Switching to the Cloud can be Cloud Nine

RED FROG
AMAZON WEB SERVICES

RESULTS SUMMARY

☁ Re-implemented Amazon Web Services.

▧ Lowered cost of infrastructure management by leveraging technology.

👥 Improved scalability to better manage high-volume traffic events.

⬇ Reduced site maintenance efforts.

THE COMPANY

Have you ever run the Warrior Dash or The Great Urban Race? Maybe you attended the Firefly festival. Or maybe you've done a color run, a bacon dash, or have gone to a beer festival. Whatever your involvement in any of those events, you've just become familiar with what Red Frog Events does. They are an event production company that puts on numerous active entertainment events across the country, around the clock.

Red Frog started off small in 2007, from the enthusiastic vision of one man who wanted to make a difference in people's lives and have fun doing it. After eight years, international accolades, and prominent events across the country, Red Frog continues to constantly look for new ideas, new events, and new technologies to use, like creating it's very own Event Sprout registration system, now at work in every one of their events and available as a managed event solution.

BUSINESS CHALLENGE

In 2011 the company was at a crossroads. The technologies behind Red Frog's event management system were traditional hardware-based systems that had reached their limits for power and space. One option was to move to a classic, virtualized datacenter, but the costs associated with that were largely prohibitive. Additionally, Red Frog wasn't interested in adding inhouse, technical teams to manage the infrastructure.

Red Frog's online assets host high-volume entertainment events. Registration occurs at break-neck speeds and in quick bursts of activity. When releasing tickets for one of its more popular events, traffic to the site drastically increases, going from 10 to 100,000 visits per minute and from a few to 5,000 concurrent sessions. (Red Frog to confirm numbers) Red Frog's ability to scale compute resources and power for that kind of shift is critical to their success and reputation. If the site loses online capacity during a registration go-live, then their ability to capture the market and satisfy customers on one of the brand's most profitable events of the year is in jeopardy.

SOLUTION

At the same time Red Frog needed to expand, Amazon began offering a cloud solution, Amazon Web Services. Unlike other cloud providers, hosting Red Frog's site on AWS would not require a large capital investment in computer services. AWS offered flexibility in utility consumption and compute scalability that best fit Red Frog's needs. In addition, AWS also excelled in many areas like security, governance, and integration capabilities that its competitors lacked. Already known for its thriving retail services, AWS was proven, reliable, and uniquely suited to solve Red Frog's problems.

Even with a new hosting solution in place easing many of Red Frog's stresses, there remained

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difficulties with their implementation partner that held them back from the full potential of AWS. Servers and databases were not configured in a redundant fashion, resulting in frequent downtime due to deployments and high spikes in website activity. Monitoring was not performed in a proactive fashion, resulting in phone calls to their provider only after complaints were received from the public.

ICF Olson, the implementation partner chosen by Red Frog for its reputation and physical proximity, was quick to jump to Red Frog's aid in a non-related emergency situation, highlighting ICF Olson's dedication to customers, no matter the problem.

With ICF Olson managing the technical details of Cloud services, those frantic, failing registration go-lives are a thing of the past. As Red Frog continues to expand the size (Firefly adds an extra festival day this year) and number of events, their website remains optimized and efficient, handling surges in compute demands and continuous uptime with ease. As Red Frog's implementation and Managed Services Partner (MSP), ICF Olson also provides 24/7 support, which includes answering a ticket online or in-person service and maintenance.

> "From day one, ICF Olson has been over-producing on expectations. They came in with a list of improvement suggestions, implemented them, and we have never looked back."
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> *Tom Kita, Web Director, Red Frog*

RESULTS

Having an accredited and attentive implementation partner that deeply understood their business needs was the best choice Red Frog could have made when switching to Cloud Managed Hosting. Being able to communicate, in the same time zone and in the same language, made a significant impact on the quality of service Red Frog received and the relationship they built with their implementation partner.

Red Frog, like many businesses, sought to choose an implementation partner that could not only react to changing business needs, but could anticipate the way their business would grow and the capabilities needed to sustain it. With ICF Olson proactively searching for technical answers and becoming a trusted advisor, Red Frog could stop worrying about hosting and focus on other important details, like launching EventSprout, their homegrown ticketing platform at work in all Red Frog events and available for public use. Moving to the Cloud is a strategic decision many businesses make, but the decisions don't end there. Finding the right implementation partner is critical to getting the most out of the Cloud.