



rackspace

Customer Case Study – Financial Services

Charles River Leverages Hosted Virtualization

Rackspace helped Charles River meet the demands of rapid growth with virtualization, while modernizing delivery and improving customer experiences.

Our customer

Charles River Development is an investment management SaaS and services provider for some of the world's largest insurance companies, and mutual and pension funds.

The obstacles they faced

The organization wanted to move its SaaS from customer data centers to virtualized infrastructure to increase efficiency, improve the customer experience and lower costs.

How we helped

Managed Hosting; Professional Services; Professional Services – Application Services/DevOps; Private Cloud; VMware®; Rackspace Private Cloud Powered by VMware; Rackspace Application Services/DevOps.

What we achieved together

Charles River delivers a modern customer experience while bringing new efficiencies to internal processes and accelerating growth to gain a larger market share.



Charles
River

Charles River Development

Founded in Boston in the mid-1980s, Charles River Development is an investment management software and services provider for investment firms in more than 40 countries. Over 25,000 users leverage its investment offering to manage more than \$25 trillion in assets.

Several years ago, Charles River made a key strategic decision to offer a hosted solution as an alternative to its on-premises model. “Many of our clients found it very challenging to manage the complexity of an enterprise platform on their own, so we created hosting and application management services,” said Edward Fitzpatrick, Vice President of SaaS Operations at Charles River. “Clients could focus on what they do best, which is trading and managing investments, and we could focus on what we do best, which is running the Charles River platform.”

Leveraging hosted virtualization for a competitive edge

Initially, Charles River offered hosting and application management as optional services. It soon realized it could significantly improve customer experience and total cost of ownership by creating a private cloud-based offering combining Charles River’s software expertise, standards and best practices with high levels of configurability and integration capabilities.

“A virtualized Software-as-a-Service (SaaS) environment helps us provide a more cost-effective, flexible foundation for supporting our clients with the best possible solution to meet their needs,” said Fitzpatrick. “We can roll out upgrades more frequently to give them faster access to new feature

sets and enhancements with a predictable, scalable cost model.”

But given the mission-critical nature of the investment platform, Charles River had to choose a solution carefully. The breadth of the Rackspace technology portfolio — including deep experience in both cloud infrastructure and threat-centric security — strongly appealed to Charles River. Rackspace engineered a secure, stable and scalable VMware environment that delivered both the efficiency gains and enhanced capabilities Charles River had envisioned.

“After we adopted Rackspace Managed Services and virtualization, our hosting business and what we now call our cloud-based solution really started to take off,” said Fitzpatrick. “The timing was great. At that point, our customers had gotten more comfortable with the idea of outsourcing and running critical applications in the cloud, so it all came together at the right time and has since grown at an impressive rate.”

To advance its capability to the next level, Charles River has decided to proceed with Rackspace Private Cloud (RPC) powered by VMware. The success of the solution to date, along with increased efforts to win new SaaS clients and transition existing clients to the cloud, has created a new challenge for Charles River: explosive demand. “That is where Rackspace Private Cloud powered by VMware comes into play,” said Fitzpatrick. “We see RPC as critical to enabling us to meet our growth projections.”

With RPC delivering a software-defined data center (SDDC) capability based on VMware technologies, Charles River will benefit from end-to-end virtualization of the entire private cloud stack. The full solution includes compute (vSphere®), storage (vSAN®) and network virtualization (NSX®).

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Edward Fitzpatrick
Vice President of
Operations, Charles River

Powering rapid growth

As its client base grew, Charles River learned that its “traditional ways of deploying and provisioning systems were simply not fast enough,” said Fitzpatrick. “They were still too labor-intensive.”

Rackspace responded by aligning its internal support teams (sales, network security, storage and virtualization) to increase the agility of its service delivery. And it worked with Charles River to streamline the company’s delivery methods and accelerate SaaS deployment.

“Rackspace has done a very good job advising us on how to change the traditional delivery process, taking steps out of the provisioning process,” said Fitzpatrick. “We are working to leverage DevOps technology to automate the provisioning of servers and virtual machines, and we have our first application of that technology running in one of our environments hosted on Rackspace.

“We’re also continuing to push the envelope to try to take time out of the process. We’re talking with Rackspace about ways we can integrate our objectives of faster provisioning with Rackspace capabilities.”

Adding value with Fanatical Support

While its Rackspace-led transformation has provided great value for Charles River, the company has found additional value in the responsiveness of Rackspace specialists.

“We grew very quickly, and we know we’re a very demanding client, but what’s really worked well for us is having stability and consistency in the account team,” said Fitzpatrick. “They get to know us, they understand us and our customers. They know what’s driving us, and they know what they

need to do within Rackspace to deliver the services that make us successful.”

Fitzpatrick sees the larger Rackspace culture of Fanatical Support® at work in his interactions with his account team and other Rackspace employees.

“I remember the first time I was introduced to Rackspace, I saw the slogan, ‘Fanatical Support,’ and I smiled,” Fitzpatrick said. “It sounds great and I’ve dealt with many hosting vendors over the years and in all honesty, I have to say that it is true. It’s much more than just a slogan. You can feel it when you talk to Rackers and feel their passion for customer service. That really is a key differentiator. Some of the bigger traditional hosting providers are solid, but they’re just not as responsive and energetic in trying to meet customers’ needs. So, it’s far more than a slogan for us.”

About Rackspace

Rackspace is modernizing IT in today’s multi-cloud world. By delivering IT-as-a-service, we help customers of all industries, sizes and locations realize the power of digital transformation without the complexity and expense of managing it on their own. Our comprehensive portfolio of managed services across applications, data, security and infrastructure on the world’s leading public and private cloud platforms enables us to provide unbiased expertise. 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**.

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