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CASE STUDY

Cloud Computing Increases Flexibility and Reliability while Reducing Expenses for Public Relations Firm

Background

Established in 1998, DPR Group, Inc. is a full service PR and marketing agency for a wide range of both privately held and publicly traded business and technology companies. The agency primarily focuses on promoting software and IT, manufacturing, clean tech, government contracting, supply chain and logistics, telecommunications, and business consulting companies.

As a small-medium business (SMB), DPR Group has 10 employees between its headquarters in Germantown, Md., and Cary, N.C.

Challenges

In early 2011, DPR Group had two physical offices—its headquarters in Germantown, Md. and a secondary office in Cary, N.C. Both offices were utilizing traditional on-site IT set-ups that often ran into problems with accessibility, integration and lost productivity due to extensive downtime and daily IT maintenance issues. With the rapid pace of news today, it's imperative for DPR Group's account executives to have a reliable method to electronically communicate with clients and the media, while accessing files to support the execution of time-sensitive projects. Additionally, DPR Group was working with a managed services provider that functioned in a reactive break-fix model resulting in excessive downtime, reduced productivity and unnecessary time spent on IT maintenance.

Beyond the day-to-day challenges, DPR Group was also faced with high operating costs associated with maintaining two physical offices. Due to a growing client base stretching from Washington D.C. to New England, DPR was continuing to increase staff in the Maryland office.

According to Dan Demaree, president and CEO, DPR Group, Inc., "the public relations industry is always changing and we are currently in a slow growth period. This meant we needed to find a way to decrease our large operational costs and retain top industry talent to maintain our competitive advantage in the marketplace."

At a Glance

Background

- DPR Group is a full-service agency that specializes in providing public relations and marketing support services to technology companies.

- The company is headquartered in Germantown, Md., with employees in Cary, N.C.

- www.dprgroup.com

Challenges

- Utilizing a traditional, on-site IT set-up with accessibility and reliability issues.

- Reactive break-fix model resulted in excessive downtime and lost productivity.

- High operational costs associated with two physical offices.

Solution

In October 2011, DPR Group selected Cetrom Information Technology, Inc. (Cetrom) to implement a custom cloud computing solution that would decrease operational costs, streamline IT operations, and make it possible to continue to employ top industry talent. Demaree had researched other cloud providers and knew that many offer the cloud as one capability among other managed services. Cetrom's 100 percent devotion to cloud computing and impressive customer retention record impressed Demaree from the start.

"I like that Cetrom is committed to delivering a best-in-class cloud computing solution from start to finish—both hosting my data and applications and proactively monitoring and supporting them to ensure peak performance and unmatched security," Demaree commented. "It was a complete 180 from the traditional reactive break-fix solution we were used to."

Cetrom has built its cloud computing solutions on a best-in-class technology infrastructure to provide flexible mobile workforce capabilities and provides the highest level of customer service to its clients by maintaining a front-line customer support staff of senior-level, certified engineers. DPR Group selected the unique Cetrom Hybrid Cloud, which enables the company to take full advantage of the power and convenience of a full cloud deployment, while maintaining the peace of mind that comes with an extra layer of redundancy in backup on a local server. This solution would enable employees to access all of DPR Group's IT resources anytime, anywhere, from any device with only an internet connection.

As part of the cloud-based solution, Cetrom hosts all of DPR Group's applications and data at secure, Tier 4, SAS 70-compliant data centers. These enterprise-class facilities maintain physical and logical security measures, geographically dispersed redundancy for top-notch security and 24x7x365 monitoring and alerts, to prevent problems before they occur. This keeps DPR Group's IT network up and running even in the event of a disaster, like the recent severe mid-Atlantic storms.

> **Demaree says,** *"With our previous IT provider, we would constantly lose access to our resources while working remotely, and when we submitted a trouble ticket it would sometimes take days to hear from them resulting in lost productivity and downtime. With Cetrom, we get a rapid response from a high-level engineer that can solve the problem with expertise and efficiency. Our ability to service and respond to our clients is vital and having Cetrom's 99.9 percent uptime guarantee ensures we maintain the lifeline of our business."*

Results

DPR Group remained completely operational during the entire process of transitioning to the cloud with no downtime or lost productivity. Selecting Cetrom as a cloud computing service provider gave DPR Group the confidence that comes with having a leading provider that will both host and maintain the company's vital applications and data, as well as provide senior-level support 24x7x365 and the expertise necessary to meet the needs of an SMB. The reliability of Cetrom's cloud computing solution, and zero downtime since going live, will save DPR Group approximately $50,000 in lost productivity each year.

As DPR Group transitioned to its new cloud solution, Demaree was still considering ways to increase profitability. By implementing a cloud solution that would allow for seamless remote connectivity, DPR Group decided to consolidate into one, centralized headquarters in Germantown, Md., and close its Cary, N.C. office. With the cloud, DPR Group retained top industry talent by enabling employees to work remotely from home offices, while opening up additional recruiting possibilities in other important geographies across the U.S. Ultimately, this will save DPR Group over $70,000 in annual operating costs by closing this office.

> **Demaree concludes,** *"Cetrom has given us increased flexibility and more time to focus on our business and our customers, so we can provide the highest level of public relations for a variety of high tech companies across multiple industries. Cetrom's full-service, one-stop-shop approach provides flexibility, accessibility and reliability so that our company can access vital IT resources anytime from anywhere in the world. Cetrom delivers top notch service because they care about their customers."*

At a Glance

Solution

- Fully outsourced, cloud computing solution from Cetrom centralized all company IT resources.

- Enterprise-class, secure data centers host valuable applications and data.

- Proactive 24x7x365 monitoring and alerts to prevent downtime, eliminate interruptions and ensure uptime.

- Extensive knowledge of SMBs and high-level technical expertise.

- Extra level of redundancy with on-site replication of all cloud-based resources with the Cetrom Hybrid.

Results

- Reduced operating costs by over $70,000 annually with the consolidation to one physical office in Maryland, while retaining staff in home-based offices.

- Saved $50,000 in lost productivity with Cetrom's excellent customer service and 99.9% uptime guarantee.

- Increased mobility and flexibility for traveling executives and teams with easy access to applications and data.

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