



rackspace

Rackspace Customer Story – education & training

Helping Tribal Group excel with public cloud

Our customer

Tribal Group is a global provider of products and services to support the delivery of education, learning, and training services. With more than 850 employees working across five continents, it is one of the largest providers to the higher education and vocational training sectors, supporting student management systems and fully managed shared services. It supplies student management systems to more than half of the UK's higher education institutions, as well as a number of leading universities across the globe.

How we helped

Rackspace helped Tribal move to a multi-cloud environment, working collaboratively to design a public cloud-first strategy that expands its offering for new customers while simultaneously supporting a significant platform migration of existing customers. Rackspace supported Tribal on the development of its new offering across AWS and Microsoft Azure, as well as jointly delivering cloud installations for customers. With multi-cloud environments opening businesses up to thousands of product updates, Rackspace helped Tribal navigate this complexity with its deep understanding of the Tribal Group business and unbiased cloud expertise.

The obstacles they faced

Digital disruption is affecting all industries and the higher education sector is no different, with changing student expectations driving the need to innovate, and the pace of business calling for more agile and flexible infrastructure. With a constantly changing landscape and a growing interest in cloud, Tribal was looking to evolve its cloud offering to maintain its leadership in the education sector and further shape market trends.

What we achieved together

Through its move to a multi-cloud strategy with Rackspace, Tribal has established a strong cloud offering and improved its position in the market. It has also achieved cost efficiencies, with cost optimisation consultancy from Rackspace and streamlined solution delivery. Over an 18-month period following the launch of the new offering, 90 per cent of Tribal's new customers opted into the new offering.

TRIBAL



“We didn’t want a customer/supplier relationship, we wanted a partner who could engage with us and our customers. Rackspace has achieved this since day one”

Graham Barton,
Commercial Director,
Cloud Services, Tribal Group

Learning to embrace digital disruption

The education sector is facing massive digital disruption, with industry competition both increasing and broadening due to globalisation, and the emergence of new education pathways. At the same time, student expectations are rapidly changing, with more demand for digital learning and campus experiences.

Against this backdrop, large-scale change is taking place in terms of the role technology plays within education institutions. Universities and training providers need to ensure they have the infrastructure to support innovation, as well as the ability to

rapidly develop and refine digital services to meet the needs of students, staff, academics, and other customers.

With increased emphasis on flexibility, scalability, and agility, many education institutions are looking towards public cloud as a platform to support their digital transformation. Tribal is a global service provider for the education sector, helping higher education and vocational training institutions with technology solutions to support the delivery of learning and training services. Rackspace’s team of professional services, migration and cloud experts helped Tribal to migrate to a multi-cloud environment and design, build, and scale out a public cloud offering for new customers.

“The market has and is moving very quickly. If you’d have told us five years ago that our customers would be looking for a public cloud-first approach, we would have been surprised. But that’s the nature of the transformation this sector is undergoing, and why we leaned on Rackspace to help us meet the market’s needs,” said Graham Barton, Commercial Director, Cloud Services, Tribal Group.

Partnering for success

On top of sweeping digital transformation, the education industry is increasingly moving towards a 24/7 model with flexible learning, and around-the-clock access and support. Yet

Tribal wasn’t geared in the delivery of cloud services to operate a 24/7 support model and help its customers make this move. It needed a partner with whom it could jointly deliver services and chose Rackspace for its market credibility, unbiased expertise, and approach to working with customers.

With Rackspace as a partner for cloud installations, Tribal moved from its existing in-house hosting offering into a fully managed service with a strong public cloud footprint. Rackspace supported Tribal through the architecture design and build engineering to deliver an ongoing managed service on AWS, enabling it to provide higher education customers with 24/7 support and the required service-level agreements (SLA).

“We didn’t want a customer/supplier relationship, we wanted a partner who could engage with us and our customers. Rackspace has achieved this since day one with a very pragmatic and open approach, working to understand the ins and outs of our business while helping drive it forward,” said Graham.

“Rackspace’s market credibility was a big factor for us, but it wasn’t just quadrant positioning for us. Rackspace was able to support why it holds these positions with evidence, experience, and expertise.”

Optimising the bottom line

Tribal operates in a constantly changing landscape where customer requirements significantly vary. This means it can be challenging to keep on top of costs. By supporting Tribal in designing and implementing a public cloud-first strategy, Rackspace has helped the education service provider drive efficiencies through cost optimisation activity.

Compared to the capital expense (CapEx) model under its previous private cloud approach, working in the public cloud through a more fluid Operating Expense (OpEx) model has allowed Tribal to better manage costs.

Rackspace also supported Tribal to develop a single point view of all cloud expenditure across the organisation, where it previously had a large number of individual AWS and Azure accounts with costs in different parts of the business. The switch to one monthly bill from a single supplier, coupled with cost optimisation analysis reports prepared by Rackspace, has allowed Tribal to put a greater amount of governance around how its cloud business operates and work towards greater efficiencies. This highlighted where infrastructure was being paid for but not used, enabling Tribal to consolidate

and deliver savings without impacting service provision.

“Given how dynamic the market is, the development of our cloud offering will be an ongoing process. Rackspace’s guidance has and will be crucial as we continue along the journey,”

Graham Barton, Commercial Director, Cloud Services, Tribal Group.

Future-proofing the business

The move to a public cloud-first approach has seen Tribal capitalise on appetite in the market and future-proof its offering to help customers now and in the future. Its strong cloud offering and repeatable deployment model is generating real traction in the market, with 90 per cent of new customers opting to deploy the offering over an 18-month period. The majority of Tribal’s new business is now delivered in the cloud and a number of existing customers have also engaged in digital transformation programmes to take advantage of the new public cloud offering.

Looking ahead, Tribal is planning to reconfigure its product set for the cloud. This will allow it to use more of the technologies available and take advantage of the benefits of public cloud – scalability, flexibility, agility, and more.

“Right now, we have a coherent and strong cloud offering. We’ve improved our position in the market, and evolved to help shape and keep ahead of customer needs,” said Graham.

“Given how dynamic the market is, the development of our cloud offering will be an ongoing process. Rackspace’s guidance has and will be crucial as we continue along the journey,” said Graham.

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 maximise their IT investments. As a recognised 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 honoured within the top 100 Great Places to Work for more than a decade.

Learn more at www.rackspace.com

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.

November 26, 2019 / 4070-Tribal-CS-V5