# CloudTO hits the spot for Canada's small businesses, with cloud services powered by OnApp

The cloud got more local for Canadian businesses with the launch of new cloud services powered by OnApp. CloudTO offers public and private cloud hosting services for Canada's small and medium-sized business community.

CloudTO is backed by Cirrus Tech, one of the country's largest web hosts, and has quickly established itself as a trusted cloud provider in its market.

## Keeping it local

"We made a conscious decision to focus on our local market," says Ehsan Mirdamadi, CEO of CloudTO. "It's an important way we can stand out from other providers, the big guys like Amazon and Microsoft. We work with small and mid- sized companies who need to feel they can trust their cloud provider."

A couple of years ago, the company's primary focus was on dedicated servers, and services around them. The move to the cloud in 2012 was a natural progression, according to Ehsan.

"People were happy with dedicated servers, and of course there is still a market for that," he explains. "But technology evolves, and there was an opportunity here to offer something that our customers just can't get from the big guys like Amazon: a local service, with local support and SLAs that actually work."

## Choosing a platform

The team evaluated several different cloud platforms before settling on OnApp Cloud. CloudTO chose OnApp on the basis of core cloud management functionality like automation, billing flexibility and support for different storage devices, but ease of use was another key factor, as Ehsan explains.
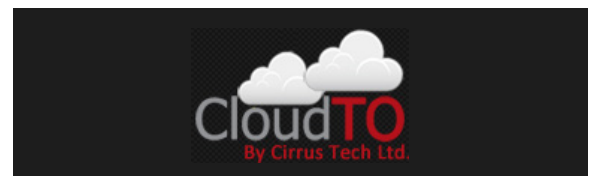
"What OnApp is very good at, is helping us design and market services that have clear value for end users, and are very simple to understand and use. It's a powerful platform, but it doesn't expose complexity to end users unless you want it to. That's perfect for us, and for our customers," he says.

With OnApp it really is possible to create different SLAs for different kinds of user, says Ehsan, to deliver the cloud each customer needs - not just one size fits all.

"It's about that understanding of what a cloud provider like us needs to provide the right kind of service to our customers," he explains. "It's not like magic is happening at the virtualization layer: we could build the same kind of capability ourselves, but that isn't the point. The point is that OnApp takes that technology and turns it into a platform that makes it easy to design services, manage services and support the kind of services our customers want to buy."

The whole OnApp deployment took two months, though the majority of that time was spent acquiring hardware.
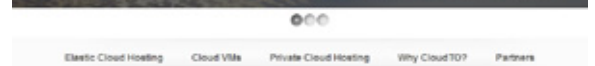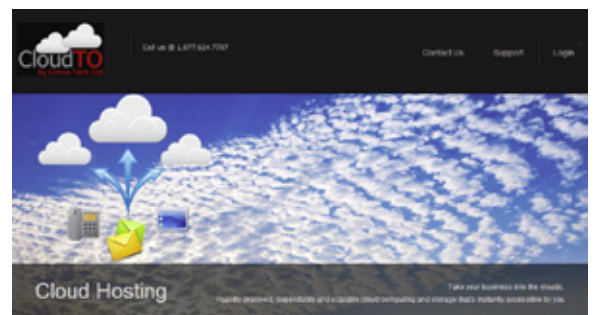


**Website:** www.cloudto.com

**OnApp go-live:** September 2012

**Summary:**

> OnApp's rapid deployment accelerates time-to-profit for CloudTO

> CloudTO can easily design services with SLAs tailored for local users, to offer a compelling alternative to AWS

> OnApp Cloud security & availability complements resilient datacenters

> 24x7 support translates to uptime for customers & reduced admin work



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**Ehsan Mirdamadi,**
CEO, CloudTo

"OnApp is easy to use. It's easy to learn. It's intuitive, and it focuses on the things we need to do business – billing, automation, storage flexibility. OnApp knows our business. That's what makes the difference," Ehsan says.

## High availability and security

CloudTO services include individual cloud VMs and general-purpose 'elastic cloud' hosting packages, as well as private cloud services. Security and high availability were critical factors in the design and implementation process. This begins at the hardware and network layer, with enterprise-class Dell server and storage hardware.

CloudTO services are supported by synchronized RAID 10 SANs for fully redundant storage, as well as redundant hardware nodes (blade servers), bandwidth and power subsystems. This infrastructure is hosted at state-of-the-art Cologix datacenters in Toronto.

At the cloud management software layer, OnApp enables secure sharing of hardware resources through its advanced VLAN management, multi-level firewalls, anti-spoof/anti-sniff systems and an advanced permissions engine. OnApp provides the maximum level of security for CloudTO's public cloud services, and enables CloudTO to create private clouds with dedicated hardware resources for individual clients, if required.

## Time to profit

CloudTO's new services proved successful almost immediately after launch.

"We were generating revenue almost immediately, and our OnApp cloud is already one of our top three revenue streams," says Ehsan. "Without any real marketing effort we've been able to launch a profitable service that clearly ticks the right boxes for our customers. It's one of the most successful products we've ever launched."

"With OnApp cloud we can provide services at lower cost. Those dedicated boxes now contribute their hardware resources to the cloud. Our customers get the capacity they need without having to pay for the whole server. They can scale up whenever they need to. And at the same time they get much higher uptime, because of the failover and redundancy built into the platform."



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## Incredible support

Being able to offer that uptime is partly about the support CloudTO gets from OnApp.

"The support is incredible," Ehsan explains. "We've worked with plenty of vendors and I've never seen a support team work as well as this. They helped us set up the infrastructure and worked with us to build the cloud we set out to build. So many other providers just leave you to figure out what you need."

"OnApp is just an easy company to work with, and I've never had an issue with the team. That's almost unheard of in this industry. I'm sure that's one of the reasons why OnApp has been so successful. It's one thing to create the software, but backing it up with a real support service is what makes the difference."

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(UK) 0800 158 8600
(US) 866 234 3240
http://onapp.com
start@onapp.com