CloudHealth® TECHNOLOGIES

Rapidly Scaling Ve Global Doubles Down on Cloud Responsibility, Cost Consciousness

VE GLOBAL ("VE"), FORMERLY KNOWN AS Ve Interactive, is an award-winning company that dedicates its efforts to enhancing the online consumer experience. They provide tailored digital advertising, website optimisation, and re-engagement (remarketing/retargeting) services. Founded in 2009, the startup has grown exponentially and now serves 10,000 clients globally across 18 territories.

THE CHALLENGE

Ve's journey to the cloud began in 2015 with the decision to migrate their entire data centre to Microsoft Azure. Once on Azure, Ve's cloud spend grew rapidly and unchecked, due to having multiple development centres and limited governance in place for spinning up new IaaS and PaaS services.

"When developers get ahold of new fancy toys, there can be a tendency to play as much as they can, and you don't want to cut their wings, but you need to make sure you're getting value from a cost perspective," said Bart Farrell, Talent Manager. With increasing traffic around peak periods (e.g. Black Friday) resulting in higher costs, it became clear that Ve needed a solution for managing their infrastructure.

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– BART FARRELL
Talent Manager

60%

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THE SOLUTION

Ve wanted a leader that could help strike the balance between freedom and responsibility, and make 'cost consciousness' part of their culture. The company started a cost reduction initiative and named Arie van den Bos, Cloud Systems Engineer as the lead, with the support of Bart Farrell, Talent Manager.

Arie decided to go beyond cost reduction, and focus on optimisation as well. After evaluating several cloud management platforms, he determined that CloudHealth would give Ve the biggest advantage in terms of functionality.

Key capabilities that set CloudHealth apart from the competition for Arie included Perspectives for customising reports by functional area, team, and resource groups, and the ability to create policies to alert on tagging compliance violations and daily spikes in costs.

THE RESULTS

Ve knows that developer time is a valuable resource. The company wanted to ensure that their engineers were as productive as possible to drive the business forward. Arie created workshops to demonstrate the benefits of CloudHealth to his colleagues. "Before CloudHealth, we spent a week on cost management reporting. At the end of the month we would download a CSV from Microsoft, then manually divide up the data by teams across multiple geographic locations. There has been a huge payoff on what people don't have to spend time on now," said Arie.

Ve has not only saved valuable employee time, but they have realised significant savings as well. "The project took a year to complete, but the result is a reduction in our Azure costs by 60%. We are still optimising now at a different level, and expect to drive our bill down another 10-20% in the coming year," claimed Arie.

The results are two-fold, Ve is now able to take the money they saved from their Azure bill and use it on more strategic initiatives, such as building company culture through employee development. In addition, employees now understand how responsibility and cost consciousness benefit the company as whole. "From a company perspective, we're very happy with the results we have been able to achieve with CloudHealth," exclaimed Bart.

Reflecting on the project, Bart shared, "when you're just starting out, the monitoring side of things is important from the very beginning – you shouldn't just be thinking about what contract you're signing with whom. We had massive infrastructure that we had to change to optimise all the workloads and data flows. Our biggest mistake was to not start right away with a platform to give us more governance and control."

NEXT STEPS

Looking forward, Ve is interested in containerisation leveraging Mesos and Docker, and they are considering a multi-cloud strategy. "CloudHealth supports us if we add cloud providers and can add insights to cost in the container world," said Arie.

"Customers need a deep level of reporting for utilization and costs and CloudHealth has custom report options to provide these insights."

– BART FARRELL
Talent Manager