

Public cloud infrastructure enables media software provider to scale rapidly while minimizing costs

The Media Services Group had experimented with cloud through a disaster recovery solution with iland. So when its IT team needed to meet the challenges of business expansion more effectively and quickly, the natural progression was to look into Infrastructure-as-a-Service with iland. Building on the partnership already established, MSG moved mission-critical systems to the cloud provider and is now reaping the benefits of flexibility, scalability and transparency.

business profile

The Media Services Group (MSG) was founded in 1985 to serve the magazine advertising market. Since then it has grown dramatically, providing software solutions to meet the needs of publishers worldwide. Over the years, MSG's products have evolved to meet the ever-changing needs of publishers as they embraced the web, eCommerce and now, cloud computing. Today the organization focuses on providing integrated publishing software, magazine advertising software and event registration software.

a new era – a new cloud

An iland customer since 2004, MSG and iland have built up a long-standing and mutually beneficial working relationship. When MSG first became a customer, the publishing software house used iland for disaster recovery and colocation of equipment in iland's Houston data center. However, with the advent of cloud as a high availability, scalable environment for IT infrastructure, MSG was introduced to iland's Enterprise Cloud Services and the benefits that Infrastructure-as-a-Service has to offer.

MSG is growing. To facilitate this continued expansion at minimal cost, it needed a flexible and scalable IT infrastructure platform capable of supporting its growth. With the help of iland's engineers, MSG's IT team participated in a deep-dive session on iland's Enterprise Cloud Services Portal. The team realized not only how powerful the cloud management tool actually was, but also how easily and quickly cloud resources could be adjusted to fit the organization's changing needs.



profile

- ▶ SIZE: SMB
- ▶ INDUSTRY: Technology
- ▶ TYPE: Publishing Software
- ▶ CLOUD APPLICATION: Production & DRaaS
- ▶ HEADQUARTERS: Los Angeles, USA

challenges

- ▶ Ability to scale rapidly
- ▶ Unique networking requirements
- ▶ Customized environment
- ▶ A vendor that would be a partner

benefits

- ▶ Add more resources when required
- ▶ Meets the flexibility of the business's needs
- ▶ Environment is built to MSG's specifications
- ▶ A partner that works to meet MSG's unique requirements

Through a series of detailed questions, iland’s team determined MSG’s requirements and demonstrated the simplicity of using the portal to effectively control resources and costs down to a granular level. MSG also gained valuable insight into how its cloud infrastructure could evolve and scale with future growth plans. Ron Motley, CIO at MSG comments, *“The iland team really understood our needs. We needed a partner, not a vendor, and the sales and engineering teams understood that right from the start”*.

It was important to MSG to ensure that in moving production systems to a cloud environment, security and flexibility needs would be met. Consequently, they required a visit to the facility housing the iland cloud location MSG had selected. Motley visited the iland data center in Los Angeles to ensure it met with requirements. Motley comments, *“iland met with me and the CEO and one of our other senior people and we did a complete walkthrough and looked at the site. iland was able to answer all of our questions about the various technologies that were in use and the security in place. It was an important part of our due diligence process.”* Despite being an existing iland customer, researching additional cloud vendors was fundamental to identifying the right partner for MSG’s business.

Motley remarks, *“We had special needs. We couldn’t just take a standard environment and implement our products within it. Most of the cloud vendors out there that have hosting capabilities like Amazon, Dell, HP and even VMware, also have stringent service delivery processes and environments - such as instances that have pre-set resource configurations.”* He continues, *“We knew we were going to need a very specialized environment that allowed us to execute discreet billing with the ability to allocate resources differently. We knew we would need a custom environment. But cost was also important, so we looked at other vendors as a cost comparison exercise. From day one we always felt iland was the better match for us but we wanted to make sure that pricing was also in line with our expectations.”*

For MSG and many others, a good working relationship and partnership with their cloud vendor is key to operating core business systems in that cloud environment – particularly when the cloud requires customization, as was the case. MSG runs a non-standard database that does not include any standard Microsoft tools but consists of binary number databases created internally. It also has some very unique networking requirements: MSG must maintain control outside the network perimeter while the cloud vendor controls within that perimeter.

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Motley explains the reason for wanting a cloud partner – not simply a vendor. “We needed a vendor that from day one was going to be a partner with us. Not just a vendor, but a partner that could adjust their environment to fit what we needed. iland did just that and we are extremely happy with the relationship.” He continues, “iland definitely understood how to extract the correct information from us to figure out what we needed faster than any of the other vendors we spoke to. And iland understood that it would have to customize services to meet our very unique needs. iland got it correct from day one.”

a cloud partnership

Motley appreciates the assistance iland gave him and his team during the cloud evaluation process. During the course of discussions, iland engineers realized that MSG would be significantly over-allocating resources with the other cloud providers on the MSG shortlist. iland’s unique model of a reserved pool of resources that can be configured exactly to a customer’s specifications allows customers to keep costs down by provisioning only the resources needed.

Motley remarks, “We were able to cut down the amount of resources we were originally asking for and quickly get it to half that amount. We knew instantly that no other vendor would have ever done that. No other vendor would have explained to us that we were asking for more than we really needed. We knew at that instant, anybody that was willing to truly look at our needs before the money was who we wanted to be with.”

iland’s Enterprise Cloud Services portal garners praise from Motley for its effective management of cloud resources and costs. “iland’s ECS portal manages resources from the data center level right down to the VM level and is fantastic. For example, its ability to group machines and apply rules to a group makes it really easy for us to manage our resources and have greater visibility into our cloud. We’re very happy with the portal.”

As MSG continues to grow its portfolio of business, iland is a supportive partner, scaling its environment to meet changing needs, and working hand in hand to ensure the cloud addresses MSG’s unique use cases and requirements.

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about iland

With data centers in the U.S., U.K. and Singapore, iland delivers proven enterprise cloud solutions that help companies do business faster, smarter and more flexibly. Unlike any other provider, iland’s technology and consultative approach mean anyone—regardless of expertise, location or business objective—can experience the benefits of a hassle-free cloud. From scaling production workloads, to supporting testing and development, to disaster recovery, iland’s secure cloud and decades of experience translate into unmatched service. Underscoring the strength of its platform, the company has been recognized as VMware’s Service Provider Partner of the Year, Global and Americas; is part of the Cisco Cloud Managed Service Provider Program for IaaS and DRaaS; and partners with other industry leaders including Zerto and Veeam.

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