



Exe Squared chooses the IONOS Cloud

For reliability, security, and scalability, Exe Squared relies on the IONOS Cloud to host their custom technology solutions, ranging from anti-theft stock tracking apps to ads on mopeds.

With the IONOS Cloud, Exe Squared’s multiskilled developers can focus on their core strengths without becoming hosting experts. They chose the IONOS Cloud for hosting their custom apps because the Data Centre Designer tool allows easy provisioning and management of secure infrastructure. Plus, expert help is just a phone call away. The IONOS Cloud personalised customer service even welcomes Exe Squared’s clients to meet the account team at their premises.

Learnings



- Using the IONOS Cloud, Exe Squared can ensure applications scale effectively. This allows clients to increase their capacity from sending 100k emails to 75 million emails.
- Partnering with a cloud company that provides exceptional customer service means you don’t need to hire an in-house expert in server design. This frees up resources to invest in the core skills that set your business apart.
- The IONOS Data Centre Designer tool makes it easy for Exe Squared to configure virtual infrastructure and deploy it quickly.

The challenge

Creating innovative business technologies

Smart, nerdy, and nice: those are the adjectives Exe Squared uses to describe its team. Based in Devon, the company develops web applications, customer relationship management systems, and Internet of Things (IoT) solutions.

‘Our customers engage us to solve what I’d describe as digital problems, often by developing custom solutions to address those problems,’ says Henry Massey, managing director of Exe Squared. ‘What makes us unusual is that we offer a complete end-to-end solution. We can supply the IoT hardware, write the software for that hardware, and build the application programming interfaces (APIs) that enable the IoT hardware to communicate. We can even design and 3D-print the box that the device comes in.’

Clients often approach Exe Squared with a business problem and challenge the firm to come up with a technology solution. For example, a roofing company estimated it was losing up to £150,000 worth of roofing products through theft each year. Exe Squared developed a stock-tracking solution so any theft was quickly identified.

Acquiring a reliable infrastructure

Exe Squared develops critical business systems for a number of companies, which run in the cloud.

For example, another roofing company uses a custom solution from Exe Squared to manage its day-to-day business including toolbox talks (on-site safety briefings), health and safety compliance, and business planning. For a manufacturing company, Exe Squared built an end-to-end process management system.

For Exe Squared’s clients, it’s essential these solutions are dependable. Any outage could result in missed deadlines, lost business and disappointed customers. Exe Squared relied on a single server solution, which meant that a server failure could cause an outage during the backup restoration process.

To ensure the highest standards of customer care, Exe Squared needed a hosting company it could trust to be reliable, and to offer prompt help in the event of any problem.

Achieving massive scalability

One of Exe Squared’s clients develops booking software for airports, and Exe Squared manages their bulk emails and reporting. As the software company expanded into the US, they needed a solution that could scale from serving 10 million passengers at the largest UK airport to 75 million passengers at one of the USA’s busiest airports annually.

The client explained the challenge to Massey: Our airport clients need to send mass emails, potentially 5 to 10 million at a time. We have the data in our system, but can you work with us to turn that data into a massive email function for all our clients?

Massey adds: *‘That’s the kinds of volumes at which our cloud hosting solution needs to be able to cope with segmenting the databases for these campaigns.’*

Tapping into hosting expertise

Exe Squared’s team of ten is multitalented. ‘As a small company, we’ve got to be very resourceful. Everyone here has a number of skills,’ says Massey. ‘People can typically work with things like Raspberry Pi computers or small hardware. Half the team are happy to solder and work with circuitry. Three people are good at 3D design. Our people are focused on problem solving, and we’re very good at taking a business requirement and coming up with a technical solution.’

However, the team didn’t want to have to become experts in hosting, and the cost of hiring someone dedicated to server design would be better spent on developers. Massey and his team needed a hosting company that would offer the ease of use and support that would enable them to work without specialist hosting expertise in house.



The solution

IONOS improves scalability and reliability

Exe Squared now deploys new infrastructure on the IONOS Cloud and is in the process of migrating legacy applications over. 'That's testament to the level of trust we have in IONOS: everything we're doing is with them,' says Massey.

