

Case Study

Global Innovations reduced IT costs and increased innovation

Migration to the IONOS cloud saved money, maintained performance and encouraged new, cloud-based product development.

Global Innovations, based in Dubai, is a leading provider of travel technology and related solutions, offering its customers a variety of indispensable tools to automate business processes (e.g. ERP software and a B2B travel portal). These customers include DMCs (Destination Management Companies; inbound providers), travel wholesalers (outbound) and travel agents. For years, Global Innovations used a dedicated hosting service on physical hardware, but high fixed costs left the company looking for a new solution. IONOS cloud offered the high performance required to best serve Global Innovation's end customers, but with a flexible pricing model. What's more, the cloud migration motivated Global Innovations to develop new products based on cloud computing, thus sustainably expanding its own portfolio.

The challenge

From inbound to outbound

Kabir Ali Baig, CEO and founder of Global Innovations, has developed the company since establishing it as a one-man band in 2003. Now, around 45 employees work in three branches – two in Dubai and one in Saudi Arabia. "In the beginning, I primarily concentrated heavily on inbound business in the travel sector," explains Kabir Ali Baig. "I developed a solution to automate processes in Destination Management Companies. This is a type of ERP system that I primarily sold in the GCC region (Gulf Cooperation Council)."

More than 100 corporate customers use the product from Global Innovations. But over time, the DMC market was veritably flooded with similar solutions. Due to its hosting structure – one server per customer with individual configurations – Global Innovation's product was relatively expensive in comparison with

its competitors. In order to remain competitive, Kabir Ali Baig decided to develop a product for the outbound sector in the travel segment as well. "But the development was much more complicated," explains Kabir Ali Baig. "This was due in particular to the large number of suppliers that had to be integrated in the tool." The new solution was completed at the end of 2019 and is planned to be rolled out in full at the end of the Covid-19 crisis.

Destination Management Companies

In the travel sector, Destination Management Companies (DMC) are professional service companies with extensive local expertise and resources, that specialise in planning and implementing tours, transfers, activities and events. They offer a variety of (logistics) services – for example, for meetings, incentives, transport, hotel accommodation, restaurants, activities, etc. They act either as subcontractors or as direct partners for companies in the destination country.

The solution

The search for the right cloud provider

In order to become more competitive in the market, Global Innovations decided to look for an alternative that was flexible enough for its technical requirements and offered a variable price model. "Previously, the whole cloud issue was somewhat ambivalent for us as a company. This was primarily because some cloud providers for corporate clients demand a commitment in the form of minimum monthly sales. But this is not particularly attractive for our company, because our customers are specialised and tend to be small or medium-sized," said Kabir Ali Baig. Acknowledging the benefits of cloud computing (namely price and scaling), was an attractive opportunity, Global Innovations had already extensively researched cloud providers. "But initially, we could not find the right one," sums up the CEO.

New software development and beta test

In 2019, the moment had arrived. At the time, the Global Innovations team was developing a new product: an Advanced Distribution System (ADS). The idea was to focus on the customer procurement process in particular, which is seen as especially sensitive in the outbound travel business. This is because travel providers usually buy services such as transport, airlines or hotels from thousands of suppliers throughout the world. But in order to automate the procurement process, all the suppliers had to provide the best possible product for the end users. This is precisely what Global Innovations wanted to achieve with ADS. "We standardised the request and response formats for our customers for this project and started beta testing with our previous hosting provider. That also worked reasonably well, but the costs were very high – due to the dedicated hosting," explains Kabir Ali Baig. "Another big disadvantage was that this type of operation wasn't really scalable." Whenever additional server capacity was needed, Global Innovations had to place time-intensive orders for new hardware components with its former hosting provider. A process out of sync with the pace of the ever-developing market.

The implementation

The stumbling block

"Finally, I came across IONOS cloud. The team persuaded me really quickly to implement a first trial project together. Operating the ADS with the help of IONOS cloud seemed ideal to me." Within just three months, the cloud partner managed to host an exact replica of the ADS solution in the IONOS environment. "The trial period totally convinced me that IONOS cloud is exactly the product we had been looking for, for so long," states Kabir Ali Baig. "The advantages for us are primarily the cost savings and that we didn't have to commit to any payables – such as minimum monthly sales – with IONOS cloud. Especially for the smaller and mid-sized companies that we predominantly serve, that is a no brainer. Compared to cloud heavyweights from the USA, for example, we're making really big savings."



