



PARTNER PROFILE

DRFortress is the largest and the only carrier-neutral datacenter and cloud services provider operating in Hawaii. Based in Honolulu, DRFortress provides network neutral colocation and cloud services to enterprises, content companies, system integrators, carriers, wireless service providers, cable companies and ISPs.

The mission of DRFortress is to manage and maintain world-class facilities and cloud service offerings so that customers can focus on their core business.

DRFortress acquired the original facility from Equinix, Inc., (NASDAQ: EQIX) in December 2006 and completed the expansion of the 2nd adjacent facility in August 2007.



<http://www.drfortress.com/>

“The best thing is the fact that now we sleep well. We are more confident that there is someone who cares about us and lets us run our core business. We feel like CloudSigma is our partner who we can reach out to if we have any kind of question.” - Fred Rodi, Director of DRFortress

THE CHALLENGE

The core business of DRF has been providing data centre and internet exchange service to local Hawaiian customers. A couple of years ago though, the concept of cloud emerged to gradually become a trend and stay for good. Slowly but gradually DRF started losing customers to AWS on the mainland and the adoption of a cloud strategy became an inevitable choice.

“We wanted to keep the customers within the island so that we could contribute to the local economy. Being witness of how users were moving 3000 miles away to AWS was unfortunate because we knew we could offer them better.”

By choosing CloudSigma as a strategic partner DRFortress were able not only to keep their customers within their data centre facility but to keep them within the state of Hawaii, which was an achievement they were striving for. Since the start back in 2013, DRFortress onboarded many new customers due to the stable and flexible service provided by CloudSigma.

“The cloud-as-a-service is a great tool for us. Now it is easier to sell co-location to customers who would like to do both co-lo and cloud. The best part is that we are able to compete against AWS S3 on mainland USA so the more customers we keep on the island, the higher revenue for the island and better performance for the end customers.”

We laid the foundation of our cloud services partnering with a software based management cloud provider. After a while it became obvious that it did not function properly. This solution ran into several problems of different character, such as hardware and software based issues, to a point where the service outgrew the assigned storage and the entire system started crashing due to the lack of enough IOPs. That was really painful to DRFortress and the customers. That solution did not work to what they needed so they started looking at another provider. They evaluated the VMware cloud platforms, IBM, and others.

“Lots of them were just trying to sell their software or hardware which were really expensive. These companies did not know where the cloud was standing. CloudSigma on the other hand, was a dedicated cloud provider who knew our pain and problems.”

DRFortress were running their own hardware and when they got to know CloudSigma, it became clear that CloudSigma was going to help them move with the industry. Consequently, this allowed DRFortress to adjust to the market because CloudSigma was their dedicated cloud partner to move along with them.

“In the beginning when we started using CloudSigma it did not have that many features but we were happy it functioned better. CloudSigma allowed us to define the pricing based on the market demands, as opposed to this and that software version the rest wanted to sell us.”

“CloudSigma on the other hand, was a dedicated cloud provider who knew our pain and problems.”- Fred Rodi, Director of DRFortress.

“We enjoy the flexibility that CloudSigma is giving us as a partner. They figure out how to address the demands of the market developing the functionalities which define a cloud for the customers nowadays.”

THE CHANGE

Cloud-as-a-service is all about outsourcing the operational overhead of the cloud infrastructure deployment. Furthermore, it is about expanding into new business areas in a relatively short period of time. In contrast to some of the companies DRFortress were evaluating which wanted to sell their software or hardware without further real commitment, CloudSigma provided its experience, 24/7 dedicated operational support and agility in terms of deploying new service features required by the Hawaiian market. DRFortress have been relying on the latter which was proved in a few real live situations.

“Our experience with the CloudSigma operations team has been really good. There were two major issues we’ve had which were resolved quickly and jointly. Every time we do maintenance it has actually been convenient that we are in the opposite sides of

THE SOLUTION

DRFortress were the first cloud-as-a-service partner of CloudSigma. At that initial phase the entire onboarding process was not as clear because DRFortress were still figuring out what exactly they needed. However CloudSigma was working hard to provide the numerous new features DRFortress eventually started asking for.

“We were asking for a lot of features we did not have available but CloudSigma worked through a lot of the platform to fine-tune it. By the time we had to expand the teams were instinct to one another. CloudSigma smoothly adjusted to DRFortress’ requirements.”

