Miss Hosting grows from launch to hundreds of cloud clients in just nine months - running on OnApp

Launching a new cloud hosting service in a market with established competitors might sound like a daunting prospect... but not for Miss Hosting, a fast-growing Swedish brand which has grown from a standing start to more than 23,000 international customers, in less than two years. How? With a fresh approach, and the help of a cloud platform powered by OnApp.

Miss Hosting launched at the end of 2014, and now offers a wide range of services, from traditional shared hosting and domains, to dedicated servers, reseller hosting and SEO services.

One of its fastest-growing product lines is Cloud VPS (Virtual Private Server) hosting that runs on the OnApp cloud platform.

"We went live with OnApp in September 2015," says Fredrik Björklund, who is responsible for business development at Miss Hosting.

"Nine months later we have several hundred customers hosting applications on our OnApp platform, and our business is still growing fast. OnApp makes it easy for us to offer servers that are easy to buy, easy to manage and easy to scale."

Miss Hosting's cloud runs at a secure datacenter facility in Sweden, and while a sizeable percentage of cloud customers hail from Nordic countries, the company is gaining market share in the U.S., UK and further afield.

Making it easy for customers to grow

OnApp software provides the orchestration, provisioning, server management and billing functions at the core of the cloud. Miss Hosting has used OnApp's billing flexibility to tailor its VPS hosting to its customers - who include e-commerce businesses and technology start-ups, as well as much larger enterprises hosting websites, development environments and business applications.

"We love working with start-ups, especially tech start-ups who need a platform they can use to build their application, take it through beta testing and launch - and then scale their VPS within the same solution as they grow," says Fredrik. "Using OnApp we can switch them to more powerful VPS packages to support their different stages of growth, with zero downtime."

The power of flexible billing

The OnApp cloud platform provides very fine control over how cloud infrastructure is metered and billed for – from very granular pricing per hour for CPU, storage, network and other resources, to the packaged VPS products offered by Miss Hosting.

The decision to offer packaged VPS was driven by the need customers have for simplicity, Fredrik explains:

"The cloud industry loves to give you sliders for your hosting product, but faced with the decision to use 4GB or 8GB RAM, or 2

Website: http://misshosting.com

OnApp go-live: September 2015

Use case: Public cloud/VPS hosting

OnApp products:
OnApp cloud platform, running on Dell

Summary:

> OnApp makes it easy to design products for specific market segments, with flexible control of packaging and pricing

> OnApp enables customers to scale up cloud servers with no downtime

> OnApp control panel makes cloud management simple, even for non-technical users

> Integrated CDN provides natural upgrade path for e-commerce clients

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Fredrik Björklund
Business Development Manager, Miss Hosting

cores or 4 cores or 8 cores... most customers draw a blank. They're running websites and e-commerce businesses. They're developing and testing new web applications."

"Obviously there are tech-savvy customers who know exactly what they want - but for most companies, choosing a hosting package is a business decision. And they have a business requirement: they want rock-solid hosting that delivers excellent performance for their application workload. So we use OnApp to create packages to suit different workload requirements and different budgets, based on our experience of what works, and we advise customers what works best for them. It's simple and effective."

Growing through proactive marketing

The Miss Hosting team saw triple-digit growth in their first year of business, and they've sustained strong double-digit growth since then. The way they use OnApp to create services is part of that success, and supported by a proactive outbound marketing strategy, which – unusually for a hosting company – has made extensive use of telemarketing, targeted especially at e-commerce companies.

"There are big providers in our market, and we're the new kid on the block," says Fredrik. "It's hard to get market share if you're new... but you're not going to win customers by being reactive - by doing a bit of banner advertising and waiting for customers to come to you."

"We've grown fast by offering a fantastic product, powered by OnApp; by offering round-the-clock support, and very aggressive pricing; and by having unbeatable uptime. And, by being proactive and personal in our marketing. We call people. We talk to them about the benefits of our cloud, compared to the shared hosting they're used to. And we show them those benefits when they join us," he says.

Powered by OnApp and Dell

Miss Hosting's OnApp cloud runs on Dell hardware, with Dell R630 PowerEdge servers forming the backbone of its cloud infrastructure, and storage delivered by a Dell Compellent SC4020 SAN, with 54TB of high-speed capacity.

"Dell delivers the reliability our customers need, and offers great price/performance for our cloud service, as well as great service and support," says Fredrik. "And OnApp just works, seamlessly. We've had no issues with the OnApp platform. The control panel is easy to use, and our customers love the simple control it gives them over their VPS, their DNS, rebooting, managing backups and so on. The OnApp UI is great, and for our customers - compared to their experience with other hosts, where they just get a VPS and a root login - OnApp is worlds apart. We've had nothing but positive feedback."

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And plans for the future?

"We've definitely got an eye on other OnApp capabilities, like OnApp CDN," says Fredrik. "With so many e-commerce customers, CDN is a natural extension to our hosting service - although, I think there is still an education job to be done. But just as we did with cloud VPS, we'd approach CDN the same way - speaking to clients, explaining the benefits, and showing the proof in our hosting service."

For more information about Miss Hosting visit http://misshosting.com.