

**SUNGARD**

AVAILABILITY SERVICES CASE STUDY

Cloud Infrastructure
as a Service solution
gives Permal a
better return

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Steve Conway, director of IT infrastructure, Permal Group

Business problem

Longstanding customer Permal, a leading alternative asset management firm, was looking to focus on running its business, rather than running its infrastructure. With an expensive technology refresh imminent, the firm considered its options and found SunGard Availability Services' enterprise-class private cloud to be a secure, flexible and cost-effective solution.

Solution

- Infrastructure as a Service (IaaS)
- Managed Services:
 - Hosting of critical systems
 - Internet bandwidth
 - LAN management
 - Intrusion detection service
 - Electronic Data Vaulting
 - Citrix management
 - Around the clock monitoring of systems and databases
- Disaster Recovery (Technology and Workplace)
- Consulting (Technical and business continuity).

Business benefits

- High availability of data and services
- Value for money solution that eliminates expensive technology refreshes
- Low risk transition from physical to cloud environment
- Flexibility to mix and match services according to business needs
- Ability to scale up in line with company growth
- Resilient, secure and compliant, giving customers peace of mind
- Freedom to focus on core business by removing burden of infrastructure management.

Established in 1973, the Permal Group has one of the longest and most successful track records in the alternatives industry. The firm offers a wide range of multi-manager and multi-strategy funds, including absolute and directional strategies. Today, it has global reach with offices in nine international financial centres, over 200 employees, and extensive networks of experienced managers and relationships around the globe.

For more than six years, the company has used SunGard Availability Services to ensure its critical systems run uninterrupted 24 hours a day, seven days a week; for this it contracts SunGard's Managed Services. Additionally, it has a disaster recovery provision to prevent catastrophic data loss and provide an alternative workplace.

Steve Conway recalls, *"We were drawn to SunGard's infrastructure, scale and experience. And with nine offices around the globe, from New York to Tokyo, it is imperative that we have technology contingency plans in place should an office become non-operational for whatever reason. It is therefore reassuring that our production servers are hosted offsite in one of SunGard's data centres, ensuring uninterrupted operations."*

Blended solution the logical progression

In 2010, looking to refresh its technology infrastructure, Permal chose a blended solution combining enterprise cloud computing, dedicated managed hosting and advanced recovery services.

As numerous vital business applications were involved, including an Oracle financial database and SQL mapping and modeling tool for risk management, high availability was a critical factor. Rather than attempting to build the necessary expertise and resources in-house, the firm instead chose a virtualised infrastructure, contracting SunGard's cloud-based IaaS.

"SunGard has delivered exactly what it promised. Importantly, it invested a lot of time and effort in understanding Permal's business and our specific needs."

Steve Conway, director of IT infrastructure,
Permal Group

This provided a hybrid solution as it gradually transitioned from a physical to a virtualised environment and build on the benefits it had already realised as a longstanding SunGard customer.

Steve Conway, director of IT infrastructure, explains, *"By taking the physical servers out of the equation, we could remove a potential point of failure and increase our capacity and capability. At the time we recognised that we did not have the physical resources to manage these new technologies ourselves."*

Permal's confidence is such that it has placed its core systems in SunGard's enterprise-class private cloud infrastructure including the firm's banking systems and corporate intranet, which Steve Conway explains, *"is now at the heart of how we move information around the organisation – from deal approvals to travel expenses."*

In a challenging economic climate, cost-effectiveness was also a key consideration and the integrated solution from SunGard has resulted in cost savings for Permal. But it has also given the firm greater flexibility. With services being delivered through physical and virtual platforms running seamlessly side by side, Permal can move at its own pace, reducing the amount of hosting services it needs as a greater proportion of services are delivered via the cloud, resulting in a low risk transition.

As Steve Conway points out, *"We no longer need to think about our needs three years down the line – we can simply build what we need now, secure in the knowledge that we can scale-up in a matter of hours whenever we need."*

Among other benefits, the checks and controls built into the SunGard solution have relieved Permal's management burden and security concerns, particularly in terms of compliance with legislation such as the Sarbanes-Oxley Act. In fact, Steve Conway notes, *"One of the attractions of SunGard's cloud IaaS proposition was that it was a private cloud – giving us all the cloud benefits without the attendant security risks of a public cloud."*

In short, Permal is delighted. Steve Conway reports, *"SunGard has delivered exactly what it promised. It has achieved this very professionally, with a great deal of time and effort spent understanding Permal's business and its needs. SunGard's on-demand cloud IaaS solution has enabled us to be more flexible: move forward, change faster and grow more efficiently without having to worry about physical constraints."*

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Availability Services

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