In spite of the slower start of deployment process and more specifically the hardware installation and trainings, resulting of the fact this kind of partnership was new to both companies, the pace of progress accelerated during the service modification phase and the first round of software and hardware upgrades went undisrupted.

the planet because we don’t affect customer’s computing. Customers appreciate this and everything has been going smooth.”

Moreover, DRFortress’ users benefit from the 24/7 live technical support which has a history of being very responsive. CloudSigma and DRFortress’ symbiosis of local onsite support, provided by DRFortress, and technical support, delivered by knowledgeable CloudSigma agents, is among the highly appreciated advantages of the Cloud-as-a-service partnership.

Other essential components of the successful mutually delivered service are the stability of the cloud and performance of the virtual nodes. CloudSigma was one of the first cloud provider to offer SSD storage which is faster than traditional HDD. Since it was deployed locally on the island, customers’ data does not have to go all the way to continental USA as it would have had to if the users were hosted at AWS or Google clouds.

“Service performance has been really good compared to what we had before. We are not spending all our time trying to fix something. If there are any small issues they are not affecting customers.”

Another set of important aspect are security and data privacy. CloudSigma is ISO 27001 certified. Not only is this a guarantee for high security standards but DRFortress found it to be a great selling tool. DRFortress are the only cloud provider in Honolulu who are able to provide this certificate via CloudSigma. DRFortress users consider this aspect of the solution one of the reasons why they granted their trust to DRFortress and CloudSigma.

Furthermore, cloud users in Hawaii benefit from the SSD storage which is an essential part of the service platform. Many of the customer used to maintain their own in-house server and drives and using SSD led to big improvement.

"A big part of our users had on-premise servers and stash drives. Customers noticed huge difference in the performance of their applications since they start using our SSD solution."

Apart from this, CloudSigma was able to develop another feature demanded not only by customers in Hawaii but also worldwide. The dual authentication, similar to the Google 2-Factor authentication, is one of the platform features which users regard as a vital service component and which apparently proved to be a decision-making factor. It is another piece in the puzzle of data protection and access control which the partners solved.

"We found a partner in the shape of CloudSigma to help us provide an improved service to our own users." - Fred Rodi, Director of DRFortress.

Apart from the smaller-scale consumers, DRFortress attracted some very interesting customers with extraordinary use cases. A growing number of state institutions and agencies deployed on the Cloudsigma platform, and State of Hawaii and the University of Hawaii are amongst these customers:

"AWS S3 seems cheaper but then they charge you for everything. Our services are great for the users here in state and all of them are inside DRFortress. University of Hawaii had to do backup and but they could not afford the traditional way of doing it. Using CloudSigma gave them this opportunity and even allowed them to spin up multiple servers on top of their backup cheaply".

THE FUTURE

The cloud-as-a-service partnership between CloudSigma and DRFortress has been the winning mechanism for onboarding new and keeping existing customers. DRFortress found a trustworthy partner who provided them with a stable and flexible service locally which in turn allowed to contribute to the local economy. The cloud service facilitated the sales process in other directions, too:

"The cloud-as-a-service is a great tool for us. Now it is easier to sell co-location to customers who would like to do both co-lo and cloud. The best part is that we are able to compete against AWS S3 on mainland USA, which is 3000 miles away and painfully slow so the more customers we keep on the island, the higher revenue for the island and better performance for the end customers."

The cloud platform creates new strategic opportunities for DRFortress. One of the biggest differences for them is the fact that they transformed from a data centre provider to a data centre offering cloud and other value-added services. If previously they could attract only very large customers now very small business can afford to come to the data centre:

"Small customers who could not afford DRaaS now can do it. Users realise that the cloud is more stable than the deployment in their offices. They all start coming in."

Nowadays, DRFortress are looking toward the future and the deployment of the upcoming features Cloudsigma have got in the pipeline. They are ready to recommend Cloudsigma to all companies who are in a similar position that DRFortress were three years ago, or anybody who wants to enrich their portfolio.

