CASE STUDY

Scaling a growing website and software business with the cloud

Onsharp is a web design, managed hosting, and app development firm based in Fargo, North Daktota. Founded in 2000 by Joe Sandin and Matt Hardy, the firm was born of their passion and curiosity for technology, and has scaled to support more than 250 active clients.

Hear Onsharp's story and learn more about how they serve their customers with Vultr's help: Vultr Victories: How Onsharp Has Used Vultr to Grow Its Website and Software Development Business

Onsharp now works with leaders in sectors such as agriculture, banking and finance, engineering, healthcare, transportation and logistics, and real estate. Some of their clients include Titan Machinery, Gate City Bank, American Crystal Sugar Company, United Way, Apex Engineering Group, and Wishek.

Cloud platform headache

As well as design and development, Onsharp also hosts websites and application backends for their many clients. Initially, they used colocation facilities for hosting, which meant they had to manage racks, bandwidth, storage, and equipment – which they did efficiently, securely, and reliably.

However, as the number of customers and solutions they developed grew, they needed more data centers. And, because their customers were spread out geographically, they needed data centers located throughout various regions. Onsharp struggled to find a balance between providing development services to their customers and managing their own data centers.

Hosting had become a huge headache, and data center maintenance became overwhelming. When managing physical data centers, Onsharp needed to monitor racks, servers, storage, power consumption, server room control, and network bandwidth. Then, they had to scale the environment for hosting. Though running their own systems in data centers once worked, this method could no longer keep up with Onsharp's success.

Scalable and flexible solutions

Onsharp decided it was time to embrace the cloud, and specifically began looking for a provider that would allow them to spin up virtual machines easily and quickly, in a scalable manner, at the desired location, and with tight security control. After thorough research, they chose Vultr. Vultr worked closely with them to understand their needs and provided a solution that allowed Onsharp to hand off the task of managing their data centers.

ONSHARP

onsharp.com

Industry
Web and software development

About Onsharp
For more than 20 years, Onsharp has been helping their customers launch websites and apps, allowing businesses to scale and grow through web design, development, and hosting services.

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With Vultr, Onsharp was able to tackle their key challenges, including:

- **Rapid deployment:** Vultr's intuitive user interface portal met Onsharp's expectations, rapidly spinning up virtual machines with the required configuration. It also helped Onsharp configure its firewall rules in minutes. "New deployments that used to take us days now take a couple of hours or less with Vultr," says Sandin.

- **Geographic diversity:** Vultr provides a data center presence in 30+ cloud data centers worldwide, allowing Onsharp to meet its present and future expansion goals.

- **Security and compliance**: Some of Onsharp's customers demand details of data center security practices and compliance certificates to meet their security and legal expectations. Vultr provides detailed documentation of the security and compliance practices followed in data centers, helping Onsharp ensure they meet their compliance requirements.

- **Upgrade paths:** Onsharp often needs to make virtual machines bigger as their customers' complexity increases or demand increases. Vultr allows them to increase the size of a VM with little to no work.

Scalability and simplicity

Vultr provides an ultra-reliable, low-latency solution to scale with Onsharp's needs. Onsharp requires both Linux and Windows operating systems with a wide variety of instance sizes, depending on the client's application or website processing needs – an environment that Vultr can support in every facet.

Additionally, Onsharp uses Cloud Compute and Vultr's Optimized Cloud Compute services. Currently, the majority of Onsharp's deployments are in Chicago, with others located in Silicon Valley, Seattle, New Jersey, Los Angeles, and Dallas. This geographic spread has been crucial to their successful scaling.

Thanks to Vultr, Onsharp's managed web hosting business, Website Essentials, has been able to scale quickly, "without us having to worry about increasing our capacities at data centers, something we used to think about all the time," says Sandin.

"Being able to get access to the resources we need at a moment's notice allows us to be much more nimble and keeps us from having to outlay capital on building up future infrastructure capacity that we may or may not use based on demand."

> *"Not only would AWS be more expensive for Onsharp, it would also be more complex."*
> **– Joe Sandin,** President and CEO

Also, upgrades with Vultr are easier than ever. Onsharp can carry out flexible upgrades at will – they always need to scale up the virtual machines when the load on hosted websites increases and scale up data storage as user data storage requirements inevitably grow.

With Vultr, Onsharp can scale up the VMs and storage with little to no work. And, Vultr offers these services and features at an affordable price that's less than half of what comparable services from AWS would cost.

"Not only would AWS be more expensive for Onsharp, it would also be more complex. As Sandin explains, "using AWS would be complicated from a networking setup perspective – complexities that we don't need in the type of hosting that we typically do."

"I've never worked with an infrastructure as a service provider that made it so simple to deploy solutions for our clients at a moment's notice," says Sandin. "We've considered and evaluated a number of cloud providers, and ultimately, Vultr provides the best overall value."

Get started on your own Vultr Victory. Contact us at **sales@vultr.com** or visit **vultr.com/company/contact/sales/**.

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