

Cloudian Gives ThinkOn the Tools to Grow Its Cloud Storage Business

ThinkOn is a wholesale infrastructure-as-a-service provider in Toronto, Canada that works with more than 68 channel partners to build secure, fast and scalable solutions for enterprise application hosting, big data analytics, backup-as-a-service (BaaS) and disaster recovery-as-a-service (DRaaS).

As a storage-centric organization, ThinkOn maintains a sharp focus on applications that drive enormous amounts of data consumption. Its storage requirements hovered in the hundreds of terabytes as the company grew at a blistering pace. But even as the number of customers grew, ThinkOn's storage business began to stagnate due to the limitations of traditional storage.

"Cloudian technology has been instrumental in growing our S3-compatible object storage services. Before we deployed Cloudian, our S3-compatible storage footprint growth was modest. Now we're more than doubling it every year," said ThinkOn Founder Craig McLellan. "With Cloudian, we continue to solidify our service delivery infrastructure and accelerate the growth of our customer base. Our business opportunities for object storage are bigger than they've ever been."

Other Solutions Come Up Short

ThinkOn's initial experience with object storage resulted in a solution that was unreliable and difficult to manage. The solution was also difficult to integrate with ThinkOn's partner portal where customers provisioned and managed their storage environment.

Eventually, ThinkOn turned to Cloudian HyperStore to address these challenges. The Cloudian software now runs on HP servers, managing 200TBs of storage capacity for five data centers spread across Toronto, Montreal, and Calgary.

McLellan said the company selected Cloudian because it offered the most interoperable S3 API on the market and provided the easiest integration with its management tools, including the company's resource monitoring and orchestration systems.

"We saw Cloudian as a means of building an infrastructure that would enable us to grow our storage business," said McLellan. "While dealing with troubles from our previous object storage solution, we had wasted up to two years of missed opportunities to grow that part of the business, but now our sales funnel for object storage is probably the biggest it's ever been because we're finally at a spot where we're comfortable aggressively selling capacity through the Canadian sales channel."

Cloudian helped ThinkOn build a BaaS solution with Commvault that is secure, highly available and simple. Cloudian HyperStore is supported within Commvault, so customers can quickly connect and begin using the service. Configurable for multiple levels of data redundancy, Cloudian allows ThinkOn to protect data from corruption and hardware failures. Customers also benefit from a scalable storage and pricing model where they can reduce or expand data as needed.

Power to the Portal

ThinkOn has integrated Cloudian with their Compass partner portal where resellers manage their customers' storage. The Cloudian API and multi-tenant capabilities make it easy for ThinkOn to operate the portal and provide capacity management services under their own brand.

"With Cloudian, we extended the ability for our resellers to manage their customers' data by providing complete visibility into the status of their storage through custom monitoring



Industry

Managed Service Provider

Solution Benefits

- Proven compatibility with Commvault
- S3 API enables integration with management platform
- Configurable user interface allows solution to be private labeled
- Simple management

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tools,” said Patrick Torrens, Lead Software Developer of ThinkOn. “Cloudian’s S3 API made it possible to build this type of tool. We’ve integrated with other object storage APIs and Cloudian was by far the most mature platform to integrate with.”

The ThinkOn Compass partner portal includes a quote to cash engine that enables resellers and their customers to provision storage in minutes and review their data usage at the end of the month, all in two or three easy steps. Resellers are provided with a URL that they can customize and rebrand the portal as their own service.

“When customers provision storage through our portal, they never see a Cloudian pane of glass,” said McLellan. “This is all made possible by the easy and smooth integration with Cloudian that we couldn’t find with other object storage providers.”

With Cloudian as the foundation of its Object Storage services, ThinkOn is exploring opportunities in new industries and other software partners. This effort includes work in the medical imaging archive industry with a software provider that wants to integrate with S3-compatible storage. Potential leads are also opening in areas such as museums that want to digitize and store copies of priceless pieces of art.

“Cloudian object storage is creating new opportunities for us and our resellers who want to take advantage of growing demand for S3-compatible storage,” said McLellan. “Cloudian’s guaranteed compatibility with S3-enabled backup solutions like Commvault helps us and our partners expand our business with new services and new markets. Cloudian’s industry-leading S3 API interoperability is the ideal platform for us or any organization to build a cloud-based storage business.”

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