



At a Glance

What they wanted to do

- Build an application with a lean IT infrastructure requiring minimal maintenance
- Avoid integration challenges associated with infrastructure-as-a-service (IAAS) solutions
- Allow for automatic scalability to accommodate future growth in the user base

What they did

- Used Google App Engine to take advantage of a highly scalable, reliable infrastructure maintained by Google
- Built and deployed new software releases within 10 minutes, making it easy to improve the app
- Took advantage of App Engine features such as the High Replication Datastore and automatic instance scaling to improve performance

What they accomplished

- Avoided spending more than \$70,000 on servers and rack space and over \$300,000 annually on additional staff
- Received highly favorable user reviews, partly because of the ability to add new features so quickly
- Gained easy scalability for future growth

Startup Saves Money, Launches Fast and Iterates with Google App Engine

Organization

A startup called CaptureToCloud uses Google App Engine to build and host a powerful cloud application aimed at simplifying how people capture digital content and collaborate with others. CaptureToCloud allows users to easily capture web pages, email, images and documents and share them with others through social networking tools. The San Jose, Calif.-based company is able to rollout improvements quickly and easily, with a minimal IT staff.

Challenge

The principals of CaptureToCloud explored several infrastructure-as-a-service (IAAS) systems before starting the company in 2011. They soon realized those services required considerable effort to set up and maintain, and CEO Ramon Nunez wanted a lean IT infrastructure.

“We didn’t want to spend time installing and maintaining operating systems,” explains Fritz Mueller, Vice President of Product Management. “Even if those systems are in the cloud, we still would have had to worry about things like bugs and security patches. We basically would have needed to manage the infrastructure systems ourselves.”

A platform-as-a-service (PAAS) solution, in which the provider manages the operating systems, proved more feasible. By easing setup and administration challenges, the service would free Mueller and his team to spend their time improving the CaptureToCloud application.

Solution

Nunez and Mueller were attracted to Google App Engine and the idea of running their service on Google’s reliable, highly scalable infrastructure.

“Being able to focus on features that add value to customers, instead of solving infrastructure problems, has been a key advantage. It allows us to respond to feedback quickly and improve our service.”
—Fritz Mueller, Vice President of Product Management, CaptureToCloud

“Google App Engine allowed a fast time to market and cost-effective scaling without sacrificing security and reliability,” Nunez says. “As our company grows, we’ll be able to easily accommodate new users.”

Google App Engine allows Mueller’s team to build and deploy new software releases within 10 minutes. This makes it easy to refine and improve their app. In addition, developers can deploy multiple versions of code

About Google App Engine

Google App Engine enables businesses to build and host web apps on the same systems that power Google applications. It offers fast development and deployment, effortless scalability and simple administration, with no need to worry about hardware, patches or backups.

For more information, visit
www.google.com/enterprise/appengine/

"Google App Engine allowed a fast time to market and cost-effective scaling without sacrificing security and reliability. As our company grows, we'll be able to easily accommodate new users."

—Ramon Nunez, CEO, CaptureToCloud

in parallel, so they can test new features without having to take down the existing version.

"Users can be logged onto the service at the moment we're putting up a new release, and App Engine will move them over from the old release to the new one," Mueller says. "The transition is seamless."

Mueller and his team rely on a number of Google App Engine features to improve service, including:

- The High Replication Datastore, which replicates data across multiple centers to help keep users' data safe
- Automatic scaling, which handles usage fluctuations
- The intuitive App Engine dashboard, which helps them monitor performance

The company also relies on other Google tools to strengthen its application. A tight integration with Google Apps, for instance, allows users to link Google Docs and Gmail messages directly into their collections so that all the content about a project or topic can be found in one place.

Results

The CaptureToCloud app has been downloaded more than 18,000 times to date and has a near-perfect user rating on the Chrome Web Store, Google Apps Marketplace, Google Play and other sites where it is listed. Mueller attributes this partly to the ease with which developers can refine and improve the app using Google App Engine.

"Being able to focus on features that add value, instead of solving infrastructure problems, has been a key advantage," he says. "It allows us to respond to feedback quickly and improve our service."

Mueller estimates they have saved more than \$70,000 on servers and rack space by using Google App Engine. In addition, they haven't had to hire additional staff to manage an in-house system, saving over \$300,000 per year.

Both startups and established companies can benefit from Google App Engine, Mueller says. "It can help companies that are further along scale their systems as they add customers, rather than having to keep ordering and installing servers and risk having excess capacity at times," he notes. "The ability to incrementally scale as much as you need – no more, no less – is a great advantage."

