



INGRAM MICRO CLOUD SERVICES CASE STUDY

Datasmith Network Solutions

Founded:
1986

url:
www.datasmithnetworks.com

Employees:
8

Key Market Vertical:
Healthcare

Specializations:
HP server, HP storage, VMware

Business Challenge:
Transitioning several transactional websites to the cloud

Solution:
Amazon AWS, dinCloud, NetEnrich

Customer Benefits:
Consolidated billing for several services
Support from Ingram Micro

Datasmith Network Solutions is a Perfect Fit for PlanetShoes.com

MSP Teams with Ingram Micro to Successfully Move Fast-Growth e-tailer to the Cloud

Datasmith Network Solutions has been in the IT network infrastructure sales and services business for more than two decades, spanning two generations. The business has thrived because the Datasmith Network Solutions approach to business is personal. "When our customers call with a problem, we take care of it, and then we stand by that work with a 100 percent satisfaction guarantee," says Datasmith Network Solutions Partner Paul Smith. "Their IT problems are our IT problems and we won't quit until the job is done right and to their satisfaction."

This customer-first signature of service, combined with its technical expertise and business-minded approach to IT, are what set Datasmith Network Solutions apart from competitors twice its size. Another core differentiator is its working relationship with the world's largest technology distributor, Ingram Micro. By using the Ingram Micro Cloud Marketplace (www.ingrammicrocloud.com), a transactional, online marketplace, solution providers like Datasmith Network Solutions and MSPs can shop, procure provision and obtain invoices for their cloud services directly from Ingram Micro.

"Our relationship with Ingram Micro and the business value it brings to the table has been a game-changer for us and our clients," says Smith. "By working with Ingram Micro and leveraging its

resources, relationships and expertise, we've been able to win larger customer accounts such as PlanetShoes.com and really differentiate ourselves in the market – especially when it comes to cloud services."

Earning the Business of PlanetShoes.com by Doing IT Right

A great customer success story that highlights not only the business value of Datasmith Network Solutions' relationship with Ingram Micro, but also the solution provider's sales and service leadership is PlanetShoes.com (www.planetshoes.com). Recognized as a fast-growing specialty e-tailer, PlanetShoes.com strives to deliver the best shoes, bags and other accessories in the most eco-conscious way possible and relies heavily on technology to make business happen. With six websites – each receiving about 30,000 unique visitors a day – and sales that can soar as high as 5,600 items a week, a top priority for PlanetShoes.com is keeping their websites easy-to-use, available and transactional.

"When you get down to it, we are a technology company that happens to sell shoes, purses and accessories," says PlanetShoes.com's Director of IT Scott LaPointe. "For the type of business we're in, business loss can exceed \$90,000 each day the website is down. That's unacceptable and no one understands that more than Paul and the Datasmith team."

LaPointe elaborates, "A couple of years ago, we had lost our network admin, and instead of hiring a replacement, we outsourced our IT to a large SQL database administrator firm. The firm never made me feel like I was one of their customers. Any time

I had an IT issue, such as an email server going down, I had to hound them to get it fixed. Plus, they never gave us any direction or advice regarding how we could improve and better protect our IT network. Datasmith Network Solutions did the exact opposite – they gave us attention, guidance, and tangible solutions. They are the real deal and truly earn my business every day."

LaPointe first met with Smith when PlanetShoes.com was three months away from its contract end date with the SQL DBA firm. Out of the gate, LaPointe was impressed with Smith's consultative approach. "Paul gave me confidence that my success was his success and that Datasmith Network Solutions would take ownership of our IT problems," says LaPointe. "He also talked about the importance of doing a network assessment, finding out where we were currently, and developing a roadmap for where we wanted to go with our network."

At the second meeting, Datasmith Network Solutions ran that network assessment and uncovered several troubling issues, including low memory on the e-tailer's virtual machine clusters, and servers that were approaching the end of their lifecycle. Additionally, PlanetShoes.com did not have a true backup and disaster recovery solution in place. "Their assessment was right on the money," says LaPointe. "I had been spending a lot of time each week moving virtual machines from server to server trying to free up space, and I often had to reboot the aging servers."

"Consolidated billing is a major benefit to the Cloud Marketplace."

— Chris Bradley, senior business technology consultant, ProTech

WHERE RAINMAKERS THRIVE





Smith's consultative approach and expertise in cloud services are what really won PlanetShoes.com over. In their final meeting, Smith presented LaPointe with multiple options for solving his IT challenges, ranging from buying new hardware to moving everything to the cloud via Amazon Web Services (AWS). The tie with AWS was a relationship Datasmith Network Solutions had gained through the Ingram Micro Cloud Marketplace. The results? A comprehensive managed IT service and support contract.

Making the Move to Cloud One Site at a Time

When all was said and done, LaPointe was in. A software programmer at heart, LaPointe didn't want to be in the business of managing hardware. Consequently, he was very open to the idea of moving his IT infrastructure to the cloud and putting a management contract in place. But the memory of expensive down-time lingered, and he remained a little leery of potential hiccups in migrating everything to the cloud.

Not missing a beat, Smith explained the solution to LaPointe's concern - a phased approach to the project that would start with the smallest websites, work out any snags, and then progress to larger ones.

"Smith and his team understood where I was coming from and they had a plan," says LaPointe. "What's more, they had tremendous support from Ingram Micro and NetEnrich backing to get this done right the first time. It's a beautiful thing to find a true business partner who knows how to put technology to work for the customer."

Datasmith Network Solutions won PlanetShoes.com's business and shortly thereafter began migrating the e-tailer's web, email, and other business servers to the cloud using Amazon AWS. The move to the cloud was a success strategy that positioned PlanetShoes.com for rapid expansion, but Smith is quick to point out that he didn't win the business alone.

"Through Ingram Micro, we were able to work Amazon AWS into our solutions portfolio. We also forged a valuable 24/7/365 day working relationship with NetEnrich to provide all the NOC (network operation center) support we needed, including remote monitoring, patch management, and off-site data backups for PlanetShoes.com. We use NetEnrich for other Datasmith Network Solutions customers as well," says Smith.

"These relationships and cloud services have radically enhanced our capabilities and allowed us to go after much bigger customers."

Smith admits every once in a while he gets giddy about what Ingram Micro has helped him do in a relatively short amount of time. "With Ingram Micro and NetEnrich as partners, I haven't spent a dime on my NOC, yet we can provide as good or better service than our competitors who have spent millions on theirs," quips Smith.

"Working with Ingram Micro, however, allows smaller resellers like us to compete more effectively and have a voice with heavy cloud-hitters like Amazon AWS. It also provides us with the education, resources and vendor introductions we need to succeed and help our cloud-based customers do the same," concludes Smith.