IONOS

A brighter outlook,
thanks to the IONOS Cloud

The American Meteorological Society chose IONOS to help it replace an inflexible on-prem data center with a highly reliable and scalable cloud-based solution.

AMS was able to move to the cloud quicker than expected, thanks to the fully featured and easy-to-use IONOS Cloud and its data center management tools.

Staff and members have seen greater everyday service availability and less planned downtime since the AMS data center moved to the IONOS Cloud.

AMS can cost-effectively deliver high availability for online services during peak demand with the ability to spin up and scale back resources as needed.

AMS
American Meteorological Society

The American Meteorological Society (AMS) was founded in 1919. Its mission is to advance atmospheric and related sciences, technologies, applications, and services for the benefit of society. Today, its global membership is made up of people from a wide range of industry organizations and academic institutions who come together to learn and share knowledge through research, publishing, conferences and more. In 2023, AMS moved its on-prem servers to the IONOS Cloud.

The challenge

From paper to digital

The AMS has all of the digital services you'd expect of a large membership organization today, including online access to its journals, webinars, conferences, podcasts and a host of other content delivered through its website www.ametsoc.org. The website was built and is hosted by AMS, together with modules provided by third-parties to deliver all the functionality needed to deliver these services.

"We have a small handful of mission-critical servers that we host on-premises, which are used internally for development and database management, but also as public-facing application servers. Then there are specific modules for many of the internal and external services we deliver, running a range of Application Programming Interfaces (APIs) and plug-ins – though this is invisible to staff and members, who access all our services through single sign-on (SSO) on the website, which we host," said Chris Pagliccia, network administrator for the AMS.

As the society has grown, its technology hasn't always been able to keep up. In 2022, the AMS annual meeting had more than 4,000 attendees, many of whom submitted research abstracts in advance through the AMS website. In the run up to the submission deadline, the website was receiving hundreds of abstract submissions per day and was regularly crashing despite remedial efforts. *"Our other motivation for moving to the cloud is that AMS is headquartered in a 200-plus year old building in downtown Boston, Massachusetts. It's a risk – it's not the ideal place to be running mission-critical servers,"* Chris said.

The AMS team started to look at cloud-based alternatives for its on-prem data center, and from three evaluated providers – IONOS, AWS and Azure – IONOS quickly became the standout solution. Having worked with both AWS and Azure before, Chris had found them complex to use. *"AWS and Azure were both way more than what we needed given the financial and time resources we had available. IONOS Cloud was clearly the best fit for our needs – it checked all of the boxes,"* said Chris.

The solution

Easy to use, easy to adopt

In January 2023, the AMS team kicked off the project to migrate to the IONOS Cloud. They spent a couple months getting experience with the IONOS technology, finding their way around and learning how to use the IONOS Cloud Data Center Designer, setting up and taking down servers.

"It really was remarkable. We found we could drag and drop, and customize what we needed, on the fly – and then click a button and have that asset ready to use in just a few minutes. I also spent some time trying to break it, and I couldn't," Chris said.

With the IONOS Cloud, AMS was able to create a solution that brought together all of its technologies to create a seamless experience for its service users, which include AMS staff, members, and the general public. It's now easy for the core systems to connect to other cloud-based AMS business systems. For example, enabling the checking of the CRM/membership database to ensure access to the correct content is provided at sign-in.

44-45 Beacon Street

But before the migration to the IONOS Cloud could take place, AMS suffered a critical failure of their on-prem servers, and ultimately required a complete server rebuild. The team decided the best solution would be to fast track the transition, and get back up and running as soon as they could in the IONOS Cloud.

"We had already planned to embrace IONOS and make it our default platform for our mission-critical servers. We just got pushed a little bit further along because of these issues – we ended up bringing the schedule forward by nearly four weeks in the end. But because of our experience, and the ease of use of the IONOS solution, we were able to do this," Chris said.

The benefits

Up and running at speed

AMS was able to get up and running in the IONOS Cloud quickly, in part because of its agility, scalability, and ease of use, but also as a result of the experience the team had gained through the previous months of testing. "Having a cloud-based platform that you can quickly and nimbly maneuver and deploy was game changing," Chris said.

Greater reliability

Since the move to IONOS, AMS has seen a significant improvement in systems availability – which directly impacts staff productivity and member satisfaction. "This year, a week before the paper submissions deadline for the annual meeting, we were able to simply allocate more resources to the appropriate web and application servers – a quick power down and power back up," said Chris. "Then, of course, we were able to go back in after the deadline had passed, and scale the resources back down, saving us dollars," he added.

Accessing new possibilities

With the ability to instantly provision and scale data center capacity, AMS is able to be more technologically smart. One such example is maintenance. With on-premises equipment, maintenance often meant taking services offline, which wasn't great for users even if the downtime was planned. But with the IONOS Cloud, AMS can temporarily spin up clones of its production servers for use during those maintenance windows, meaning services are always available for users.

Future-proofed for change

The AMS technology stack is currently based on Windows servers, but the organization's roadmap has plans to migrate away from Windows. "I know that IONOS not only serves the needs we have now, but that they'll be able to support all of our future plans. Whether they be containerized solutions or Linux-based solutions, IONOS has it all. A feature-rich ecosystem means scalability for us – which is a huge benefit," Chris said.

Transparency of costs

Like many IONOS customers, AMS finds it helpful to have easy visibility of costs. ""In the IONOS Data Center Designer, I can view the Cost and Usage Summary to forecast our monthly costs, and use this to create a budget and target, including any future resources I might need. And because the portal is so easy to use (much easier than on competitive platforms) I can hop on at any point in the month and see where we are, which is super helpful," Chris said.

Conclusion

As a growing membership organization, AMS wants to ensure it can continue to deliver the resources and facilities that its members need, and IONOS is helping them to achieve their goals.

"We get three key things from working with IONOS: affordable solutions, easy visibility of operations, and scalability we can rely on. I know that IONOS is not only serving the needs we have now, but that they will be able to support all our future plans too," Chris said.

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