

AT-A-GLANCE

COMPANY: BlackLine Systems

PROBLEM: Overcoming the historical reluctance of Fortune 1000 finance departments to allow their balance sheet and other financial data to move outside their corporate firewalls.

SOLUTION: Managed hosting provider with Fanatical Support® and experience in hosting SaaS applications.



WHAT THEY DO

SaaS solution which gives Fortune 1000 companies the ability to automate and control the financial close process with their SAS 70 Type II-audited Blackline Financial Close Software Suite.

A Rackspace® Hybrid hosting environment that includes private cloud, dedicated database servers, public cloud, disaster recovery and intensive support.

BENEFITS

With a Rackspace® Hybrid Hosting environment that includes Private Cloud, dedicated database servers, public cloud and disaster recovery, BlackLine Systems can dramatically scale its business, while meeting the demanding security, reliability, and performance requirements of Fortune 1000 finance departments.

"Rackspace enabled BlackLine to grow and focus on the areas that were important to us, taking our business further and faster than we could have done on our own." Mario Spanicciati, Executive Vice President of Operations, BlackLine Systems

BlackLine combines traditional dedicated hosting with private and public cloud services to deliver Fortune 1000 quality, secure and reliable software to its clients.

COMPANY OVERVIEW

Founded in 2001, BlackLine Systems was the first to develop and offer a commercially available Balance Sheet Account Reconciliation solution. An experienced provider of software to companies ranging in size from Fortune 100 to the Fortune 1000, BlackLine provides quick-to-implement, scalable, and easy-to-use applications that automate the entire financial close process while helping to improve financial controls.

BlackLine provides a diverse suite of modules designed to assist accounting professionals in closing their books each month. It replaces manual, error-prone, Excel-based financial close processes with automation, control, and visibility. First implemented in 2004, BlackLine's Account Reconciliation solution now includes modules for Task Management, Transaction Matching, Variance

Analysis, Journal Entry, and a Consolidation Integrity Manager.

THE SITUATION

Initially a provider of traditional, on-premise software solutions, BlackLine recognized the advantages of moving to a Software-as-a-Service (SaaS) delivery model. The challenge was overcoming the historical reluctance of Fortune 1000 finance departments to allow their balance sheet and other financial data to move outside their corporate firewalls. To be successful, BlackLine needed a SaaS delivery infrastructure that met the exacting

**"A fully staffed
department of experts,
top of their game."**

Mario Spanicciati

Executive Vice President of Operations, BlackLine Systems

experience *fanatical support*®

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“They are there for us whenever we need them. Rackspace is an integral part in providing support to our IT team and we really appreciate it.”

Mario Spanicciati, Executive Vice President of Operations, BlackLine Systems

application and data security and performance requirements of enterprise finance departments. As an example of their commitment to meeting those requirements, BlackLine invested in securing a SAS 70 Type II audit of its application, making it unique among its competitors.

At the same time, growing at a pace of more than 100% in 2010 in terms of new users, BlackLine needed to rapidly scale their business without diverting disproportionate resources into building its own IT infrastructure and specialized staff. They needed a managed hosting provider that would provide support to their IT department—a provider that understood the mission critical nature of infrastructure availability and reliability in the SaaS model and one with demonstrated success in providing it.

RACKSPACE SOLUTION

BlackLine chose Rackspace as its managed hosting provider because of Fanatical Support® – a commitment of providing world-class customer service experience to its customers – range of services, and its position and experience in hosting SaaS applications.

Serving as an independent extension of BlackLine’s internal IT department, Rackspace provides 24x7x365 support to BlackLine’s IT staff and Intensive® services. As the leading specialist in the hosting and cloud computing industry, Rackspace has the broad range of technical specialists necessary to run an enterprise-class managed hosting infrastructure. As a result, BlackLine doesn’t have to expand its own team at a rapid pace. Dedicated account management and a team of IT security, database, and architecture specialists, among others, are on call whenever their skills are required. Rackspace processes and procedures, including its SAS 70 Type II infrastructure audit, were instrumental in allowing BlackLine to achieve its own SAS 70 Type II certification.

To meet BlackLine’s SaaS delivery infrastructure requirements, Rackspace provides a hybrid hosting solution that allows BlackLine to match the best technology to each specific task. BlackLine utilizes Rackspace’s scalable private cloud for QA and to deliver its BlackLine applications; dedicated database servers for scalability, performance and security; and scalable and flexible Rackspace public cloud for test/dev and its BlackLine.com Website.

Rackspace also worked with BlackLine to create an enterprise quality disaster recovery solution that uses dedicated NetApp devices to provide block-level replication from data center to data center, as well as implementing VMware SRM for site recovery.

THE SUCCESS

BlackLine Systems needed a provider that would serve as an independent extension of their IT department, deliver the wide range of hosting services to support their SaaS business, and satisfy the performance requirements of their Fortune 1000 customers. They chose Rackspace, the world’s leading specialist in the hosting and cloud computing industry.

Rackspace provides BlackLine with a quality infrastructure that combines traditional dedicated hosting with cutting edge private cloud and public cloud services. This hybrid solution allows BlackLine to match their specific requirements to the technology that will most efficiently meet them, saving time and resources. Rackspace also worked closely with BlackLine to create a disaster recovery solution that is a requirement for hosted business in the financial world. With time-to-market being critical, Rackspace’s technical experience and team allowed BlackLine to significantly accelerate the implementation of their disaster recovery solution by a factor of three.

CUSTOMER’S FINAL WORDS

“Rackspace has meant peace of mind to BlackLine. We’re very good at what we do, and we want to be able to focus our efforts on building and selling the best financial applications. Rackspace makes that possible. Their SaaS hosting experience and scale means we can depend on them. And as a SaaS company themselves, Rackspace knows that in SaaS, you’re only in business if your application is up and running. To achieve that goal, they combine innovative hosting infrastructure and services with living and breathing Fanatical Support customer service. They are there for us whenever we need them. Rackspace is an integral part in providing support to our IT team and we really appreciate it.” Mario Spanicciati, Executive Vice President of Operations, BlackLine Systems

experience *fanatical support*®

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