

Media Dojo Tear Sheet

RightScale

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Summary: RightScale is the leader in the cloud computing management space. Founded in 2006, the company offers a fully automated management platform that lives on top of Infrastructure-as-a-Service (IaaS). The customer gets a portal to control their data center resources, regardless of location or cloud deployment model.

The Problem Being Attacked: The big problem RightScale solves is allowing companies to get quick access to cloud infrastructure, namely fast provisioning, pay-as-you-go and dynamic workloads. It's an entire cradle-to-grave environment for delivering cloud-based IT resources.

The Approach to the Problem: Think of a layered sandwich in which the customer accesses both operational and auditing orientated dashboards that hook into their cloud infrastructure and services. Aside from being able to spin up cloud resources from a single management interface, RightScale creates a persistent log record of server activity so that a cloud computing customer can figure out what went right or wrong with a particular instance. That operational capability is overlaid with workflow and authorization so that the customer can control access rights and privileges internally. Finally, there is a design and architecture layer that enables the customer to roll their preferred server configuration into an optimized machine image called a server template.

Customer Base: RightScale works with customers across industries. It has fired up in excess of 1 million cloud server instances on behalf of its customers in the past three years. In the media space, RightScale works with gaming companies like Zynga or Playfish/EA, broadcast networks like ESPN, and specialized digital media and mobile shops like Dada Entertainment.

Ownership: Private, two rounds totaling \$17.5m from Index and Benchmark Capital during 2008.

Unique Point: RightScale has baked a significant amount of value into its server templates, which are extensions of the machine images you'd find in EC2 or similar cloud offers. Rather than just describing the OS, RAM, GB storage in an instance, RightScale has rolled a clutch of application specific and even industry specific server templates. The upside is that the customer can take that pre-configured option and add their own customizations on top, knowing that the fundamental cloud plumbing is sound.

Cloud Angle: Well, RightScale wouldn't exist without the cloud. The number of customers and industries being served by cloud management companies like RightScale is growing like mushrooms after rain. The continued professionalization and productization of cloud offers through management plays like RightScale augur well for further adoption of cloud computing outside of the usual suspects that most cloud players are going after at the moment.