

CASE STUDY



Singapore's largest IT retailer

ORGANIZATION:

Challenger is a market leader in consumer electronics based out of Singapore. As a dynamic retailer known for its strong brand name, attractive ValueClub member privileges, and strong product partnerships with major global brands, Challenger strives to innovate and offer best in class products, service and support for its customers. Since its founding in 1982, Challenger has expanded to almost 50 stores across Singapore.

CHALLENGE:

Address changing market conditions on a scalable platform

SOLUTION:

Managed Amazon Web Services



SG: +65 6653.1960 UK: +44 800.634.3414 US: +1 877.773.3306

DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION ENABLED BY THE CLOUD

THE CHALLENGE

Challenger was faced with two significant concerns it needed to rapidly address. Firstly, market expectations were quickly changing. Singaporean consumers traditionally preferred going into physical stores over online retailers. This behavior was culturally built into the region and reflected the shopping habits of consumers in Singapore. However, this was very quickly changing. Over the course of 18 months and largely due to enhancements in online security, logistics and support mechanisms—such as free returns and couriers apps that allow you to track deliveries—Singaporeans were very quickly going online to make their purchases. Challenger needed to transform its brick-and-mortar retail business that previously only had a small focus on the ecommerce portion into a true Online to Offline (O2O) model that allowed for a more integrated shopping experience in store and online.

Secondly, the speed and scale at which Challenger's retail network was expanding meant that it needed to enhance its existing IT infrastructure to a more robust one that could handle increased transactions, more complex backend functions, and improve operational efficiencies.

Rather than see the above as problems, Challenger chose to view these as opportunities and looked to

digitally transform its business to meet changing market conditions, follow its customers, and remain a market leader.



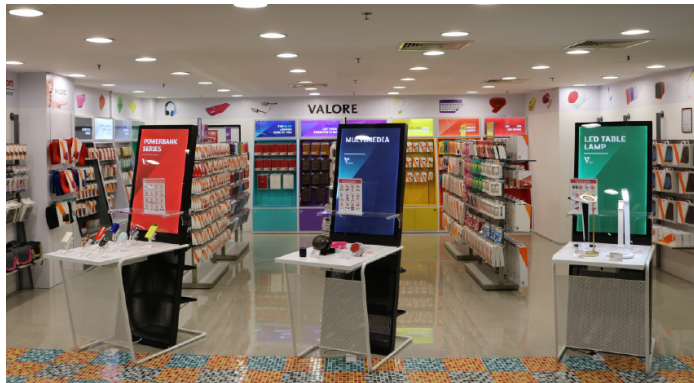
Whilst Challenger had an online presence, it was built on an on-premise solution which did not allow it to quickly scale as they looked to push consumers to purchase online. The company was also looking to change the dynamics of its retail presence to become more experiential. The company's goal was to move from an offline mindset to an online one, creating a digital lifestyle ecosystem that would move its entire business platform to the cloud to better serve its customers and exceed expectations for information gathering, ordering, fulfillment, and service. This was not something Challenger took lightly, as it meant moving its very core operational systems, including its point of sales, ERP, and entire online marketplace onto the cloud.

Because of this, infrastructure was a primary concern for the retail chain. Like firms considering cloud migration, security was also a critical discussion point to ensure proactive monitoring and management from the start.

ENTER DATAPIPE

Challenger was advised by Gartner that Datapipe's expertise in designing, deploying, and managing best of breed AWS environments could potentially be a good fit for the company's transformation program. As one of AWS' inaugural premier consulting partners, Datapipe was recommended for its expertise in cloud enablement. With its strong managed services portfolio focusing on scalability, compliance and security (including backup and DR), Datapipe was able to provide Challenger with guidance, assurance and innovation provided by AWS' leading services from the start.

Challenger's rapid growth—it had nearly doubled its amount of stores in less than five years—required that its infrastructure be very responsive to the changes of its stores. AWS' marketing leading platform was chosen for its agility and was designed around a highly available autoscaling capability which would ensure IT infrastructure and AWS instances grew in response to growing demand. This also meant Challenger was not required to bear any upfront costs of expensive hardware.



THE SOLUTION

Challenger's move to AWS comes in two phases. Phase 1 moved its core web, point of sale, billing, database, and backup and disaster recovery workloads into Amazon Elastic Compute Cloud (Amazon EC2) instances within a Virtual Private Cloud for added security. Phase 2 will see Challenger move its remaining security, mail, payments, print, and network functionality into Amazon environments including a planned move to AWS Direct Connect for added security and increased performance. A staged approach was used as it allowed Challenger to move faster while minimizing downtime.

Moving core components of Challenger's business required high levels of security to ensure compliance and protection against external threats such as DDoS attacks. Datapipe ensures compliance and security measures for Challenger with its 24x7x365 managed service and monitoring. AWS Virtual Private Cloud (VPC), which isolates Challenger's environment, provided additional security through managed VPN connectivity. Datapipe was able to ease security concerns from the beginning with strong security expertise and a core built around AWS security products and features.

Migrating to an AWS environment with Datapipe allowed Challenger to not only commit to its creation of a digital lifestyle ecosystem, but also accommodate the demands of the Singapore marketplace by improving its speed and agility in responding to and making changes.

OPERATIONAL IMPACT

RESULTS & BENEFITS

- Cutting lead times for IT infrastructure when building stores from 6-8 weeks to 1-2 days
- Ability to automate and scale infrastructure easily to meet rapidly growing online demand
- Meeting a high level of security and compliance befitting of a company transforming itself towards a digital-first business model
- Ability to shift internal IT resources from routine IT maintenance to helping the business innovate and increase revenue

“Datapipe architecture and operational teams have provided us valuable insights and technical advice. They have been instrumental in solving our issues while guiding us on our cloud journey, allowing us to focus on our business,” said Joshua Woon, Chief Technology Officer, Challenger.

“We expect cloud will be the platform for our growth and will continue to leverage all aspects of cloud to support our business,” added Woon.

Migration and management of AWS infrastructure can be filled with nuances and uncertainty, particularly in Singapore where compliance issues are a major concern for businesses. With Datapipe’s guidance through the migration process, day-to-day management, and knowledge of the Singapore market, it can help guide businesses through changing marketplaces.

DATAPIPE

Datapipe is the managed hosting and cloud services provider with the most complete set of services, global locations, and industry leading partners. Datapipe delivers choice, control and confidence in architecting, deploying, and managing multi-platform hybrid IT solutions tailored to individual customer needs. Optimizing mission-critical and day-to-day enterprise IT operations, Datapipe enables businesses to transform, innovate, and scale. Backed by a global team of experience professionals and next-generation data centers Datapipe provides comprehensive security, governance, orchestration, and analytics solutions. Analyst firm Gartner has named Datapipe a leader in the 2014 and 2015 Magic Quadrant for Cloud-Enabled Managed Hosting.

DATAPIPE.COM SG: +65 6653.1960 UK: +44 800.634.3414 US: +1 877.773.3306