

# SUCCESS STORY: Rackspace

## Keeping Pace with Evolving Customer Needs



### Overview

#### Challenge:

Rackspace Hosting recognized that it had outgrown its current network management solution and in order to ensure the uptime of over 13,000 Cisco network devices spread across its extensive customer base, Rackspace needed a new network management solution. It had to be extremely scalable, have deep out of the box functionality and be easy to use.

### Solution:

- **Auto Discovery**
- **Proactive Monitoring of Networks, Up/Down Status**
- **Event Monitoring**
- **Detailed Reporting**
- **Global Dashboard with Integrated View**

### Business Value:

- Bringing on new customers and devices much more quickly via auto discovery and subsequent assignment to pre-defined templates in Zenoss.
- Leveraging internal network resources more efficiently via easy-to-use, centralized dashboard and alerts.
- Using synthetic transactions to proactively detect potential issues and resolving them before customers are impacted.
- Established competitive differentiation by developing unique capabilities in Zenoss which are used to better manage the network.

### AT A GLANCE

**Rackspace**  
HQ: San Antonio, TX  
[www.rackspace.com](http://www.rackspace.com)

**Industry:**  
IT Hosting

**Year Founded:**  
1998

**Number of Customers:**  
29,000 Worldwide

#### About Rackspace:

Rackspace Hosting delivers hosted IT systems and computing to businesses of all sizes. Customers choose Rackspace for its hosting specialization and expertise, backed by the company's award-winning Fanatical Support®. Customers can receive benefits such as higher quality, lower cost and better performance from Rackspace's vast knowledge of industry best-practices. Because Rackspace removes the burden of IT systems maintenance and management, customers can focus on key areas that differentiate their business. Rackspace's portfolio of hosted services includes managed hosting ([www.rackspace.com](http://www.rackspace.com)), email hosting ([www.mailtrust.com](http://www.mailtrust.com)) and cloud hosting ([www.mosso.com](http://www.mosso.com)). Rackspace is recognized as one of FORTUNE Magazine's 100 Best Companies to Work For, ranking number 32 on the 2008 list.

#### Rackspace's Key Initiatives with Zenoss:

- Scale to a large number of monitored devices
- Conduct threshold-based monitoring
- Adapt solution to fit Rackspace's unique environment and meet specific customer needs

## Evaluating Zenoss

After operating for a number of years with its prior network monitoring product, Rackspace recognized that it had outgrown the solution's capabilities. The company required a new network monitoring solution that had deeper out-of-the box functionality, was more scalable and could be configured to meet Rackspace's very unique environment.

In summer 2007, the company began to evaluate a number of network monitoring solutions, including Zenoss. "Because network monitoring is so critical to our business, we took the time to assess the different solutions in great detail," said Marty Meyers, Global Network Operations Manager at Rackspace. "What we discovered was that the proprietary solutions lacked the flexibility we required; we couldn't get them to fit our unique environment. Zenoss, on the other hand, was extremely configurable out of the box, and in the few cases we needed to go the extra mile, we cracked open the code and developed very specific functionality. Not only does Zenoss fit our internal environment perfectly, we can now offer services to our customers that our competitors cannot."

*"...the [Zenoss] solution works exactly the way we need it to work ..."*

Marty Meyers  
Rackspace

[www.rackspace.com](http://www.rackspace.com)

## Improving Efficiencies

Rackspace uses auto-discovery in Zenoss to detect new network devices and alert users of their existence. The Rackspace team then quickly assigns these devices to pre-defined device type families based on templates. The new devices automatically inherit the monitoring parameters associated with their respective device type family. As a result, Rackspace is able to stand up new network devices much faster than before.

Zenoss' centralized monitor dashboard and alerts have driven further efficiencies. The Rackspace team now has a comprehensive bird's eye view of their entire network infrastructure. They use SNMP polling to detect issues notified via event alerting on the console and track the cause through the console to resolve potential issues before customers are impacted.

"With Zenoss, we're able to detect potential issues more quickly and resolve them before customers experience problems. It's all about minimizing performance degradation and downtime, and Zenoss does a great job of that."

## Key Functionality for Rackspace

- Auto Discovery
- Proactive Monitoring of Networks, Up/Down Status
- Event Monitoring
- Detailed Reporting
- Global Dashboard with Integrated View