

Scaling the subscription economy

Zuora delivers a new growth model for recurring-payment businesses with HPE Helion

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– Jeff Feldstein, Senior Director of Quality Assurance, Zuora, Inc.



Objective

Deliver an enhanced toolset for the subscription-based economy, allowing customers the flexibility to manage, measure, and monetize their products faster.

Approach

Speed improvements to subscription services by moving test and development environment to cloud-based offerings from HPE Helion.

IT Matters

- Delivers a cloud-based environment for scalable flexibility
- Mobilizes as many servers as needed without purchase, installation, and configuration
- Enables significantly faster changes to test and development environments

Business Matters

- Provides a consistent and reliable cost structure for growth
- Brings new products, features, and modifications to market faster
- Enables an improved cost model, gets Zuora out of the data center business

Zuora has been enabling the subscription economy by building the next generation commerce platform since 2007. By attracting hundreds of customers, Zuora's subscription management software has enabled 21st century businesses around the world from startups to enterprises in any industry to launch and monetize subscription products and services. To provide enhanced features and faster response to market needs, Zuora recently moved its test and development and quality assurance environments to cloud-based services using HPE Helion.

What do you subscribe to?

In the days when print-based media ruled the content landscape, subscribing to your favorite publication used to be a fairly straightforward business relationship: sign up once, and then pay a regularly scheduled fee until you terminate your subscription. But the subscription economy has changed dramatically since then. Today it's not uncommon for even traditional media outlets to offer varied levels of content to their audiences. Tiered subscriptions, special offers, and new services can be rolled out in a way that traditional subscription models were never designed to accommodate. As big data analytics continue to drive new monetization models, subscription and recurring payment-based businesses are seeing new opportunities to enrich and expand the customer experience. Helping subscription-based businesses navigate the complexity of the recurring payment landscape is the mission of Zuora. Since 2007, Zuora leadership has been building Z-Business, a Relationship Business Platform (RBM) designed specifically for global, multi-divisional enterprises reinventing their business models around recurring revenue.

Moving beyond recurring payments

"More businesses are moving toward recurring revenue models every day—from cloud storage and software companies to digital media distributors and electronic health records providers—and those businesses need a solution to manage rapid changes in delivery and demand," says Jeff Feldstein, senior director of QA at Zuora, Inc.

"Zuora delivers tools for the subscription economy that allow our customers to scale, modify, and evolve their services at the speed of business," Feldstein explains. "What we offer is a cloud-based solution that helps our customers navigate the complexity of the recurring revenue model while taking advantage of the flexibility to monetize, manage, and measure outcomes with total visibility."

To improve the services Zuora provides its customers, Feldstein and team continually evaluate their own business processes. "Zuora wants to overcome complexity and enable an easier online self-service experience for our users," Feldstein says. "To that end, we're exploring the best public cloud offerings on the market to see which solutions will give us the confidence to ultimately move our business to a cloud model."

Business without the data center

Zuora already has a cloud strategy. "We know we don't want to be in the business of building data centers. And we realize that we could scale more efficiently if we made the move to the cloud," Feldstein explains. So the team started by looking for the best cloud-based solution for its quality assurance and test and development environments.

"My job was to find the best cloud environment," recalls Feldstein. "Specifically, I explored the possibilities of Amazon Web Services and Helion, the new managed cloud service from Hewlett Packard Enterprise. I compared the two services based on our needs, and it quickly became clear that HPE Helion portfolio products were going to be a better fit for us. Then I swiped my card and within 10 minutes, I was swamped—swamped in a good way. I got a call right away. That was a Friday, and by the next Monday, I was using HPE Helion."

Reacting to market needs faster

With HPE Helion's expansive portfolio of private, public, and hybrid cloud consisting of market-leading hardware, software, and services, Zuora can deliver faster and with higher quality. "In our competitive environment, our biggest challenge is to deliver features and scale as quickly as possible," Feldstein explains. "With HPE, I can do that."

Zuora founder and CEO Tien Tzuo is excited about the next phase of his business in the cloud: "Zuora has worked closely with HPE to provide the first Relationship Business Management (RBM) platform fully integrated with OpenStack," Tzuo says. "With Zuora, HPE customers and partners will benefit from access to Zuora's sophisticated subscription and billing capabilities, which are key to enabling the subscription economy in the cloud."

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