

Migrating gohenry to public cloud for increased security, scalability and flexibility

Rackspace Technology supported gohenry's migration from private cloud infrastructure to Google Cloud Platform, delivering additional flexibility and security for ambitious growth plans in an increasingly cashless society.

Our customer

Launched in the UK in 2012, gohenry is a prepaid Visa debit card and mobile app with unique parental controls designed exclusively for 6-18 year-olds to help them learn good money habits in an increasingly cashless society. gohenry's innovative app gives young people the freedom to learn and take charge of their own spending and saving in a safe environment, while the app's parent version allows parents to guide their children through the early stages of digital finance.

How we helped

Working with Rackspace Technology as its trusted advisory partner, gohenry evaluated the different public cloud options and subsequently ran a proof of concept on two different platforms. The company decided to migrate to Google Cloud for its fit with gohenry's company culture and the platform's flexibility and security. As a Managed Service Provider (MSP) for Google Cloud, Rackspace Technology supported gohenry throughout the migration to ensure a smooth journey from the private cloud environment to public cloud.

The obstacles they faced

For several years, gohenry has partnered with Rackspace Technology for hosting its application in a private, dedicated cloud environment. However, with ambitious growth plans, gohenry decided to explore the potential of public cloud and turned to Rackspace Technology for help. Alongside this, the multicloud experts at Rackspace Technology continue to provide private cloud support, through a custom hybrid environment development for their payments application.

What we achieved together

gohenry now has an infrastructure with the flexibility to scale with its growing customer base and support future growth plans in the US. The company can also rest assured that the data of its young customers is secure with data encryption, while it has the continued potential to innovate and evolve towards a cloud native environment.



“Looking back to when we first launched, gohenry was working off just two servers to run the entire business. At the time, we had far fewer customers, so the system was working fine for us. But soon, we needed more power and scalability to support our growing customer base, and that’s when we started working with Rackspace Technology,”

Jeff Faubel - Managing Chief Technology Officer, gohenry

Embracing the flexibility of public cloud

Technology is evolving everyday life and that includes financial matters including pocket money. Instead of coins and notes, we are increasingly using contactless and digital payment methods to spend our money. For example, gohenry’s recent data shows online spending by its UK customers jumped by 65% in the first two weeks of lockdown, with Nintendo, PlayStation, and Microsoft some of the most popular outlets up 152%, 70% and 64% respectively. Disney+ also proved a huge hit with under-18s, with a massive 1,159% leap in spend during the first month of its launch.

As a result of these trends, gohenry, based around a mobile app, is on a mission to make every kid good with money in our increasingly cashless society. Its prepaid Visa debit card and app, designed exclusively for 6-18-year-olds, enables parents the ability to set tasks and spending boundaries, whilst their children learn to earn, spend, save and give responsibly in a safe environment.

When gohenry first started working with Rackspace Technology around five years ago, it decided to host its systems in a dedicated private cloud environment. But, since migrating 99% of its services to Google Cloud, gohenry, doubled its customer base between 2018 and 2020, reaching one million

