

NTT Com's flexible cloud environment decreases BMJ's lead time for deploying new applications by 80%



“The ability to constantly spin up new VMs for build servers, prototypes and new products is invaluable. It's also made it much easier to support a heterogeneous platform, now that we have several products based on Windows/.net.”

Jon Peterson, Head of Architecture, The BMJ Group

Background

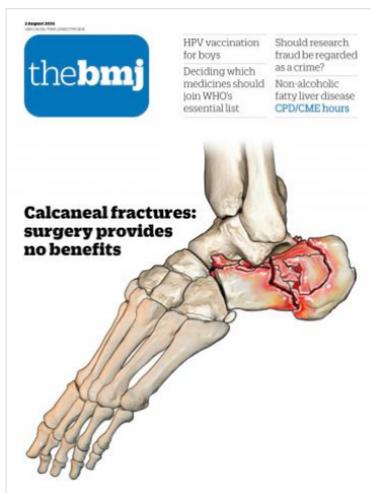
The British Medical Journal (BMJ) Group is a worldwide healthcare knowledge provider. Its services vary from its original journal publications to apps and training tools for healthcare professionals. Since the launch of the original print journal in 1840, BMJ has expanded into the digital world, and in 1995 became the first general medical journal to go online. It now offers over 20 different digital services for research, learning and clinical decision-making support. BMJ offers its services in 9 languages, across 229 countries, to over 2000 organisations.

Objectives

With over 4.2 million global monthly visits, and a 10% year-on-year growth, the BMJ Group needed an ICT infrastructure that could cope with this increasing demand. BMJ also needed a flexible platform to develop, test and deploy new applications for their online services. BMJ's supplier needed to provide high levels of technical support and act as an advisor for future technological implementations and requirements.

Challenges

As many of BMJ's customers are government health services, its ICT solution had to meet stringent data security requirements. As a supplier, NTT Communications (NTT Com) complies with the Information Governance Statement of Compliance (IGSoC) requirements, allowing it to establish a secure connection to the National Health Service (NHS) broadband network, N3. As a result, BMJ is able to offer its services to over 1 million NHS staff directly over N3.



“The key thing for us is that we can reach knowledgeable people rapidly. Even front line support has a good understanding of our environment and what is going on. Our operations team has enough experience of hosting providers to know a good support desk when they work with one!”

Jon Peterson, Head of Architecture, The BMJ Group



Solution

NTT Com provides a combination of private cloud and dedicated hosting in a redundant, load-balanced Linux operating system. This gives BMJ the resilience of a dedicated platform with the flexibility of the cloud. As a result, BMJ is able to work on new applications and reconfigure its cloud environment in real time, providing performance, cost and lead time benefits.

The hybrid cloud configuration also allows the BMJ to manage peaks and troughs in demand easily. For instance, in 2013, during a weeklong promotional campaign, BMJ experienced a 500% traffic increase in the BMJ Learning app. Traffic peaked during the first and last days of the campaign. In order to deal with this high level of traffic and ensure users could access the application with no issues or delays, BMJ's technical team was able to easily add application instances, RAM and cores to critical infrastructure services and revert back once traffic stabilised. The NTT Com technical team works with BMJ, providing 24/7 support, helping to solve any issues quickly and effectively.

Benefit

With the flexibility of a hybrid cloud solution and the on-going support and guidance provided by NTT Com, the BMJ Group decreased the lead times of commissioning new applications by 80%. As a result, overall traffic in BMJ's different products increased by 9% between 2012-13. Many key products had a 20% year-on-year growth in page views.

“BMJ can now deliver internal prototypes and beta applications far faster and cheaper than before. We've been able to efficiently support a mixture of Windows and Linux VMs, and we have the flexibility to delegate management and administration of individual apps and VMs within the company.” Jon Peterson, Head of Architecture, The BMJ Group

Contact Us: info@ntt.eu



www.eu.ntt.com

NTT Communications offices in Europe and the Middle East

NTT Europe Ltd. (Headquarters)

3rd Floor, Devon House
58-60 St. Katharine's Way
London E1W 1LB
United Kingdom

Benelux

+31 23 569 8340

France

+33 1 73 02 02 03

Germany

+49 69 1338 68 000

Spain

+34 902 250 280

Sweden

+46 8 27 81 04

United Arab Emirates

+971 4 426 4866

United Kingdom

+44 20 7977 1000

Connect with us:



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