

Tickethour expands into the UK market using Fujitsu's secure, scalable and cost-effective Cloud platform

» Working with Fujitsu has been a pleasure. The team understands our needs, our business and our technology and has been instrumental in establishing Tickethour in the UK market «

David McClellan, CEO, Tickethour UK



The Customer

Tickethour was established in 2005 by three senior figures from the Athens 2004 Olympic Organising Committee. It was their responsibility to sell the 5.5 million tickets for the Games. Having made a success of that task, they wanted to use the experience they had gained in a new venture: Tickethour. Since then, the company has rapidly grown to become the largest ticketing company in Greece and has gone on to open operations in Cyprus and the Middle East. Tickethour's revenues in 2010 were USD3.5m.

The Challenge

The next stage in the company's evolution was to target the Western European market and the United Kingdom was the perfect first step to take. However, the most immediate challenge was deciding how best to set up a local IT infrastructure to host the ticketing application.

There were a number of available options; the company could connect back to the hosted servers in Athens but potential customers were adamant about keeping data held within the UK and there were concerns about bottlenecks across a wide network. The next option was hosting the systems internally or in a Co-Location deal with an ISP but this would involve significant upfront investment and would lack the rapid ability to scale which a business such as Tickethour requires. The next option – and the one best suited to the company's needs – was to choose a Cloud-based service.

"We didn't want to invest a lot of money upfront in a system of our own that would need constant upgrading and maintenance and connecting to the parent company platform in Greece was simply not viable," explains David McClellan, CEO, Tickethour UK. "Choosing a Cloud solution was the best way forward, offering flexibility, scalability and security without costing the earth. The next step was finding the right tier-one Cloud partner."

The Solution

Tickethour decided that Fujitsu offered the security and scalability it needed while also guaranteeing that data could be exclusively stored within the UK. What proved equally appealing was its ease of use. Tickethour was keen to get operational so getting its service up and running quickly was essential.

THE CUSTOMER

Countries: Greece, Cyprus, Qatar, UK
 Industry: Technology
 Founded: 2005
 Employees: 22
 Website: www.tickethour.com



THE CHALLENGE

Tickethour was establishing its UK operation and needed a partner to host its ticketing application. Due to the nature of its business, the platform had to be secure, scalable and reliable – without requiring significant initial capital outlay.

THE SOLUTION

The company partnered with Fujitsu whose Cloud service offered the ideal flexible platform on a pay-per-use basis, while ensuring optimum security and availability.

THE BENEFITS

- Fujitsu's Cloud platform ensures 99.95% uptime and can handle tens of thousands of concurrent requests – critical when tickets for major events go on sale.
- Tickethour is only billed for the processing power it uses; there is no need for upfront investment.
- The Fujitsu brand gives Tickethour extra credibility as it builds its own business in a new market.
- The Fujitsu Cloud can guarantee data is hosted exclusively within the UK – a necessity for many potential clients.

"Fujitsu offered the simplest and quickest go-to-market process. I applied through the website and was given a test platform to which we could migrate our applications – all the time with great support from the pre-sales team," continues McClellan. "Fujitsu is introducing an ISV programme and is eager to bring companies on board so the team was incredibly helpful in getting us started. It was very much a two-way partnership."

After a month of testing and technical exploration, Tickethour's ticketing platform was ready to go live in the UK. However, there were a number of issues that had to be addressed. By its very nature, the ticket provisioning market must be able to handle enormous peaks in demand, which means processing perhaps hundreds of thousands of concurrent requests per hour. Working together, Fujitsu and Tickethour ensured the Cloud service was up to the job.

"You can imagine that if tickets to a cup final or major concert go on sale, there will be a tremendous amount of people logging in simultaneously to secure their seat," adds McClellan. "Fujitsu offers 10,000 concurrent log-ins as standard but we collaborated closely to ensure our system could cope with much more."

The extensive testing also satisfied the company founders back in Athens, some of whom had been sceptical about the suitability of a Cloud platform.

"We have never lost a customer and won't take any risks that might compromise our ability to deliver the best possible service to our customers so a change on such a fundamental level had to be absolutely bullet-proof," says McClellan. "Hosting a transactional website is complicated for many reasons – load-balancing, security and processing among them. With Fujitsu's Cloud, if something happens to the physical server, the session will automatically be rebuilt elsewhere and continue seamlessly. It also guarantees us 99.95% uptime."

The Benefit

Since going live, Tickethour has secured a number of UK clients including rugby club Castleford Tigers and football team Crawley Town. The company is also in the running for a number of prestigious events – and it is being helped by Fujitsu's credibility.

"We recently pitched for a major sporting event and Fujitsu actually came along to help explain how the service works and its benefits," comments McClellan. "It's a mutual team effort that really adds to our viability as a new player in the UK"

Tickethour is now well placed to make its mark on the UK's ticketing industry with a platform that is secure yet flexible, that can scale to handle huge demand and that offers best-in-class reliability and availability. And all this with entirely predictable costs based on actual usage. In fact, the Cloud platform is proving so well-suited to the company's business needs that plans might be afoot to extend it further.

"We're exploring whether to also shift our other operations to Fujitsu's Cloud because it really delivers with minimal fuss, allowing us to focus on our business and not on procuring and managing infrastructure," concludes McClellan. "Working with Fujitsu has been a pleasure. The team understands our needs, our business and our technology and has been instrumental in establishing Tickethour in the UK market."

Contact

FUJITSU
Address: 22 Baker Street, London, W1U 3BW
Phone: +44 (0) 870 242 7998
E-mail: askfujitsu@UK.fujitsu.com
Website: www.fujitsu.com/UK
2012-05-18

© Copyright 2012 Fujitsu, the Fujitsu logo, are trademarks or registered trademarks of Fujitsu Limited in Japan and other countries. Other company, product and service names may be trademarks or registered trademarks of their respective owners. Technical data subject to modification and delivery subject to availability. Any liability that the data and illustrations are complete, actual or correct is excluded. Designations may be trademarks and/or copyrights of the respective manufacturer, the use of which by third parties for their own purposes may infringe the rights of such owner.