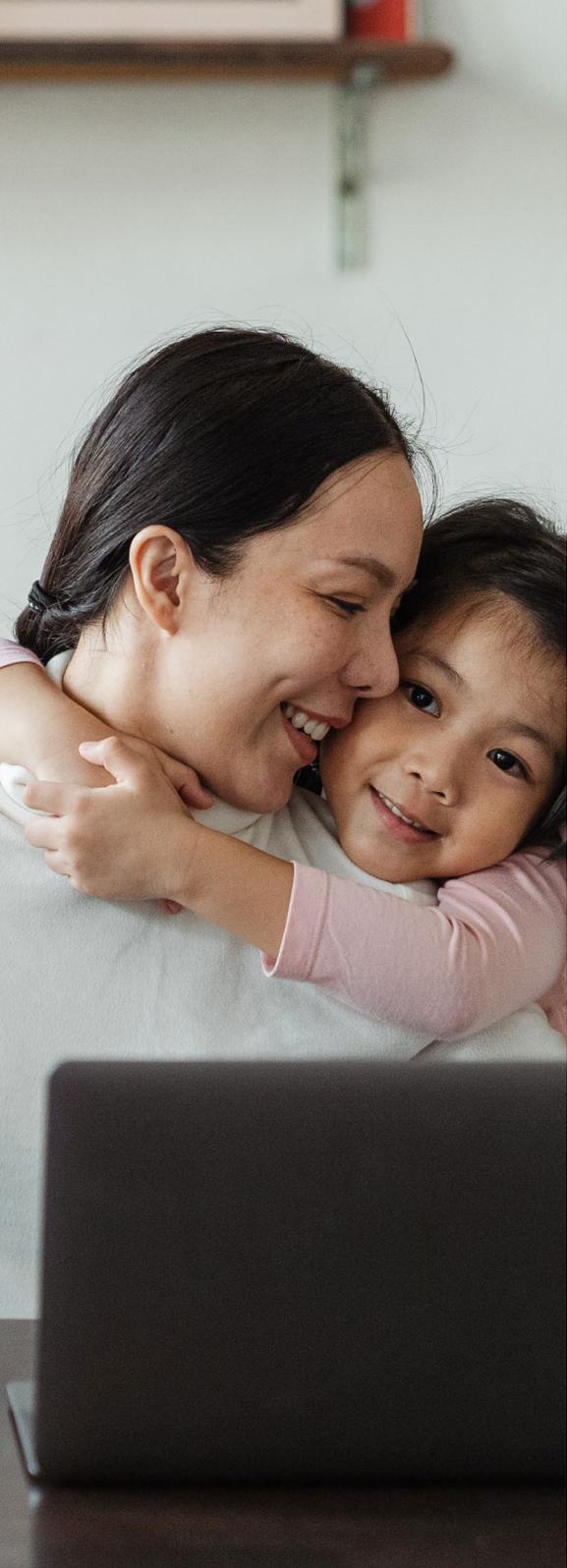
customers. It also sharply increased its revenue year-on-year with latest reports showing an annual turnover of £13 million in 2019 as families increasingly look to cashless solutions to help children become skilled in money management. This meant the company needed to explore alternative solutions and gohenry decided to consider public cloud for the first time.

Working with Rackspace Technology as its trusted advisory partner, gohenry evaluated several public cloud migration options and ran a proof of concept with two platforms.

Faubel commented, “The discussion with Rackspace Technology was very open. We knew we could trust the team to know our

needs inside out. We decided the parameters on which to base the decision, which included price, flexibility, security, and the openness of our relationship with the cloud provider. We chose Google Cloud, namely because we thought it was a better fit for our culture. The team was very open to discussion, ideas, and different designs, which put us at ease and made us feel comfortable.”

Having recently reached a milestone of one million customers globally, the company intends to expand the business significantly in North America as part of its ambitious growth plans. For this, the scalability and flexibility offered by Google Cloud and its capability to automate infrastructure deployments were vital.



“The pandemic has entirely altered how consumers spend money — and we expect at least part of this change to be permanent. Many of our customers now are the first generation who have grown up without cash being the mainstay of their interaction with money and COVID-19 has just propelled that shift in society even faster. This trend is also going to be seen in the US, and it is our intention to accelerate growth in the region. What we need to support us during this time is the availability and scalability that public cloud offers to cope with our rapidly expanding customer base and enable the capability to create new servers at the click of a button. This is exactly what Google Cloud allows us to do.”

Louise Hill — Co-founder and Chief Operating Officer, gohenry

Migration for scalability, flexibility and availability

As a MSP for Google Cloud with over 370 technical certifications, Rackspace Technology supported gohenry throughout the entire migration process from its private cloud environment to Google Cloud, ensuring the process was as smooth as possible.

According to Faubel, “Despite all the benefits of the public cloud, it’s also a complex world to navigate and we couldn’t have done it without the expertise that Rackspace Technology brings to the table.”

gohenry is now leveraging several services within Google Cloud including Kubernetes, along with additional management tools like Terraform, which are allowing the company to manage its quality of services to be automatically scaled as the company wishes.

“The ability for automated scalability is vital for us as our customer base grows,” said Faubel. “This is even more crucial when we have big TV and social media marketing campaigns live — which very significantly increase the amount of traffic we manage. The ability to cope with peaks and troughs like this is something that we were not able to achieve with our private static infrastructure. It has been an amazing opportunity to be able to leverage these kinds of technologies whilst still receiving the invaluable support we get from continuing to work with Rackspace Technology.”