Outstanding Collaboration & Technical Expertise

Kabir Ali Baig described the assistance as particularly positive. "The support from the IONOS team was and is really terrific." The migration to IONOS cloud brought about some technical challenges. "The application is based on legacy and recent technology code. We also work with multiple stacks, open source and Microsoft." But Global Innovations was able to quickly overcome these with the help of IONOS cloud Professional Services. "All in all, we're more than happy with IONOS cloud, satisfaction that is continuing in daily operational business," states Kabir Ali Baig.

Conclusion

New products planned thanks to the cloud

Although the travel sector suffered serious setbacks due to Covid-19, Kabir Ali Baig wanted to use the global pandemic as an opportunity. "We had just two possibilities. Either we went into a lockdown ourselves, or we could prepare for the time when the market comes back to life." The company decided on the latter. The result? Global Innovations developed a new application with the help of cloud computing. "The cloud enables us to implement our own solutions for a variety of customers – and, depending on the utilisation, to scale as required." And at only one tenth of the cost of dedicated hosting. "This development was really only possible thanks to IONOS," enthuses Kabir Ali Baig.

A new travel agency solution is also being planned, to be deployed in the cloud. "We will use this for several customers in the future, as well, so the costs will be completely under our control. We want to pass on the lower expenses to our customers."

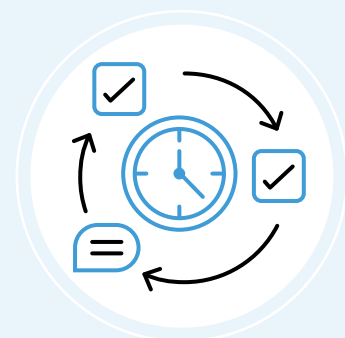
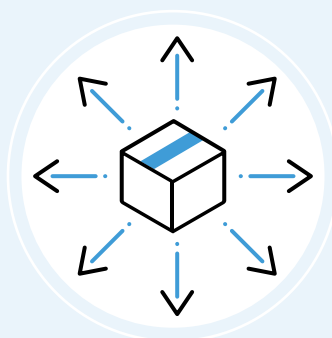
Kabir Ali Baig's conclusion is extremely positive: "For us, IONOS cloud is one of the best solutions on the market. If I were to consider changing provider, there would have to be a very good reason. After the pandemic I expect great success with our new products."



Kabir Ali Baig
CEO and founder of Global Innovations

+++ Learnings +++

- For companies in the travel technology segment, it pays to think outside the box and dare to do something new.
- At Global Innovations, the migration to the cloud has even led to the creation of new products.
- The cloud offers companies in this segment the flexibility they need to respond quickly and agilely to challenging events and situations.



About IONOS

IONOS cloud is the European cloud alternative from IONOS, the leading European provider of cloud infrastructure, cloud solutions and hosting services.

Our product portfolio includes Compute Engine, an IaaS compute engine with its own virtualized code stack; Managed Kubernetes for container applications; a private cloud powered by VMware; and S3 object storage. Our solutions provide established medium-sized and large companies, regulated industries, the digital economy and the public sector with all the services they need to be successful in and with the cloud.

We are convinced that data sovereignty is essential for successful digitisation. That's why we are committed to ensuring that our customers retain control over their data and applications. As a German company, we offer full GDPR compliance, and thus maximum protection against access based on the US CLOUD Act.

Treating our customers fairly is very important to us, so we offer transparent pricing and by-the-minute billing, no vendor lock-ins and the best price/performance ratio in the IaaS market. Ease of use is another priority, so we provide highly flexible solutions and easy, drag and drop configuration through our patented Data Center Designer and APIs.

We also attach great importance to customer needs. Dedicated account management, tailored cloud architecture consulting – including support with proof of concept by professional services – and free 24/7 enterprise-level support with certified system administrators are available to help users in any situation.

Our history

For over 30 years, IONOS has been developing innovative, reliable and high-quality solutions that help companies of all sizes to digitise their business processes.

These include web hosting products and office applications, proprietary data centres and innovative cloud solutions. In addition, we have continuously enhanced our portfolio through strategic acquisitions.

Since its foundation in 1988, IONOS (formerly 1&1) has become Europe's largest hosting provider. In 2010, Achim Weiß, the current CEO of IONOS, founded an IaaS provider, which is now the basis for IONOS cloud. With 8 million customer contracts and georedundant data centres in Germany, Europe and the USA, we provide intelligently coordinated products for every phase of a company's development.

IONOS cloud is a sub-brand of IONOS, a United Internet AG company.

More information is available at www.cloud.ionos.fr.



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