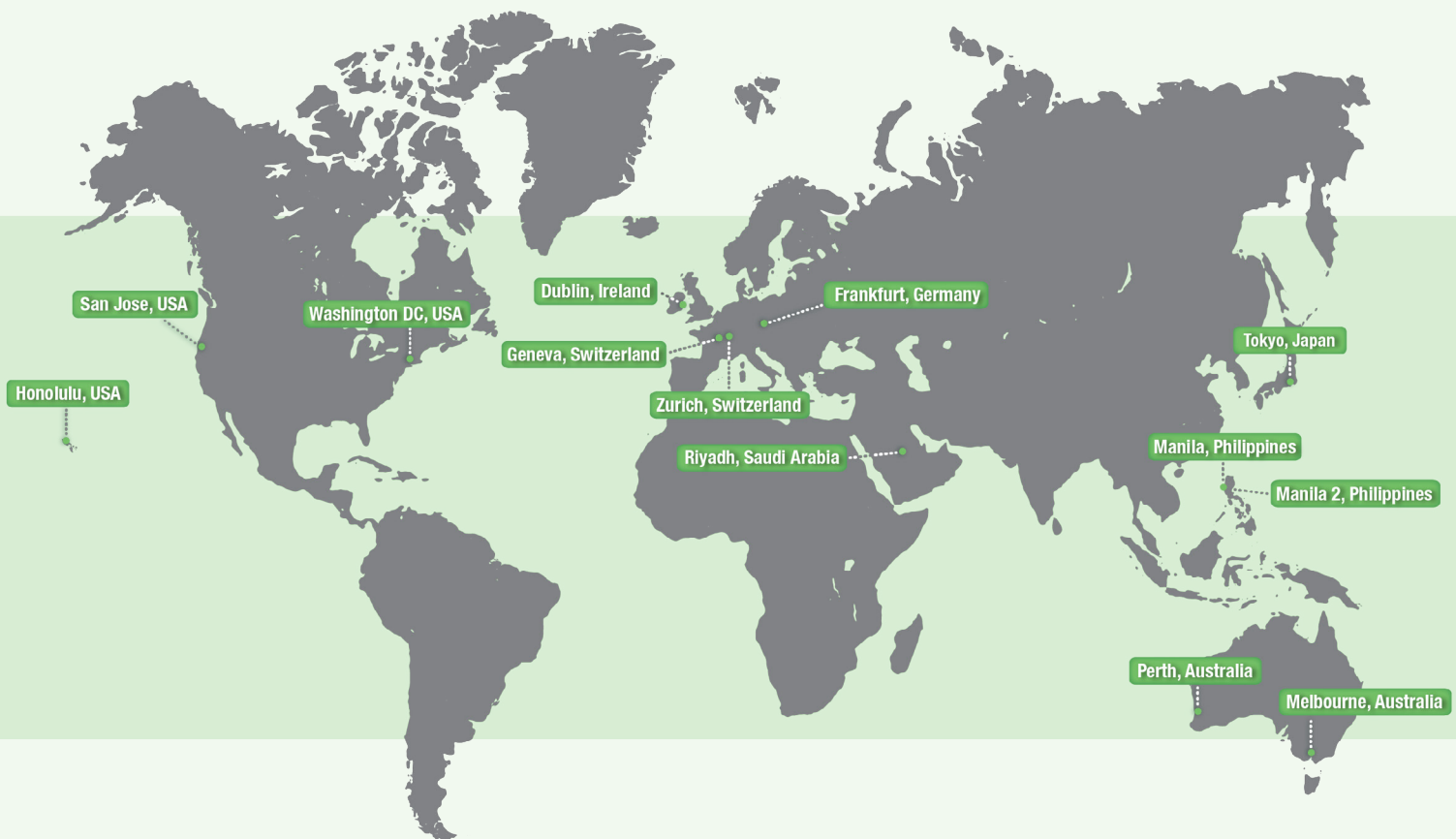
"AWS S3 seems cheaper but then they charge you for everything. Our services are great for the users here in state and all of them are inside DRFortress."

ABOUT US

CloudSigma is a Cloud-as-a-Service (CaaS) provider that's enabling IT service providers through its fully outsourced and completely managed cloud platform in Europe, the U.S., Middle East, Asia and Australia. CloudSigma's global eco-system of and partners locations create the perfect foundation for new cloud business around the world with multiple revenue streams. CloudSigma's cloud platform is the most customizable on the market, giving customers full control over their cloud and eliminating restrictions on how users deploy their computing resources. With CloudSigma, customers can provision processing, storage, networks and other fundamental computing resources as they please, as well as extend private networks out of existing infrastructure and elastically into CloudSigma's IaaS cloud to create easy to manage and transparent hybrid cloud solutions.



OUR LOCATIONS



CloudSigma offers a range of locations from Europe to the United States and APAC. We are adding new locations over time as we expand our offering globally. We choose our locations very carefully to offer excellent connectivity, security and reliability for our clouds.

For more information, please visit us at www.cloudsigma.com