



SchoolBrains is a global provider of sophisticated data management, analytical, and assessment solutions for PreK-12 school districts. They offer a best-in-class student and personnel information and analysis solutions available by modules and totally customizable to fit the varying needs of any school district. SchoolBrains provides a rare synthesis of "best of breed" technology, value-added offerings and highly desirable pricing that empowers educators in small and medium sized school districts worldwide to make well-informed decisions easily and quickly.

Situation

It's the classic textbook case for the benefits of cloud computing. SchoolBrains was looking to reduce IT expenses and offer a high-performance user experience. Over the years, this Independent Software Vendor's innovative Software-as-a-Service was enhanced allowing school districts to subscribe to the tools they require on a per-user subscription basis. Starting off in server co-location facilities using owned-and-operated equipment, as well as traditional web hosting providers like Rackspace and others, they found themselves being forced to hire a team of full-time IT infrastructure engineers. On top of that, their server and network performance was sub-par due to the constraints architected into their providers' networks.

Additionally, SchoolBrains, built on a .Net platform with MS SQL, requires both server and network flexibility and scalability. As new customers are added, each district receives their individual database with a variety of custom module. Large urban districts require a more robust instance, while smaller urban districts will find exceptional performance with a smaller number of resources.

Solution

After speaking with and evaluating a number of Cloud Computing providers, SchoolBrains selected ProfitBricks.

"They have been great and helped us meet some specific goals all focused on increasing our ability to provide our customers with the best possible experience..."

1. Reduce capital spending on technology infrastructure
2. Reallocate operations and engineering headcount while increasing productivity
3. Increase technological scalability, flexibility, agility, performance and minimize maintenance/upkeep
4. The solution must be easy to implement

"...ProfitBricks really epitomizes the premise of the Cloud and has taken it to the next generation," says Rob Pemberton, SchoolBrains President and Founder.

Customers are more knowledgeable and demanding than ever before. The entire organization must be "customer-centered," shifting from the more traditional "process-centered" focus, ensuring that the organization can meet new challenges. This shift necessitates a complete rethink of an organization, concentrating on the critical success factors of people, process, technology, and environment, to bring about extraordinary customer service.

Reallocate operations and engineering headcount while increasing productivity

As a result of the move from traditional owned and operated hardware in a co-location facility to ProfitBricks means that SchoolBrains could scale-back on costly operations and infrastructure engineers. No longer would they be responsible for hardware replacement, networking issues, and other computing issues. Those same resources were freed-up to concentrate on product-focused innovation.

“We can add and subtract capacity as client network load dictates,” adds Pemberton. “And because ProfitBricks Cloud Service costs are per-minute, based on consumption, we only pay for what our clients use, ultimately saving significant expense.”

“Cloud Computing Infrastructure-as-a-Service, and specifically ProfitBricks, allows me to control the very high personnel costs that keep me awake at night. They are a true business partner,” adds Rob Pemberton. The Cloud now gives me the freedom to hire the very best people, regardless of their location.”

Reduce capital spending on technology infrastructure

Cloud Computing allows SchoolBrains to eliminate their capital spend on technology infrastructure; maintaining easy access to their data on a cost saving, pay as you go basis. Data center equipment (servers, routers, switches, firewalls, etc.) moves from CAPEX to OPEX. In addition, since Cloud Computing services are available to use almost immediately, the revenue lost based on the time associated with complex gear set-up is dramatically reduced.

Increase technological scalability, flexibility, agility, performance and minimize maintenance/upkeep. Imagine being able to flexibly scale your technology when needed, enabling your business to move faster, produce more, pivot easily and meet increased demand proactively. Cloud Computing makes this possible for businesses of all sizes, from startup to enterprise.

ProfitBricks’ vertical scaling capacities allow SchoolBrains to proactively respond to upticks in user load to secure the additional hardware resources.

The solution must be easy to implement

You’ll be up and running within a few minutes, all for a fraction of the cost of a traditional on-premise solution and without the need to purchase hardware!

In contrast to other Cloud Computing providers who require you to manage all resource data in cumbersome and confusing tables, ProfitBricks offers a ‘virtual whiteboard’ – the Data Center Designer (DCD) which does so much more than a whiteboard. Design your ProfitBricks Virtual Data Center with servers, storage, load balancers, firewalls and associated networking using the DCD. Once complete, simply activate the data center design with a mouse-click.

“The DCD makes it so easy. Not only do we have a graphical overview of our Cloud infrastructure, it saves my team an incredible amount of time and helps us avoid costly architecture/configuration errors,” says Rob Pemberton.

Benefits

According to Pemberton, “ProfitBricks has been an excellent partner who has met and exceeded our requirements for a Cloud Computing provider.”

1. “The Data Center Designer is incredibly easy to use in designing and managing our Cloud environment. The user interface is incredibly intuitive, offers the utmost flexibility, and allows us to see what we have at all times.
2. “The reallocation of the required engineering team that was necessary for our owned & operated hardware in a co-location facility to the ProfitBricks Cloud has resulted in a measurable uptick in customer satisfaction.
3. “ProfitBricks IaaS Cloud Computing helps us control our human capital expenses, allowing us to employ the best people, regardless of location, and increasing team productivity.”

ProfitBricks provides the technology resources; SchoolBrains gets the benefits – that’s win – win!

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