate a proof of concept with the AWS public cloud in 2016.

"We wanted to apply our internal resourcing to innovation that would differentiate the core product and better serve customers through improved quality, capabilities and service levels," says Gilbert. "To do that, we wanted to focus less on the infrastructure side of things that people like AWS and Rackspace Technology would naturally do better."

While some of its platform could be lifted and shifted to the AWS environment, and those customers transitioned quickly, some were more complex owing to harder dependencies that existed between customer systems and the Basware solution. "That's when we truly started to engage with Rackspace Technology," says Gilbert.

Together, and before moving any customers over, Basware and Rackspace Technology rearchitected the product in question to make it cloud ready and therefore more capable of running closer to the AWS platform. They also built a robust, world-class automation framework, that would speed up deployment and provide ongoing operational improvements for its teams when serving customers.

"Rackspace Technology helped us to understand the key things to validate in terms of security

and making sure that the application would maintain the levels of service, performance and availability that our customers expect. They were always there to support us."

Alistair Gilbert, Director of DevOps, Basware

Rackspace Technology also provided vital commercial flexibility as Basware adopted its new business model. That support came first in the shape of the early winding down of spend commitments associated with the dedicated environment's infrastructure. And secondly in the negotiations with AWS to secure enterprise discounts and appropriate support packages.

"This was our first time engaging with AWS, so having Rackspace there to support us throughout that was extremely valuable," says Gilbert.

Today, with the vast majority of the migration complete, Basware's team has been quick to establish its cloud native maturity, moving past simply leveraging AWS as an infrastructure platform. This includes making use of AWS S3 storage, AWS RDS databases, and application load balancers. And, in the aspects of its solutions where its most appropriate, it includes leveraging AWS Lambda serverless technology, Dynamo DB NoSQL databases and AWS Step Functions for serverless microservice orchestration.

Basware also utilise AWS Marketplace through Rackspace to make their software purchases — the major items they purchase are Dynatrace, Trend Micro and Buurst.

An evolving relationship

Post-migration, the relationship between Basware and Rackspace Technology has evolved to one built around continual and consistent support in a service-oriented and value focussed way, according to Gilbert.

This involves quarterly business reviews where both parties can align on their direction and objectives, to understand how best to support each other, as well as monthly and bi-weekly catch-ups on potential operational improvements. These provide regular opportunities for Basware to leverage Rackspace Technology's deep AWS capabilities and best practice expertise in, for example, security and machine learning.

Gilbert says: "In the security domain, Rackspace Technology initially helped us through the transitions from on-premises, to managed hosting, to public cloud, and to the realisation that the cloud can be significantly more secure if approached correctly. Now they provide constant and proactive engagement through notifications of need-to-know security developments and recommended approaches."

Gilbert also says that Rackspace Technology's AWS Immersion Days — in-depth training sessions on specific AWS services — have become important drivers of innovation in Basware's technical strategy.

"Our whole data and analytics team spent three days with Rackspace Technology experts going through a hands-on workshop regarding AWS's machine learning services. The feedback that we got from the people that took part was absolutely fantastic," says Gilbert. "Yes, we're a very strong R&D organisation but there are always things we don't know. But that training has enabled us to begin delivering various key strategic capabilities that are on our roadmap."

Impactful cost visibility

Access to VMware's CloudHealth tooling for automated cloud cost optimisation is among the wider services Basware receives from Rackspace Technology. The solution enables organisations to precisely track cloud spend by cost centre, tagging resources and services to create easy-to-use dashboards that show precisely where both spend and CPU resources are being allocated.

Gilbert reports that the tooling has brought significant value to Basware. "CloudHealth has completely changed the way we internally manage and govern our costs," he says. "No more crazy Excel spreadsheets with data copied and pasted from various sources. We can depend entirely upon CloudHealth's real-time data to create our own graphs, budgets and targets to quickly reveal cist-related gaps or risks."

A best-in-class partner for the future

Looking forward, as the business world embraces ever greater digitalisation in response to the COVID-19 pandemic and beyond, Basware is expecting greater demand for its solutions. Gilbert feels solutions that deliver efficiency, simplify operations and enable businesses to spend smarter are viewed as investment priorities at this highly uncertain time — something the firm's excellent recent financial performance bears out.

"Our future is all about maximising our contribution to customers' operational efficiency — and our use of AWS services will be fundamental to this. From better leveraging the data that we have to provide BI capabilities to our customers, to applying AI to better extract and classify data from paper invoices," he says.

That will require keeping up to date with innovation in AWS's range of services, to ensure Basware is always best placed to capitalise on new opportunities. And Rackspace Technology will continue to provide critical support to Basware in this regard. "We've had great value from Rackspace Technology's experience as we've made our journey from a dedicated environment to becoming more cloud native," says Anderson.

"Innovation in the public cloud, around AWS's tools and security capabilities, is fast-paced, continuous and complex. Rackspace helps us navigate this by providing a layer between us and AWS to help us quickly focus on what's most relevant to Basware and our goals."

Klaus Andersen, CEO, Basware

To that end, Basware will remain true to its long-term strategy of complementing its own advanced capabilities by partnering with the world's best.

As Anderson explains: "Our partnership strategy is to partner with the best that are out there; naturally, if we work with leaders we can deliver the best capabilities through them. In my opinion, Rackspace Technology is the best managed service provider for AWS and deliver the best value for Basware — understanding our strategy, business model, risks, customer demands, opportunities. Without a doubt it helps us deliver the best results for our customers."

About Rackspace Technology

Rackspace Technology is the multicloud solutions expert. We combine our expertise with the world's leading technologies — across applications, data and security — to deliver end-to-end solutions. We have a proven record of advising customers based on their business challenges, designing solutions that scale, building and managing those solutions, and optimising returns into the future.

As a global, multicloud technology services pioneer, we deliver innovative cloud capabilities to help customers build new revenue streams, increase efficiency and create incredible experiences. Recognised as a best place to work, year after year, by Fortune, Forbes, Great Places to Work and Glassdoor, we attract and develop world-class talent to deliver the best expertise to our customers. Everything we do is underpinned by an obsession with our customers' success — our Fanatical Experience™ — so they can work faster, smarter and stay ahead of what's next.

Learn more at **www.rackspace.com/en-gb** or call UK: **+44 203 553 6268**