Customer Case Study – Transportation

RocketRoute fuels global flight services with critical data

RocketRoute delivers terabytes of digital flight planning and dispatching data to pilots around the world in seconds versus minutes backed by Rackspace support for Amazon Web Services.

Our customer

RocketRoute is a fast-growing pioneer in digital aviation services, delivering innovative, smart technologies and critical data to support flight processes in every country and airport on the planet.

The obstacles they faced

After rapid and sustained growth, RocketRoute realized it needed the massive scalability and global footprint of AWS, but lacked migration and management expertise.

How we helped

IT Transformation; Professional Services; Migration; Managed Public Cloud – Amazon Web Services.

What we achieved together

Combining the reach and scalability of AWS with the digital expertise of Rackspace, RocketRoute executed a complex cloud migration flawlessly, freeing the team to focus on strategic innovation.

RocketRoute

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>
> Uwe Nitsche
> CEO, RocketRoute

Expanding global reach to pilots in the cloud

RocketRoute is a fast-growing pioneer in digital flight planning and aviation services, providing software that dramatically speeds up the process of filing a flight plan and dispatching a plane. By integrating many disparate sources of information, RocketRoute's web and mobile applications can often reduce filing time from 20 minutes to 30 seconds.

"Turning this into a single automated process — which is unseen by users, who are just tapping on their mobile devices — is so much faster than legacy systems, and it gives customers valuable time on the runway for last-minute changes," said Steven Morgan, Global Sales Manager at RocketRoute.

As a result, the company has seen explosive growth since its founding in 2010. Customers used RocketRoute to plan 51,000 flights in the most recent fiscal quarter, and it expects that number to double next year. Based in the U.K., RocketRoute now services every airport and country in the world. It has also customized its mobile app for emergency medical flights, and rescue personnel in multiple countries use the app to save time and increase survival odds.

A migration challenge like "open-heart surgery"

RocketRoute's rapid and sustained growth created significant infrastructure challenges. "We just grew and grew and grew, and we reached a point where we needed to expand globally into multiple continents with multiple data centers," said CEO Uwe Nitsche. And with data privacy regulations in flux across the world, RocketRoute needed a truly global footprint to meet changing compliance requirements.

"That's when we started looking at AWS, with its global footprint and big features like elastic storage, Route 53, DNS management — all that stuff," recalled Nitsche.

But RocketRoute had no AWS or cloud migration expertise in-house, and the company needed to execute the migration flawlessly. With emergency service providers among its customers, including the Austrian Air Rescue Services, delays or slowdowns might literally be life-threatening.

The migration would also be complex. RocketRoute facilitates tens of thousands of flights per month, in every corner of the globe, and that means continuously ingesting and analyzing massive amounts of data: wind and weather information, runway status, air traffic data, local permitting requirements, etc. "We're moving literally terabytes of data around on a regular basis," noted Nitsche.

"This migration was like open-heart surgery," he concluded. "Migrating a data center that runs a system like RocketRoute — it's a living system 24x7, with pilots around the world filing flight plans. You can't just stop the system and then restart it somewhere else."

Engineering and migration expertise delivers a flawless outcome

RocketRoute knew it needed a technology partner to manage such a complex migration. After evaluating its options, it chose Rackspace, which offered deep expertise in application migration, infrastructure optimization and AWS — plus the industry-best responsiveness of always-on support. The migration came off without a hitch.

