



Centershift, Inc.

INDUSTRY CASE STUDY

ViaWest's database expertise, project management skills and scalable storage help a growing SaaS provider flourish in the marketplace.

VIAWEST SERVICES

Managed hosting, KINCECTed Storage

Scenario

Centershift, Inc. is the fastest growing Internet-based management software provider to the self-storage industry. Centershift built the most robust self-storage management software application available and delivers the software via the Internet as a Software as a Services (SaaS) solution. The centralized database model of the STORE applications was designed specifically for seamless integration with call centers, websites, corporate offices and other business systems to help self-storage operators of all sizes increase efficiencies and maximize profits.

The Centershift STORE application currently handles over \$1 Billion in transactions annually. In 2002, when Centershift's developers were actually building the software that powers Centershift's SaaS offering, they came to ViaWest to determine how ViaWest could take over the responsibility of maintaining Centershift's IT infrastructure so that the developers could focus entirely on building software. "We wanted to offload what we could and do what we do best, which is building a software product," commented James Hafen, CTO.

Business Challenge

Since 2002, Centershift has been utilizing ViaWest to maintain their production environment. By 2011, Centershift had experienced significant growth. They needed to upgrade their database environment to enable faster performance and extend their capacity, as well as shift to a platform that offered better

supportability. Over that same time period, compliance standards changed and companies that process credit card transactions, as Centershift does, also became subject to PCI-DSS requirements.

Adding another layer of complexity to Centershift's business challenge, as the company grew, their data storage needs grew with them: "As we got to the end of 2011, we knew we needed to expand our storage to stay current with support and extend capacity," Hafen explained. "We went to market to look for vendors for storage. ViaWest was the only vendor that offered a solution that didn't require us to overbuy capacity from Day 1," recalled Hafen.

Solution

In 2011, Centershift upgraded their Oracle production environments in both Salt Lake City, Utah and Denver, Colorado. The upgrade included upgrading to the latest Oracle release, adding more memory to significantly improve performance, and moving from Red Hat to Oracle database management systems.

"We did the research and analysis and knew that we needed a faster, more supportable database platform," Hafen explained.

"We called on ViaWest because databases are not our area of

expertise and we did not want to attempt to execute such a monumental upgrade ourselves."

"This was a very complex upgrade that had a number of steps that required a high degree of competence and precision," Hafen recalled. "This was a big process because we upgraded hardware and software and we also had to take into account PCI requirements."

"Our relationship with ViaWest has made our company work."

-James Hafen, CTO, Centershift



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Within a fifteen hour window, the ViaWest database team executed the database upgrade. "The transition to the new database was flawless," Hafen said. "This was a database doing billions of dollars of transactions per year and there was no drop in service. I sing the praises of the ViaWest database team. They are technically superior and very experienced. I respect them, and, over the years, they have become our friends. They are superstars in my mind."

And, since two of ViaWest's 22 data centers are PCI-DSS Section 9 and 12 compliant, Centershift could lean on ViaWest's controls to achieve compliance. "PCI-DSS requirements are very expensive to meet," said Hafen. "ViaWest supported us to the degree we needed."

As for their growing data storage needs, ViaWest's KINECTed Storage was the ideal solution for the growing company. "With ViaWest, we could buy exactly what we were going to use," Hafen said. "And, compared to SAN storage, ViaWest's KINECTed Storage is a fraction of the cost. It boiled down to a financial decision, but it also made sense to lease the storage because ViaWest would manage it. We could wash our hands of one more IT infrastructure responsibility and concentrate on our core business." ViaWest was the only vendor who presented this type of storage solution to Centershift.

Beyond the technical expertise of ViaWest professionals, Terry Bagley, CEO of Centershift, appreciates that ViaWest's co-founders, Roy Dimoff, CEO and Nancy Phillips, COO, are always accessible to him. "My experience working with Roy and Nancy has fostered an excellent working relationship. I felt like I could pick up the phone and talk to them whenever I needed their attention," Terry said. "This was especially important as we worked to meet compliance requirements. We felt like Roy and Nancy really stepped up and helped us meet those requirements."

**"As we talk with customers,
ViaWest has been a differentiator for us."**

-Terry Bagley, CEO, Centershift

WHY VIAWEST

ViaWest is one of the largest privately held data center service providers in North America. We provide colocation, complex hosting, cloud and managed services to businesses of all sizes nationwide. ViaWest owns and operates 22 enterprise-class data center facilities in Colorado, Texas, Oregon, Utah, and Nevada, delivering high-quality, flexible solutions designed to support customers' unique business needs. For additional information on ViaWest, please visit www.viawest.com or call 1-877-448-9378.