CASE STUDY

ShopVisible

Growing Hand in Hand:

HOSTWAY SUPPORTS SAAS PROVIDER SHOPVISIBLE'S EXPONENTIAL GROWTH

OVERVIEW

As ShopVisible's customer base continued to increase, the company began to evaluate hosting solutions that would be able to meet their needs and to scale with their rapid growth. Hostway was able to meet ShopVisible's demands for a reliable, customized, PCI-compliant infrastructure, while also offering a service relationship that far exceeded ShopVisible's expectations.

CHALLENGE

ShopVisible powers the commerce platform that enables world-class online retailers to run all aspects of their business in one place, from order management to returns. From initial site design or re-design, to multi-channel strategies, search engine optimization implementation, content management, order management, CRM, shipping, back office systems and analytics, ShopVisible is a complete e-commerce software-as-a-service (SaaS) solution.

ShopVisible has experienced steady client growth since its incorporation in 2006, and related data requirements rose in turn. Foreseeing the expense and inefficiency of managing the infrastructure for these services in-house, ShopVisible sought a third-party hosting provider.

ShopVisible powers the entire online commerce businesses for major retailers and brands, so uptime and stability are mission-critical. ShopVisible needed a provider with backup procedures and redundancies that would reduce potential interruptions that may be caused by hardware failures or even scheduled maintenance.

Any potential hosting partner also needed to comply with rigorous Payment Card Industry (PCI) standards safeguarding the user information and credit card data that would pass through ShopVisible's system each day.

SOLUTION

ShopVisible selected Hostway, with whom they had an existing relationship from a different project. Hostway was not only able to provide the backup procedures and redundancies that ShopVisible needed, but was able to build a custom infrastructure that could be integrated with ShopVisible's proprietary system.

In addition, Hostway helped ShopVisible meet PCI-compliance requirements, many of which were satisfied by Hostway's own internal compliance to stringent SAS 70 (now SSAE 16) credentials. ShopVisible could rest assured they were working in a PCI-compliant environment with a vendor that understood the complex regulations involved.

RESULTS

Hostway Customizes Infrastructure for ShopVisible's Proprietary Systems

Hostway offered multiple value-added services for ShopVisible: Load-balancing optimizes resources and introduces redundancies by spreading requests to multiple servers; Hostway's managed Cisco Firewall solution protects its e-commerce clients without any disruption of traffic, with security managed by an advanced intrusion-detection solution.

But these add-ons would not work with ShopVisible's solution straight out of the box.

"We have a proprietary system – it works in a specific way," explained Jignesh Patel, ShopVisible Director of IT. "So everything we use at Hostway – from firewall and switches to load balancing and backup – the entire solution is customized for us."

What amazed Patel was not just the service provider's ability to customize the infrastructure, but also the fact that he doesn't have to remind them about the specifications when making updates and changes.

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“I don’t have to give Hostway specific instructions on how we need it to work,” Patel said. “When I say ‘I need a web server,’ they automatically customize it to work with our proprietary system – they know exactly how much RAM we need, and they customize it all for us.”

ShopVisible Grows, Hostway Keeps Pace

In recent years, ShopVisible clients have experienced explosive growth, many of them more than doubling in size. The company was pleased to see that Hostway not only kept in step with them, but went above and beyond to clear the path for continued growth.

“The clients we support are quite different than when we signed on with Hostway, in terms of scale and needs,” Patel said. “Hostway has proven equally fit at servicing ShopVisible in each stage of its evolution.”

When ShopVisible decided to expand its infrastructure in step with its growth, Hostway worked closely with ShopVisible's internal IT – who visited Hostway’s Austin data center in person – to design a scalable solution that would fit ShopVisible's changing needs. In addition, Hostway advised on a deployment plan to minimize downtime to the current production environment.

Hostway Provides Personal, Proactive Attention

As ShopVisible’s hosting needs continued to grow, Hostway provided ShopVisible with a dedicated account manager who possessed intimate knowledge of the data and storage requirements of the company as well as an understanding of its business model and unique needs. A dedicated team now provides ShopVisible with fast issue resolution and an experienced consultant to look to for advice.

This proactive staff management has helped ensure that any problems are resolved quickly by one or more of the staff members who are fully briefed on ShopVisible’s custom setup.

“The Hostway team is excellent at communicating with each other,” said Patel. “If I tell something to one team member, the others all know it immediately.”

In addition, the Hostway team understood the importance of infrastructure reliability to ShopVisible and their customers.

Josh Lloyd, CTO and co-founder of ShopVisible, praised Hostway’s dedication to managed services.

“Hostway’s proactive managed service has worked to make a good service even better,” Lloyd said. “They diagnose potential issues before they exist.”

CONCLUSION

ShopVisible Becomes a Hostway Channel Partner

In 2012, Hostway launched a Channel Partnership Program to offer discounts and commissions to companies that resold or referred Hostway’s services. ShopVisible became one of the hosting provider’s first partners, as a reseller of Hostway’s resources (in that Hostway’s servers are used to host ShopVisible’s software).

As a demonstration of the commitment to the partnership, Hostway served as a sponsor of ShopVisible’s 2012 Client Connect event, and had staff on hand to help answer questions about the infrastructure side of product offerings.

“Many of our customers want to know who we’re hosting with, since this obviously affects the service they receive,” Lloyd explained. “It was extremely helpful to have Hostway at the event to answer questions and build trust with the customers directly, which in turn builds our customers’ loyalty to us.”

Hostway was a collaborative partner from the beginning, and has grown hand-in-hand with ShopVisible, offering industry-leading uptime and customized managed services. It serves as a model partner relationship, built around each side clearing the path to enhanced profits for the other.