

# Genious brings the cloud to Morocco with OnApp

In some ways, web hosting in Morocco is quite different from the US or Europe. For example, Moroccan customers value face-to-face contact with their suppliers, which is why Genious Communications has offices in Casablanca, Marrakesh and Rabat, with another due to open in Tangiers.

In other ways, Genious faces much the same challenges as hosting providers everywhere: how to keep improving services while reducing cost, how to respond to the threat from global cloud players like AWS, and how to improve margins at the same time. Genious found the answer to each of these challenges with OnApp Cloud and CDN.

## The Arabic web host of choice

Genious' vision is to become the Arabic web host of choice, and has earned a well-deserved reputation as an innovator and pioneer since it launched in 2003. Its clients include [www.hespress.com](http://www.hespress.com), one of the largest Moroccan newspapers, and high-profile e-commerce businesses like [www.hmizate.ma](http://www.hmizate.ma), Morocco's largest coupons site.

Genious manages more than 5,000 domains for 2,500 customers, and is the only ICANN accredited hosting provider in North Africa. The traditional dedicated server hosting model had been the cornerstone of this growth, but the time had come for Genious to take its customers and its business to the next level. Hamza Aboulfeth, founder and CEO of Genious, explains:

"Our customers demand the highest performance and high availability. For example, 80 to 90 per cent of Moroccan newspapers use our service, including of course Hespress.com. We are fortunate to serve many important Moroccan businesses, but there is always room to improve the quality of our service, and the potential to grow our own business. OnApp Cloud and OnApp CDN are the next stage in our growth."

## Lower cost, better service for clients

Genious deployed OnApp Cloud at the end of 2011, and started to migrate its dedicated hosting customers to the new platform. Hamza explains:

"The first thing that clients notice, of course, is that they are actually paying less. Moving from dedicated servers to our OnApp cloud reduces costs by about 30% for our customers. And at the same time, of course, they have better availability and better scalability. The OnApp platform takes care of failover automatically, and means we can provision as much or as little cloud capacity as a customer needs, on demand."

"Our customers also love the high-availability options like integrated load balancing," Hamza adds. "It's proved to be an extremely popular service. Even before we launched our cloud service we were



Website: [www.genious.net](http://www.genious.net)

OnApp go-live: November 2011

### Summary:

- > Improved resilience and scalability for customers, with 30% lower costs
- > Significantly higher margins vs dedicated servers
- > Ability to decommission/repurpose 60-70 dedicated servers immediately
- > Integrated Load Balancers & CDN
- > Easy cloud management for remote DCs



"OnApp Cloud and OnApp CDN are the next stage in our growth"

**Hamza Aboulfeth,**  
CEO, Genious Communications

## Case study **Genious**

growing our cloud infrastructure by about two servers a month to cope with the demand.”

### Easy cloud management

At launch, about half of Genious’ 200 servers have been incorporated into its OnApp cloud, which puts a premium on ease of management and maintenance – especially since its datacenters are managed remotely. Genious runs its cloud on SuperMicro servers with Intel SSDs and between 72GB and 96GB of RAM. Its servers are based in the Canix data center in Montreal, Canada.

“There are no datacenters in Morocco because bandwidth here is extremely expensive – about ten times the cost of Canada,” says Hamza. “That’s not a problem with OnApp, because it’s extremely easy to manage. Instead of waiting for a technician to make it to the datacenter we can manage everything remotely. Or our customers can manage their own services, through the OnApp Control Panel.”

### Bigger margins

This efficiency has a positive effect on management time and costs for Genious, but that’s only the start of its business success story with OnApp. Because OnApp Cloud is designed for hosts, it maximizes server density to maintain the highest possible margins for hosting providers. This is especially important in a market like Morocco, says Hamza.

“The margins for our dedicated server business were just too tight for the price points expected in our market,” says Hamza. “Moving to OnApp meant we could immediately decommission 60 or 70 dedicated servers, and we’re looking to do the same for another 30 servers as more customers take up our new cloud services.”

### Adding CDN and other new services

Hamza expects take-up to accelerate now that Genious is actively promoting its new range of cloud services.

“We’ve got some big plans for the future,” he says. “We’ll soon be launching a service to deploy common applications in our cloud with a single click. We have just deployed OnApp CDN with our own PoP in France, which is of course a very important market for us and our clients, so we can make sure content is served as close to our end users as possible, as quickly as possible.”

“We are also very excited about the new OnApp Storage product, and we hope to develop a pure SSD-based storage service for our cloud,” he concludes. “We are very happy with the OnApp software, and the OnApp team: they are always there for you, and OnApp support is one of the best I have ever seen.”

Learn more about Genious at <http://www.genious.net>.



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**Hamza Aboulfeth,**  
CEO, Genious Communications



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