

# No compromise on quality: \*um grows its enterprise cloud business with OnApp

The unbelievable Machine Company (\*um) is a Berlin-based managed services provider with a fanatical focus on quality. Its customers include Nokia, Deutsche Post, Volkswagen and nugg.ad, who rely on \*um for a range of hosting services as well as expertise in planning and operating high transaction websites, large-scale web applications and 'big data'. Now \*um offers a range of cloud services powered by OnApp.

\*um was founded in 2008. Today it has 30 employees and more than 100 customers, split roughly evenly between large multinational enterprises, e-commerce sites and media agencies, and smaller Web 2.0 start-ups.

They all have something in common: a need for ultra-reliable, high performance hosting services, with no compromise on quality. Ravin Mehta, CEO of The unbelievable Machine Company, explains:

"We don't sell to consumers, and we don't compete at the lower end of the hosting market where it's all about who offers the most RAM for the lowest cost. We focus entirely on quality. We build services from the best software and the best hardware, and we hire the best people. When it came to building our new cloud, OnApp was the natural choice."

## Building a next-generation cloud

\*um is no stranger to cloud computing: in fact, its OnApp cloud is the third generation of its cloud service. There are some significant differences introduced with OnApp, however, as Director of Operations Mario Apitz explains:

"Our previous generation clouds were 'bottom-up' deployments - they were virtualization projects within our own infrastructure, first based on Solaris containers, then a Xen-based cloud that made heavy use of our own scripting framework," he says. "Moving to OnApp was a huge step forward for us, and our customers. It's designed for service providers, with a full API, a great control panel for self-provisioning, and plenty of value-adds like the iPhone and iPad app."

"OnApp means we can design services with solid failover and scalability in the backend, but package them in a way our users expect a cloud service to look and behave. It's easy to use, but incredibly powerful," Mario adds.

\*um considered a number of different software platforms before choosing OnApp, including Parallels, Citrix and Eucalyptus. Its OnApp deployment began in December 2011, and after extensive testing the new \*umCloud went live in March 2012.

## Designed for cloud providers

"OnApp was clearly the best tool for cloud service providers," says Mario. "It was straightforward to implement, and we had all the



Website: [www.unbelievable-machine.com](http://www.unbelievable-machine.com)

OnApp go-live: March 2012

### Summary:

- > Revenue growth as clients consolidate multiple providers to the \*umCloud
- > Improved scalability and ease of use for clients, with self-provisioning and iOS app for remote management
- > Enterprise-class feature set and resilience
- > Straightforward implementation with full support



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Director of Operations, The unbelievable Machine Company

## Case study The unbelievable Machine Company

support we needed from OnApp's integration and support teams. Most of our existing customers are now using or testing our \*umCloud platform, built with OnApp."

The \*um cloud is hosted in a state-of-the-art Tier IV datacenter, which is certified by the TÜV (Germany's Technical Inspection Association) in line with ISO/IEC 27001:2005 for Datacenter Services. Customers have been very positive about the new cloud service.

"Customers particularly like OnApp features such as autoscaling, easy creation of VM templates, and the iPhone/iPad app for remote cloud management," says Mario.

"The German market is fairly conservative about the cloud," adds CEO Ravin Mehta. "Our customers don't buy into the hype - but they definitely buy the improvements in availability and scalability, and the ease of management. We have seen a noticeable growth in revenues since going live with OnApp."

### A better alternative to AWS

"There's a definite trend toward consolidation in our customer base," says Ravin. "A common scenario is where a large company runs the majority of its hosted applications on dedicated servers, with some bits and pieces running on Amazon, perhaps, and maybe a few traditional hosting companies thrown into the mix as well."

"That's not very efficient: you have at least three providers, three logins, three pricing agreements and different service levels. Our customers want to remove that complexity, and they want to get professional SLAs you just don't get with the Amazon cloud," he continues.

"With OnApp we can run a unified cloud infrastructure that meets all of their varying needs. By consolidating their services in the \*um cloud, our customers get simpler, more efficient and higher quality IT services - with SLAs you can actually run a business on. OnApp's 24x7 support gives us the backing we need to offer rock-solid support to our own clients," he finishes.

### Rapid growth

Just a few months after launch, \*um is already expanding its cloud infrastructure to cope with demand, creating multiple availability zones for customer data and applications with additional servers in a second Tier IV datacenter in Amsterdam.

\*um has also started using OnApp's CDN platform, which enables service providers to sell spare cloud capacity on a global



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marketplace, and build a virtual CDN by sourcing capacity from other providers. \*um has already deployed several CDN edge servers and was the first provider to offer OnApp CDN Points of Presence in Germany.

"We're very happy with our OnApp deployment," says Mario Apitz. "OnApp meets our stringent quality requirements, and it gives us the flexibility to keep developing innovative cloud services."

And the company name? "We fed technical terms into a rock band name generator," says Mario, "and this one just stuck!" For high quality enterprise-class cloud services, check out the \*um website at [www.unbelievable-machine.com](http://www.unbelievable-machine.com).

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