

Big Brain Global brings the cloud to small businesses with OnApp

Big Brain Global is a Virginia-based web hosting and service provider. Its customers range from bloggers to companies running multi-million dollar e-commerce systems.

Big Brain Global was founded in 2010 and has grown its service portfolio to include shared hosting, dedicated servers, managed services and colocation. Cloud was next on its list.

"We have customers that have been with us from day one asking when we would start offering cloud services, so we knew there was a huge opportunity," says Brian Smith, Big Brain Global CEO.

"We pride ourselves on customer service and offering hosting that's truly reliable, and we wanted to find a cloud management provider with the same values. After about a year of trialing different providers, we knew OnApp was right for us."

Stellar reliability

Big Brain Global has datacenters in Herndon, VA, Dallas, TX and London UK. While it hosts websites and apps for a number of large companies, the majority of customers are small and medium-sized businesses.

It's a sector where budgets are tight, and where companies depend for their livelihood on nothing less than stellar reliability from their hosting provider.

As Big Brain Global planned its new cloud, the challenge was to find a cloud platform that could deliver the reliability and stability its SMB customers needed, without breaking the bank.

The right combination

The team investigated VMware and Citrix, but found that is simply wasn't possible to deliver cloud services on those platforms at a price its SMB customers were willing to pay. OnApp provided the right combination of reliability, stability and cost.

"We don't cater to a budget market," Brian explains. "We're not in the business of cramming 500 customers on a server, and we don't use the cheapest or oldest hardware. We look at stability. That's what really retains our customers."

"Providers like VMware were a good match in that sense, but when we looked at their costs and the typical budget of our customers, it was never going to work," he says.

"OnApp got us into the cloud quickly and affordably, and with the reliability our customers need. And OnApp supports VMware hypervisors, too, giving us the option to manage VMware workloads for customers when they need us to."

Moving from dedicated to cloud

With OnApp, Big Brain Global now offers a range of managed and self-service IaaS cloud packages. High availability has become the biggest selling point. The company has seen a clear move from



Website: <http://bigbrainglobal.com/>

OnApp go-live: October 2012

Summary:

- > The right cost & performance characteristics for SMB customers
- > VMware support for enterprise clients
- > Rapid time to market and easy CDN and storage upgrade path
- > Stellar reliability for hosted apps helps customer retention
- > OnApp's 15 minute SLA backs up the Big Brain Global support commitment



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CEO, Big Brain Global Networks

Case study **Big Brain Global**

customers using dedicated hosting services to its new cloud, with take-up from VPS and shared hosting customers too. Brian explains.

"The customers that have migrated from dedicated servers to our new OnApp cloud platform are ecstatic," Brian continues. "They can't believe how reliable their clouds have been, especially as they've scaled up their businesses. It's an instant upgrade in reliability and available capacity for their hosted applications. It's more efficient for us, so our margin increases too. It's a win-win."

Support and SLAs were critical

Support is critical for small business customers. Big Brain Global has built a close-touch customer service organization and prides itself on making sure that every issue is 100 percent resolved before closing a ticket.

While reliability is the primary reason for customers to move to the company's new cloud, support is the main reasons customers stay, and continue to renew their services. OnApp's support service backed up this commitment.

"If we want to live up to a certain standard of service for our customers, it only makes sense that we expect our vendors to do the same for us," says Brian. "If there's a critical issue, OnApp gets back to us in less than 15 minutes. That 15 minute SLA and 24x7 support is included with the software."

"Never once have they said, 'Oh, that's something you'll have to figure out on your own.' We can call OnApp at three in the morning and they don't even blink. They really have our back."

Scaling up

Now that its new cloud is live, Big Brain Global hopes to make full use of OnApp Storage and OnApp CDN - both integral parts of the OnApp Cloud platform - to continue growing its business.

With OnApp CDN, Big Brain Global will be able to scale its customers' websites and applications to more than 40 countries, on demand, using capacity from OnApp's federated cloud. OnApp Storage will enable Big Brain Global to build its own high-performance SAN using disks in the hypervisor servers it already uses for its cloud. This will mean its cloud storage can scale naturally as its cloud infrastructure grows.

"OnApp is the gateway to where we want to be as a business," comments Brian. "We want to be able to grow with our clients, and OnApp's cloud, CDN and storage offerings allow that to happen."

Learn more about Big Brain Global at
<http://bigbrainglobal.com>.



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