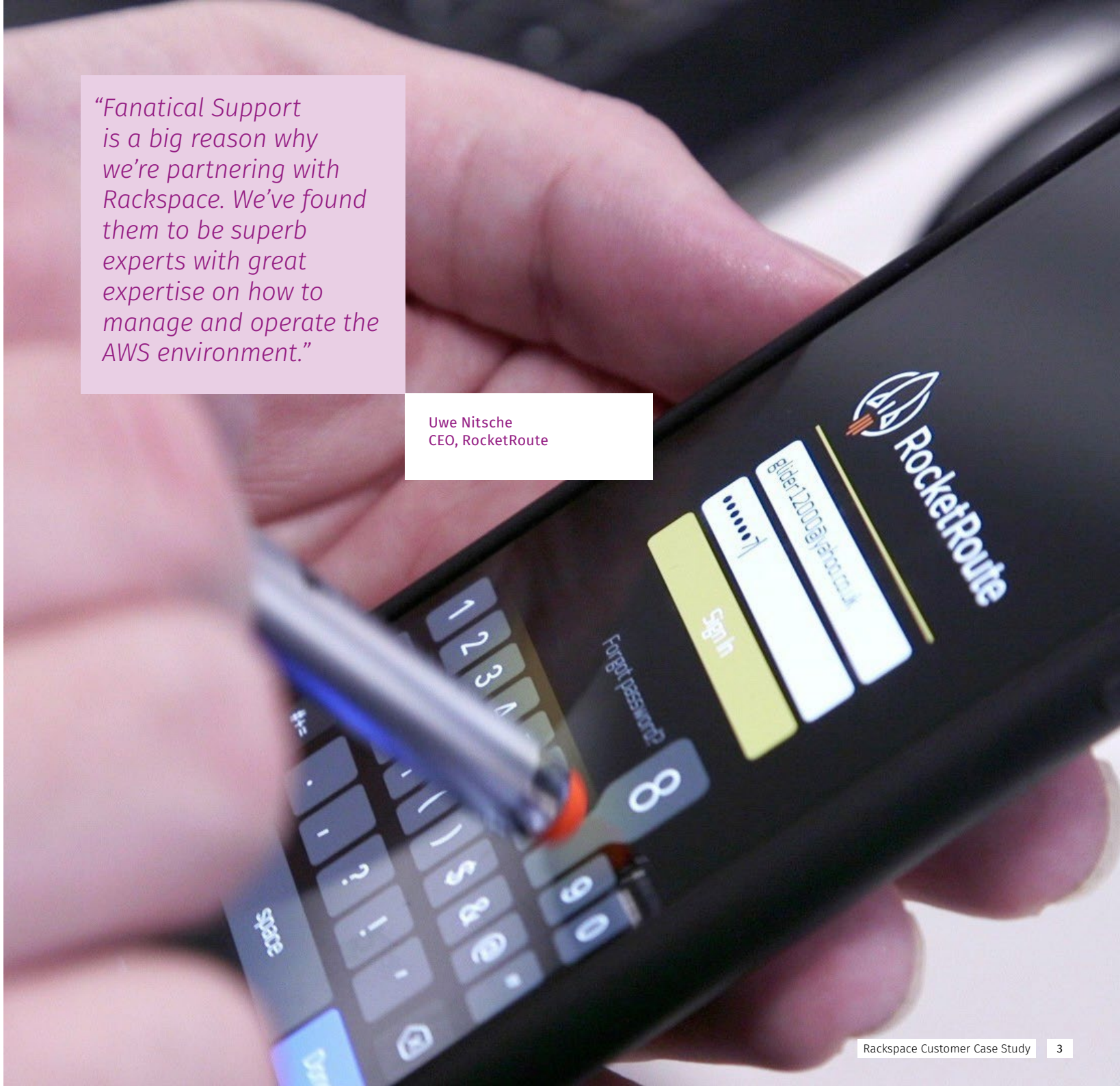
"We found that Rackspace, with its engineering expertise and its support team, was a best-fit for us to help us manage the transition," said Nitsche. "They brought the expertise of how to manage a large data network on the AWS platform, and with that expertise and support we managed to come through the migration very successfully."

