AgileIT

AWS Strategy & Migration Ease Scalability Concerns for Dotchi

About Dotchi

Dotchi is a Miami-based manufacturer that develops innovative yet practical gardening tools including avant-garde planters and self-watering plants. After spinning off from parent company Darnell in 2015, the company expanded to two new locations in North Carolina and Colombia to continue rolling out cutting-edge gardening tools.

Business Needs

Restructuring the organization presented new IT challenges and needs for Dotchi. Before Dotchi siphoned off from its parent company, President Harry Tchira looked for ways to outsource IT and avoid upkeeping expensive servers.

"Coming from a 20-person IT team, I wanted to have IT support but couldn't afford that in-house," Harry said. "Going cloud-based was efficient, easier to control and made more sense."

Other motivators behind the cloud migration include:

Physical Expansion: To keep pace with demand, Dotchi expanded to two new locations in North Carolina and Colombia within six months. With such rapid growth, the manufacturer needed networks and IT infrastructure to support these locations — along with assistance setting up user accounts, workstations and other equipment such as handle-held scanners and warehouse operations.

Upgrading the Company's SAP ERP System: Dotchi relied on its SAP Business One enterprise resource planning system to streamline processes across procurement, manufacturing, service and other critical areas of the business. However, the larger enterprise-level SAP ERP system that Darnell used was too cumbersome for Dotchi's smaller operation. In late 2016, Dotchi set out to upgrade its SAP system.

The Cloud Server Migration Project

Dotchi had previously partnered with Agile IT to migrate to Office 365. The next phase included migrating virtual servers to a cloud-based solution to eliminate the need for in-house infrastructure. Harry evaluated both Azure and Amazon Web Services for the company's new hosted IT infrastructure.

At the time, AWS was certified to work on SAP business one version for the HANA database to provide cloud computing, Harry said.

There was uncertainty around whether the SAP would work properly in Azure, so the team chose to run the ERP and warehouse management systems in AWS, along with infrastructure like servers and Active Directory.

As Dotchi's managed IT services partner, Agile IT worked alongside Harry and the team to implement a secure server infrastructure in AWS. The goal was to eliminate the need for Dotchi to purchase, host, support and maintain those systems onsite. The project scope included:

- 2 site-to-site VPN connections to AWS from Dotchi's headquarters and warehouse in North America.
- 2 servers in AWS (AD Domain Controller and SAP HANA server)
- 4 servers in AWS including VPN, remote desktop services, SMTP and AD Sync Server

"We've had a strong relationship with Agile IT for 2 years," Harry said. "The team takes their jobs seriously. They're knowledgeable in many areas and transparent about what falls outside their expertise."

Benefits

By partnering with Agile IT, Dotchi was able to outsource the AWS strategy and migration to an experienced partner.

"Working with Agile IT, we discuss what is needed and their team propose the schematic and type of instances required based on the number of users, hard drive size and bandwidth size."

From an operational standpoint, the AWS strategy and migration has also enabled the team to:

Test more frequently and efficiently. Working with Agile IT, Dotchi also gained a cloned environment where the team could fully test upgrades before implementing them into the production environment.

Now, Dotchi uses AWS to set up or test new updates of the ERP. The team can conduct simultaneous tests by copying the environment in a new instance and running the operation completely segregated.

Unlike physical infrastructure, Dotchi can shut off IT resources when they're no longer needed for a test or experiment without having to predict capacity and purchase costly hardware.

Ease growing pains. As with any growing business, scalability is an ongoing concern. With AWS, Dotchi can scale the size of instances as it adds additional facilities.

"As we onboard new employees, increasing instance size to keep up with more personnel has been very easy," Harry said.

Saved time and headache. The cost and manpower required to update security patches, troubleshoot system errors and manage a datacenter is unrealistic for many small businesses.

As a smaller entity, Dotchi outsources these services for less than maintaining an on-premises datacenter. In turn, the company has reduced the cost of purchasing servers to host onsite and the support costs associated with onsite servers.

Heighten security with AWS backup and recovery. Beyond improved application speed and performance, AWS also offers leading data security. Dotchi leverages AWS for data backup and recovery. Because AWS replicates data across multiple datacenters, Harry is confident Dotchi's information is secure and recoverable.

When moving sensitive company information to the cloud, working with an experienced consultant makes all the difference.

Interested in migrating to AWS? [Contact Agile IT's cloud experts](#) to get started today.