According to [Gartner](#), 70% of businesses are overspending on cloud. But by working with a MSP like Rackspace Technology, companies can significantly improve their cost optimisation by only provisioning the required resources, enabling automated alerts for unusual spikes in usage and analysing the available insights for increased optimisation of costs in the future.

Faubel explained, “With the increased scalability of Google Cloud and by working with Rackspace Technology on this migration, we have already been able to optimise our costs in the cloud. But we realise this isn’t a one stop shop and is a process we need to continue with well into the future to ensure our cloud costs remain where they should be.”

Leveraging around the clock support for uptime and security

Rackspace Technology continues to provide gohenry with 24-hour support, seven days a week. Monitoring its infrastructure and services, the team ensures that gohenry can provide its customers with around the clock availability.

“With such young customers to support, it’s vital that they are able to access their money when they need it,” Faubel explained. “We need constant surveillance of our infrastructure to ensure 100% availability, all of the time. At gohenry, we have a small team of developers. The addition of third party support from Rackspace Technology has helped strengthen our capabilities and — with the power of Google Cloud behind us — ensured we can support our customers well into the future too.”

Maintaining a strong security posture is also critical to delivering gohenry customers 99.999% uptime, as well as protecting their data. “gohenry has a big responsibility on its shoulders when it comes to protecting the data of the one million plus customers using our services. To be able to do so properly and effectively means that the security and integrity of our systems is absolutely paramount,” affirmed Hill.

gohenry is now leveraging the security features of Google Cloud, including its internal email service that allows the company to enable or disable functionality to its own employees. The company is also using cloud data encryption as default, enabling worldwide transaction connectivity within Google systems and Google's own private network. gohenry has modernised its data management in the cloud and is benefiting from Google Cloud's automatic backups and having the ability to switch from one database to another to further bolster its data security posture.

"The infrastructure design that we have built within Google Cloud for gohenry is a lot more redundant and highly available than our previous private infrastructure because there is a lot more flexibility," Faubel continued.

Though, like most businesses, gohenry has multicloud needs, it has worked with Rackspace Technology to ensure that its applications are supported in optimal cloud environments. Experts from Rackspace Technology developed a custom multicloud environment for gohenry — a hybrid set up which allows them to connect their public cloud environment to private cloud to securely support their payments application.

"The ability for us to work with technical experts who can consult across a range of public and private cloud options is a huge advantage for gohenry," comments Faubel. "Having one team to contact with a holistic view of our environment makes us more efficient and ensures our customers are receiving the optimum service."

Supporting a world of digital natives

"We have grown fast in the last few years, but we want to accelerate our growth even more in the US," said Faubel. "We are confident

that the infrastructure that we've built with Rackspace Technology and Google Cloud can support that growth. So, if the marketing team decides to launch a big TV campaign next week, we know we're prepared to cope with the increased traffic and growth to our customer base."

To further support this growth, gohenry has plans to continue automating some of the functionality that it has implemented with Google Cloud, such as the scalability of the service and adding more monitoring into the system. This will support the organisation in moving towards a cloud native approach that will empower them to be more innovative and agile in the future as they continually develop new banking solutions that meet the changing customer expectations.

This, the team believes, will be increasingly important as we see an even more rapid shift towards a cashless society — something that gohenry's young customers have been spearheading.

"According to our [2019 Youth Economy Report](#), only 14% of 6-18 year olds' money is being withdrawn at an ATM. They are choosing technology and a cashless way of life, and this is only going to become more prominent in younger generations," Hill explained.

"The expectations of this generation, for example, are already the highest we have ever seen and are completely different to those of millennials. They are digital natives. When it comes to the immediacy and availability of service,

they just expect what they need to be there and to be working! Having technology partners like Rackspace Technology and Google Cloud is therefore vital to ensure our services are scalable, available, and immediate. We will continue to work with them to be a key part of our strategy moving forward as the society that we live in continues to evolve."

Louise Hill — Co-founder and Chief Operating Officer, gohenry

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**

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