

VEVO™

VEVO MUSIC VIDEOS RUN ON RACKCONNECT™

Web-based music video and entertainment service spins up 900 servers for massive transcoding project

Every day, millions of consumers look to the Internet as their go-to source for music—whether downloading tunes to a mobile device or streaming music videos from a website.

Created in 2009 to address the emerging trend of online music videos, VEVO's successful business model relies on the scalability and performance of the Cloud run on Rackspace® hybrid hosting solution, RackConnect™.

Today, VEVO gets nearly 68 million visitors in the U.S. per month, and serves up 3 billion streams worldwide. None of that would be possible without a solid IT infrastructure behind the scenes—which is why VEVO has relied on Rackspace® for its infrastructure needs.

A REPUTATION FOR FAST SUPPORT TICKET TURNAROUND TIME

VEVO's applications require complex hardware capable of supporting processing-intensive operations like ingesting video content from music companies

and publishing it to VEVO syndication partners. They must also support the delivery of very high quality video, which means enormous storage requirements. "Many videos we receive are several gigabytes apiece," notes Allan Parsons, Senior Systems Engineer at VEVO.

The company therefore decided early on that it wanted to outsource its server management to a third party, ultimately choosing a hybrid configuration with Rackspace due to competitive pricing, a thorough quote process, and exceptional customer service, branded Fanatical Support®, Parsons and his team had heard so much about.

RACKSPACE ONSITE TO ENSURE SUCCESSFUL LAUNCH

It wasn't long after choosing Rackspace that the decision paid off. VEVO started with a small number of servers, which it used for its development, test and QA servers. When it was ready to move into production, the rollover to its full server footprint was seamless.

AT-A-GLANCE

CUSTOMER'S BUSINESS:

Websites, Rich Media

CHALLENGES: Storage and Transfer of large media files

RACKSPACE SOLUTION:

RackConnect used for management of large media files in a dedicated environment including custom servers and managed storage, in combination with scalable compute in the Cloud for CPU-intensive data transcoding and manipulation

BUSINESS OUTCOME:

Compute scalability and cost efficiency, allowing for in-house mass batch transcodes.

VEVO hit the scene with a brand new business model that made it difficult to predict the amount of traffic the launch would create. It was a big moment in the music industry, with launch parties featuring A-list celebrities and heavy media attention. "We flipped the switch, and went almost immediately from having zero traffic to millions of hits," says Parsons.

Rackspace played a key role in helping manage the launch, and continues to scale as VEVO's need for raw computing power

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increases. “We had people from Rackspace here onsite to help us monitor the traffic and make tweaks in real time to enhance the site’s performance,” Parsons notes. The team started with 10 servers, then stood up another 20 over the next 48 hours. “It reflects the Rackspace Fanatical Support motto. It was a very intense period, and Rackspace was right there in the room, brainstorming with us.”

HYBRID MODEL ALLOWS FOR MASS-TRANSCODING IN THE CLOUD

VEVO is using Rackspace Cloud Servers to support processing-intensive operations like video transcoding—the process of readying videos for display on vendor-specific platforms, like particular Smartphone brands. In order to connect these Cloud servers to their other dedicated hosted servers and storage, VEVO is using RackConnect. RackConnect grants VEVO the agility to batch-transcode large quantities of video without the hassle and financial burden of purchasing physical hardware to produce on such a large scale.

Recently, VEVO took the initiative to move their library of music videos to the CDN, transcoding 23 renditions of over 45,000 unique videos for compatibility and quality. The project needed to be done all at one time which required that VEVO spin up 900 servers supported in the cloud to accommodate the move, which saved the company both time and money. “Before, we shipped videos on hard drives to third party vendors for transcoding,” says Parsons. “Rackspace lets us add servers to our infrastructure on a temporary basis, so we can transcode in-house.”

RackConnect gives VEVO the freedom to choose which platform works best for their needs and leverage the technology in a way that suits their business systems. Through an automated process built by VEVO on dedicated gear at Rackspace, record labels can push content during busy times like album releases. Music videos, housed on high-speed dedicated storage, can be quickly transferred across a load balancer to Cloud Servers spun up to handle the influx to be transcoded for various platforms

such as mobile and sent to a CDN such as Akamai for users to stream videos from their favorite artists.

The hybrid model enabled by RackConnect offers a solution for VEVO that provides two key benefits: compute scalability and utility billing. VEVO’s solution benefits from the scalability of the cloud, while still leveraging the performance and security of dedicated hardware. Utility billing and fast provisioning of cloud computing enable VEVO’s mass-transcoding projects to be successful - charging them only for the cloud capacity used during these spikes is what makes these huge batch processing jobs cost-effective, and the ability to quickly add the right amount of compute for each project ensures each job can be completed as quickly and efficiently as possible. All of this helps to ensure that the premium music video content that consumers demand is processed and delivered to them as soon as possible.

VEVO’s unique usage of a wide array of Rackspace products that extends from managed hosting to custom equipment collocation, and from Akamai’s CDN to cloud hosting, allows millions of users access to their favorite artists and continues to revitalize the music video industry.

experience *fanatical support*®

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RACKSPACE, HOSTING | 5000 WALZEM ROAD | SAN ANTONIO, TX 78218 U.S.A.

