Hewlett Packard Enterprise

Case Study

Lightning fast photo lab in the cloud

Creative Photo Cloud's solution, based on HPE Helion Public Cloud, provides a reliable, secure, and scalable solution with global reach

"We put the bulk of technology and processes into the cloud so our solution gives great experience to both the photo lab and the customer. To be able to do this we needed a cloud platform with global reach, world class reliability and security. That's why we decided to build our solution on HPE Helion Public Cloud."

– Zoltán Ferencz, Director, Creative Photo Cloud

creative Photo Cloud

Objective

Replace traditional online services that photo labs run on local servers with a cloud-based solution that is technologically superior and benefits the business much more.

Approach

Open source software solution based on infrastructure and platform services by a reliable cloud partner with global reach.

IT Matters

- Cloud-based application that automates digital image processing and desktop publishing
- Light client application that intelligently learns user preferences
- Integration with third party services, web shops and social media
- Better service quality guaranteed by SLAs
- Advanced user identification and higher data security
- Fast scaling to support peak workloads

Business Matters

- Jobs printed and available to be picked up by customers in 3 hours thanks to automated processes
- The service can be implemented without hardware and software investments
- Pay-as-you-go charging model, cost efficient management of service roll outs and peak workloads
- Market reach easily expandable
- New types of services and business models supported in the cloud

Creative Photo Cloud wanted an online digital printing solution that would provide the best experience to photo labs globally. Knowing that it needed a cloud platform with global reach, world-class reliability and security, the company built its solution on HPE Helion Public Cloud. With Creative Photo Cloud's new solution photo labs can introduce and scale online services, support new business models, and find new sources of revenue without making bigger IT investments.

Into the cloud

Photo labs today typically offer online services to customers to upload their photos and choose the printed product from their home PCs or photo kiosks found at store chains.

But these services run on servers operated by the photo labs themselves. This limits their market reach, not to mention the significant costs associated with hardware and software investments and keeping the infrastructure operational. Upgrading or scaling this environment is not simple either, which makes photo lab services clumsy and expensive to run.

Creative Photo Cloud's solution puts this technology into the public cloud and offers it as a service to photo labs.

"We develop cloud-based solutions for digital imaging and printing," says Zoltán Ferencz, director at Creative Photo Cloud. "Our virtual server environment that runs in the public cloud performs all the tasks of image processing and desktop publishing completely automatically and produces an output file in PDF, JPEG or any other format which is ready to be printed."

After the customer of the photo lab picked, personalized and uploaded the desired product—a photo album, a calendar, a photo printed mug, polo or any other product—it is printed at the store of choice in 3 hours.

"The whole application is readily available in the cloud, so photo labs don't have to invest in locally run servers, deal with operations and maintenance," says Zoltán Ferencz. "In addition our service scales easily according to the actual workload."

From a business perspective it is even more appealing that with Creative Photo Cloud photo labs can introduce new services they wouldn't be able to support on locally run servers.

"Our service runs on Hewlett Packard Enterprise's global cloud so it is available on each continent," says Zoltán Ferencz. "As more and more photo labs start using Creative Photo Cloud their customers will be able to send photo albums for printing into neighboring countries or overseas where their relatives and friends live."

Customers will download a client application from the web site of the photo lab or they can access the service via photo kiosks at store chains. But there is something new here as well.

"Thanks to the cloud our application works as an online client, it's very lean and intelligent, downloads only the functions that the customer actually uses," says Zoltán Ferencz. "The software learns the customer's preferences, so the more it is used the faster it gets."

New services and business models

Each photo lab can tailor the user interface of the client application to its own company image. Though Creative Photo Cloud's service runs on shared infrastructure in the cloud, it can be customized for both the photo lab and the end user.

"With our solution, photo labs can introduce new types of services by showing advertisements on the client application GUI," says Zoltán Ferencz. "Photo labs typically sell printing material, so now they can promote their partners, and accommodate advertisements of other companies, e.g. interior designers and picture frame suppliers, and they can link to third party web shops and social media sites as well. With Creative Photo Cloud photo labs can support new business models and add new sources of revenue."

Case study
Creative Photo Cloud

Industry
Digital Printing Services

Customer at a glance

Application
- Creative Photo Cloud cloud-based application for photo labs
- Creative Photo Cloud client application

Hardware
- Existing printers at photo labs
- Existing client devices of customers

Software
- HPE Helion Public Cloud IaaS and PaaS services
- Linux® operating system
- Drupal content and database management system
- Drupal/PHP Web-based Interfaces

In Hungary HPIX photo lab network had started to use Creative Photo Cloud while it was still under development. This project was the winner of Best Cloud Customer of the Year Award in 2014 at the EuroCloud Hungary awards ceremony.

Reliable cloud partner

According to Zoltán Ferencz, instead of client devices, cloud services need to run the infrastructure, applications and processes. This makes it easier for the user.

"We put the bulk of technology and processes into the cloud so our solution gives great experience to both the photo lab and the customer," says Zoltán Ferencz. "To be able to do this we needed a cloud platform with global reach, world class reliability and security. That's why we decided to build our solution on HPE Helion Public Cloud."

In data centers around the world HPE's public cloud service offers SLAs, 99,9% and up high reliability, security and data protection that is much higher and stronger than in house infrastructure of photo labs could achieve.

"HPE Helion Public Cloud provides all the system components that make up the frame of our solution," says Zoltán Ferencz. "Development and testing was much faster for us as well. In HPE's cloud we provisioned servers for different tasks in seconds and gave them back just as easily after we finished. From now on HPE Helion Public Cloud will make it easier for us to reach different markets with our solution. This year we'll make Creative Photo Cloud available globally and we hope to have at least 15 photo labs using it before the end of 2014. Next year we plan to list our company publicly and within two years we want to become a major international market player. This is possible in the cloud only and with HPE Helion Public Cloud we have everything we need to make Creative Photo Cloud a truly global success story."

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