

A CASE STUDY FOR:

Q4 INC.

HELPS COMPANIES STAY ON TOP OF MARKET MOVEMENTS MORE EFFECTIVELY WITH INVESTORS
Rackspace enables Toronto capital-markets innovator to deliver effective tools and analysis.

BUSINESS

Provide stock market data and analysis, allowing users to better manage their work with the capital markets.

CHALLENGES

Ensure site uptime and a high-performance infrastructure, optimizing Amazon Web Services (AWS).

SOLUTION

Rackspace Managed Hosting, Dedicated Servers, **Fanatical Support®** for AWS

OUTCOME

Savings of one full-time resource- stronger user engagement with capital markets and investors.





Founded in 2006, Q4 Inc. is a Software as a Service (SaaS) platform that, through a mix of technology and client service, provides financial market professionals insightful reporting and analytics that help them make smarter decisions, gain marketplace insights earlier, and stay ahead of industry changes.

Whether an investor relations professional is telling a story through a company site or webcast, or is studying investor behavior through site analytics and stock surveillance, the Toronto-based innovator focuses on solutions to ease the process.

To better meet the needs of financial communicators, Q4 Inc. wanted to ensure that its website, webcasting and intelligence products match and exceed expectations.

BULLISH ON TECHNOLOGY AND SERVICE

Essentially a one-of-a-kind provider to Investor Relations Officers (IROs) serving publicly listed companies, “Q4 Inc. is blowing up,” according to Steve Freudenthaler, SaaS Operations Manager at Q4 Inc.

The Q4 Inc. core business has seen a rapid expansion where globally recognized brands are hosted and served by Q4 Inc. offerings including webcasting, the content management system, stock surveillance and analytics. “All of this builds engagement between our clients, the capital markets and current and prospective investors,” said Freudenthaler.

Q4 Inc. designed its website platform and content management system to give those unmatched features to a roster of more than 600 global investor relations and C-suite customers, including McDonald’s and Visa.

Along with Q4 Inc.’s growth and its expansion into the US market, the company has secured more major brands as clients. “This welcome increase in our work fueled the idea of expanding our product suite, growing the entire platform,” said Freudenthaler. “With the massive upsurge of analytics in all industries, we’re packing valuable data and technologies into the platform, to address what our customers are doing. It’s the insights, backed by our dedicated client service team, that make us unique.”

SETTING THE INDUSTRY PACE

As a result of its success, Q4 Inc. soon found that it was spending a significant amount of time manually provisioning websites. The Q4 Inc. team based its decision to use Amazon Web Services on the goals of:

- Maintain operational uptime for the Q4 Inc. platform
- Ensure data security – especially around non-publicly disseminated information
- Keep pace with state-of-the-art technologies and services.

“RACKSPACE IS A HEAVYWEIGHT THAT HAD A GOOD TRACK RECORD, BOTH IN SECURITY COMPLIANCE AND ALSO IN HOSTING. OUR RELATIONSHIP HAS GROWN IN DIRECT PROPORTION, OTHERWISE I WOULD HAVE NEEDED TO ADD INTERNALLY TO SCALE TO THE GROWTH OF OUR BUSINESS.

STEVE FREUDENTHALER :: Systems Operations Manager at Q4 Inc.

"We were able to start leveraging Amazon beyond just what we had gone in for, and what we quickly found out was that there was a whole lot of horsepower that we weren't utilizing," said Freudenthaler, who said that Q4 Inc.'s initial foray into AWS wasn't cost-effective.

Soon Q4 Inc. looked to Rackspace for assistance in building a separate footprint in AWS to act as a failover in case their primary infrastructure experienced downtime. "We didn't have the expertise to rapidly facilitate changes," he said. "It wasn't until we started forming up this idea of having support and having the engineering expertise to help us get the foundation built properly that we decided it was a good idea to go back into AWS for infrastructure as a service."

A Rackspace Dedicated Server customer since 2008, the company recognized **Fanatical Support®** for AWS as the most efficient way to enable it to scale at a fraction of the cost.

Freudenthaler said the decision to leverage Rackspace Fanatical Support® on top of AWS to improve efficiency made sense. "As a first step, we're running in AWS as a failover state so that we can drop our Recovery Time Objectives since we're going to have a warmed, cost-effective standby in AWS. Soon we'll want our public sites to be served off of AWS at all times. Until then, this gets us a knowledgeable foothold and allows us any time we may need to re-architect."

SMARTER DECISIONS ALL AROUND

Q4 Inc. now has a highly automated backup environment in the case of major failures with their current environment. The new setup provides a tactical advantage for their future disaster recovery needs.

Custom AMI are used to quickly build servers. Microsoft DSC will be utilized to capture and ensure the status of existing websites, including added sites for the customer. Two full Microsoft AD Domain Controllers were built and are scheduled to replicate over the VPN. Q4 Inc. also has access to live technicians 24x7 that can help keep their backup strategy running smoothly.

Q4 Inc. knew it wanted AWS, but was also willing to take the extra step of optimizing the experience. "Leveraging someone at Rackspace who knew AWS allowed us then to turn the key and really start running in that environment," said Freudenthaler. "We are more confident there day to day, and we aren't wasting hours on basic administration."

For Freudenthaler, Fanatical Support® boils down to a desire to actually complete the work on an entire problem, from issue notification to resolution. "It's that feeling of start-to-finish issue resolution, and I get the feeling when I'm working with Rackspace that they would prefer the ticket stayed close once it's been closed."

BETTER PREPARED FOR WHAT'S NEXT

With its newfound effectiveness provided by Fanatical Support® for AWS, Q4 Inc. has reduced the hours that some staff would have had to commit away from core priorities, and has realized performance enhancements that empower the Q4 Inc. user to make better financial industry decisions, sooner.

Q4 Inc. also gained access to expertise for Amazon Web Services that it would otherwise have had to hire to acquire. Freudenthaler estimated that using Rackspace Fanatical Support® for AWS has effectively saved itself one full-time resource in the span of around six to eight weeks. "Our team hasn't had to grow at the same rate as the rest of the business has, and that's really been the secret to success."

Freudenthaler also mentioned that to provide world-class service, companies like Q4 Inc. must always be willing and able give customer's best-of-breed equipment and technologies. "It's impossible to be an expert in every technology, but what you can do is reach out for help – for Q4 Inc., Rackspace is that help," concludes Freudenthaler.

ABOUT RACKSPACE

Rackspace (NYSE: RAX), **the #1 managed cloud company**, helps businesses tap the power of cloud computing without the challenge and expense of managing complex IT infrastructure and application platforms on their own. Rackspace engineers deliver specialized expertise on top of leading technologies developed by AWS, OpenStack®, Microsoft®, VMware® and others, through a results-obsessed service known as **Fanatical Support®**.

Learn more at www.rackspace.com or call us at **1-800-961-2888**.

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