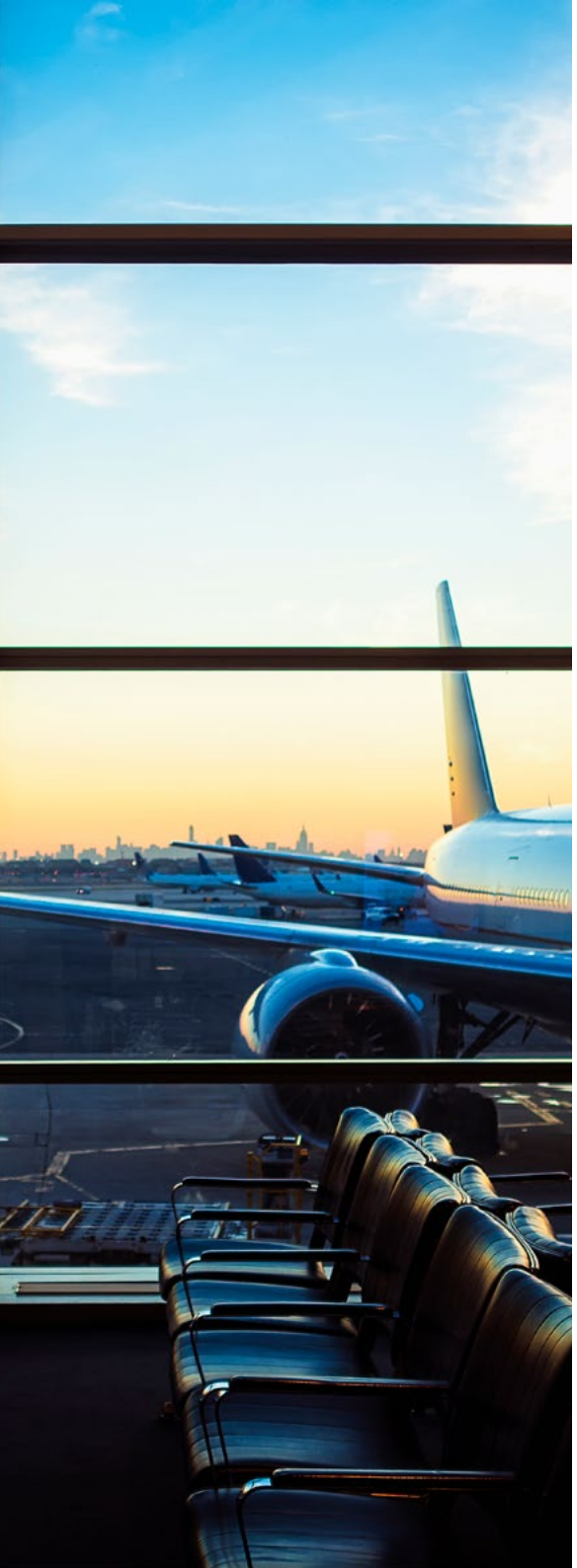
The partnership didn't end with the successful migration, as RocketRoute realized it could leverage Rackspace expertise to fully optimize its AWS deployment.

"They know a lot more than we do about how to most efficiently build the servers and services, and manage and operate the AWS environment," said Nitsche. "Their support capability is a big reason we're partnering with them as we transition to AWS infrastructure. On top of that, Rackspace adds their Navigator service, which gives us a 24x7 15-minute response SLA, which we couldn't provide internally in a cost-efficient way."

"Fanatical Support is a big reason why we're partnering with Rackspace. We've found them to be superb experts with great expertise on how to manage and operate the AWS environment."

Uwe Nitsche
CEO, RocketRoute





RocketRoute sees Rackspace partnership as key to future growth

AAfter its move to AWS, RocketRoute continued to expand globally. It now has over 100 employees, including additional IT resources. But given the demands on its systems and services, it envisions a long-term partnership with Rackspace.

“We use Rackspace as an extension of our in-house experts and system support,” said Nitsche. Reproducing Rackspace service and expertise — including industry-best service-level agreements — would be cost-prohibitive.

“So there are real economical reasons as well as practical reasons to work with Rackspace well into the future,” noted Nitsche.

Beyond cost-efficiency, RocketRoute sees strategic business benefits in the agile service delivery Rackspace provides. “This structure where Rackspace helps us manage the infrastructure really allows us to focus much more on the services and the customer-service level,” observed Nitsche. “The hardware is to a large extent taken care of, so we really can focus on giving the customer the absolute best support, and smoothest and fastest service.”

As RocketRoute anticipates a long period of rapid growth, its leadership is counting on Rackspace support. “One of the benefits of teaming up with Rackspace is you can flexibly respond to growth without having to ramp up your internal team,” Nitsche said.

“That takes pressure off of HR and pressure off internal costs, but you can still flexibly respond to the market. From our perspective, the future looks bright. We’re on the route to becoming a dominant global player in flight planning services, and Rackspace is the perfect partner to help us achieve our goals.”

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Uwe Nitsche – CEO, RocketRoute

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™. 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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