



SUCCESS STORY
Cloud Services



RAPIDSCALE | PROBLEM SOLVED

Cloud service provider RapidScale implemented NetApp flash solutions as the high-performance foundation for its customers' production environments.

A Competitive Edge in Managed Cloud

RapidScale set its services apart in the fiercely competitive cloud industry, choosing to support its customizable cloud solutions with NetApp All Flash FAS for optimal performance and efficiency. Its high-performing offerings improved business outcomes for customers including global manufacturers and hospitals.

VIRTUAL DESKTOP
RESPONSE TIMES
ACCELERATED UP TO

20x

SUPPORTS

100%

ANNUAL
GROWTH

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“We could not have supported the growth we’re experiencing without NetApp All Flash FAS.”

William Hiatt
CTO, RapidScale

PERSONALIZING BUSINESS CLOUD

RapidScale is a provider of fully managed cloud solutions that make it easy for any size business to move applications and users to the cloud. Understanding that no two businesses are the same, the company’s vision is to provide personalized, customer-oriented cloud solutions. Through RapidScale offerings such as CloudServer (IaaS) and CloudDesktop (DaaS), customers can eliminate the hassle of day-to-day updates, patches, and user management and move to the next level of productivity and profitability.

CHALLENGE

Differentiating services in a competitive market

Managed cloud services are in high demand in every industry, and the competition among providers is fierce. Fast-growing cloud service providers such as RapidScale—which has doubled in size every year since inception—must differentiate their services to sustain growth and keep customer satisfaction high.

“Our customers pay for great service, and that means different things to different companies,” says William Hiatt, CTO at RapidScale. “But the one constant is that we must provide a high-performance experience

at all times, or customers will go elsewhere.”

Because RapidScale serves companies of all sizes in all verticals, customer workloads are extremely variable, ranging from just a few virtual desktops to critical, high-volume manufacturing and healthcare environments. To continue to provide the best possible performance for its CloudServer and CloudDesktop offerings while supporting 100% annual growth, RapidScale needed to eliminate any possibility of contention between customer workloads.

“Under no circumstances can we ever allow ourselves to be constrained by IOPS or allow latency to creep up,” says Hiatt. “Any slowdowns could have huge ramifications for everything from patient care to global supply chains. We wanted assurance that this would never happen—and we also wanted a competitive edge to continue to differentiate our services in a competitive marketplace.”

SOLUTION

All flash, all the time

To give customers unparalleled performance for demanding workloads such as enterprise databases and electronic medical records,

BUSINESS BENEFITS

- Accelerates database transactions and virtual desktop response times up to 20X
- Delivers a high-performance experience to customers, making RapidScale more competitive
- Eliminates the need for performance tuning at the storage layer, reclaiming valuable engineering time
- Makes flash storage efficient and affordable with deduplication and compression

RapidScale began seeking a storage partner for its global cloud platform. The company conducted proof-of-concept demonstrations with flash-based storage vendors, including NetApp.

“We ultimately chose NetApp based on ease of use, nondisruptive operations, and native NFS capabilities,” says Hiatt. “Plus, NetApp had a great overall package, including software features such as deduplication and compression that help make flash storage more efficient and affordable.”

Instead of picking and choosing high-I/O workloads to move to flash storage, RapidScale moved all its customers’ production environments to NetApp AFF8060 systems to drive down latency in all of its data centers, both domestically and internationally.

“We view ‘all flash, all the time’ as a competitive differentiator for us against public cloud and other cloud providers,” says Hiatt. “Moving to NetApp All Flash FAS made a lot of sense from a business standpoint, and it also helps our technical teams because they don’t have to spend time tuning individual workloads for



optimal performance. It’s all on flash, and it’s always fast.”

RapidScale uses NetApp SnapMirror to replicate data between locations for disaster recovery. It also relies on NetApp OnCommand Insight software to gain a broad view of performance data and improve management efficiency. “We have a unified view of storage across all our data centers with NetApp OnCommand Insight,” says Hiatt.

BUSINESS BENEFITS

Improving customer experiences

By moving to NetApp All Flash FAS, RapidScale is exceeding customer expectations for even the most demanding workloads. As its manufacturing customers embrace the Internet of Things, RapidScale will be able to handle the resulting

data explosion while still providing excellent database and application performance. A healthcare customer has already seen virtual desktop login times decrease by 80%, helping nurses and clinicians access patient information faster and helping accelerate quality of care.

“Delivering a high-performance experience to customers makes us more competitive,” says Hiatt. “[We’ve accelerated database transactions and virtual desktop response times up to 20x by moving to NetApp All Flash FAS.](#)  The NetApp brand also resonates with customers and gives them confidence that we have an enterprise-class flash storage solution.”

MAKING THE MOST OF RESOURCES

RapidScale is retaining existing customers and winning new ones while preserving its profit margins through administration time savings and storage efficiency features. With no need for performance tuning at the storage layer, the company is reclaiming valuable engineering time for other uses.

SUPPORTING 100% ANNUAL GROWTH

NetApp All Flash FAS enables RapidScale to rapidly scale—so essential to its customers that its name reflects the need—to support organic growth as well as new business ventures. “We always need to be ready for unanticipated growth, and we could not have supported the growth we’re experiencing without NetApp All Flash FAS,” says Hiatt. 

SOLUTION COMPONENTS

NETAPP PRODUCTS

NetApp AFF8060 Systems (production)

NetApp FAS3250 System (DR)

NetApp clustered Data ONTAP 8.3

NetApp SnapMirror

NetApp OnCommand Insight Perform and Discover

NetApp deduplication and data compression

ENVIRONMENT

Applications: Various customer production workloads, including Epic EMR

Databases: Oracle RAC, Microsoft SQL Server

Virtualization: VMware vSphere

Server Platform: Cisco UCS

PROTOCOL

NFS

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