With IONOS, Exe Squared has gone from having a single server solution to having access to multiple servers in a more advanced, secure environment.

'The IONOS infrastructure allows us to cope with much higher levels of load, at much higher levels of reliability,' says Massey. 'We can give our customers options we simply didn't have 12 months ago. When we're looking at a new application, we don't have to ask whether we can host it any more. We know we can.'

'Now we've got scalable, multiple server solutions, so we've got resilience we didn't have before,' he says. 'Previously, if the server went down, we'd have to restore from a backup, which would take one or two hours to bring things up. The IONOS Cloud solution means we have redundancy so there's no need to restore from backup. I have to say... the IONOS Cloud hasn't gone down. But if it would, we wouldn't have an outage while we recover.'

Improving security

'We're doing some work with nuclear power stations and—trust me—if you're in a nuclear power station and you have data on how your system works, it has to be secure,' says Massey.

The IONOS Cloud has a UK data centre that is certified for ISO 27001, an international standard for information security. IONOS servers are fully GDPR compliant and offer clients the choice over where their data is hosted.

The implementation

Personalised customer service

Massey values the exceptional support he's received from the IONOS network infrastructure team, ensuring that Exe Squared has the optimal infrastructure for its clients' needs. He communicated the email volume Exe Squared needed to handle and the anticipated incoming messages to the system architects and sought their recommendations on IT architecture. 'How do we change from a single server solution, which will mean we're in trouble if it falls over, to a resilient solution that is secure?' he asked them. 'How do you stop it from falling over in the first place? If the load increases, how do we make it cope with that?'

The team at IONOS helps Exe Squared ensure that each application is backed by resilient, secure, and scalable infrastructure. Massey adds, 'We couldn't have taken on the level of work we're doing with our airport booking software client before. I would have had to hire someone more skilled in server design.'

'If you're working with IONOS, you feel that you are really important to them, and they would do everything in their power to look after you,' he says. 'There aren't many large companies that can offer that level of service. IONOS has the capacity of a hyperscaler, but the ability to talk to you as if they were a small business.'

Meeting the team

One of Exe Squared's clients is Ad-MOTO, a company that leases electric bikes to delivery drivers and sells video advertising on screens on the bikes' cargo boxes. Exe Squared developed the ad display hardware and software on the bike, as well as the cloud software for managing the ads. Data is sent from the bikes to the IONOS Cloud every 10 seconds.



'We've taken Ad-MOTO to the IONOS building to walk around and meet the team,' says Massey. 'Who else would let us do that? That's the level of support IONOS offers our business and our clients.'

Designing infrastructure with drag and drop

Exe Squared uses the IONOS Data Centre Designer to configure the virtual data centre. It provides a browser-based graphical user interface to create and modify virtual IT infrastructure.

'The Data Centre Designer is easy to use,' says Massey. 'It's drag and drop. You add the servers you want and add interface links by joining lines between them. Then you can deploy it, which it does very rapidly, and off you go!'

Although the solution is designed for self-service, there is help available. 'I don't just have to rely on self-help guides,' says Massey. 'There's a human there. They can help me with planning and implementation and give me suggestions for other things to try.'

Conclusion

'It just works!'



Henry Massey
Program Management / Director

Massey has been working with IONOS for 24 years, initially using a single-server solution. 'As our requirements changed, IONOS were very pleasant, nice people who had lots of ideas to help us solve our problems, which they have done,' he says.

For Massey, one of the biggest benefits of using IONOS is that it gives his clients peace of mind. 'It's one less thing for them to worry about. It just works!' he says.

'We tell our clients why we use the IONOS Cloud,' says Massey. 'It's part of our sales pitch. We can offer an ISO 27001 certified server farm in the UK, running on 100% renewable energy. Looking for security? We tick that box. If clients are looking for green solutions, we tick that box. If they need reliability, we tick that box. And if anything goes wrong, we know who to ring up and get support.'

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