



Always Up and Running in the Cloud

Thanks to Atlantic-IT.net's cloud infrastructure, Westminster Hotel's computer systems are always available — even in the aftermath of Hurricane Sandy.

Westminster Hotel prides itself on providing a great guest experience through personalized service and attention to detail, and relies heavily on technology to serve its guests and manage its business. Much of that technology resides in Atlantic-IT.net's cloud environment.

The hotel made the strategic move into the cloud in 2009, before many businesses had even heard of cloud computing. It was a tough decision at the time, but the hotel trusted Atlantic-IT.net to provide solid technology solutions and responsive support.

"I think we were ahead of the curve," said Michael Polese, General Manager, Westminster Hotel. "It seemed like a big risk to take all our local servers and put them up on the Internet and trust that the data was going to be protected, that the speeds were going to be reliable, that our connectivity was never going to be challenged.

"But when Atlantic-IT.net presented the cloud option to us, they really had a plan. They understood all the reasons why somebody might be hesitant about this and had clear answers as to how it would work."

The cloud provides Westminster Hotel with a number of benefits, including reduced costs and greater flexibility. But the real power of the cloud became evident when Hurricane Sandy struck the New Jersey coast. Located in Livingston, N.J., just 20 miles west of New York City, the hotel certainly felt the impact of the storm. But thanks to Atlantic-IT.net's cloud solution, the hotel's IT systems never suffered a moment of downtime.

"I brought the entire sales and reservations team to my home, which thankfully had power," Polese said. "We ran the hotel from there, making reservations, processing bills, running audits and dealing with the day-to-day maintenance of our systems. When the power came back on, we were

already current. There was no making up four days' worth of work."

Built on Trust

Westminster is a AAA Four Diamond hotel recognized for its stylish guest rooms and suites and a refined mix of first-class amenities. But when it began its relationship with Atlantic-IT.net, it was struggling to manage a growing array of disparate systems and keep up with constantly changing technology. Polese wanted one firm that could handle all the hotel's IT needs, and Atlantic-IT.net stepped into that role.

Atlantic-IT.net performed a complete evaluation of the hotel's existing infrastructure, reorganized the equipment and started documenting everything. The Atlantic-IT.net team then took over management of the hotel's IT systems, performing routine maintenance and providing prompt support. Armed with a clear understanding of the hotel's technology environment and business needs, Atlantic-IT.net also began recommending ways to improve.

"The relationship works because they look at their connection with our hotel as a partnership," Polese said. "They recognize trends and make recommendations for us to stay current so that we're not missing out on opportunities. They never demand anything but they absolutely guide. I think if you're looking for a technology partner, it's a huge benefit to have people who not only service what you have and keep things operating but also help you figure out what makes the best use of the dollars that you spend."

In the context of that relationship, Atlantic-IT.net recommended that Westminster Hotel pursue a cloud model.

"It was never a sales pitch," said Polese. "It was always, 'This is a new way for you to think about how to manage your technology and here are the benefits and the limitations so you can make an informed choice. We think this is what you should be doing to make sure that your investments are protected in the long term.'

"Their way of interacting with customers is extraordinarily valuable. It marks the difference between a salesperson and a partner."

Service When It Counts

When Atlantic-IT.net recommended the cloud solution, Westminster Hotel was at something of a crossroads, facing the need to either replace aging equipment or rethink its technology investments. The cloud enabled the hotel to gain access to up-to-date technology and save money by, among other things, purchasing thin clients instead of new PCs. The cloud also provides staff with anytime, anywhere connectivity to the hotel's systems.

"For businesses like ours that operate 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, the cloud makes it easier to leave your desk. You can be much more mobile. You can respond much more quickly. There's a lot of competition out there, so anything that makes it easier for us to be quick on our feet, the better," Polese said.

The "always on" nature of the cloud was a godsend during the four-day power outage caused by Hurricane Sandy. Westminster Hotel had to close its doors because there was no power for HVAC, lighting or fire systems. But Polese and his staff were able to keep the hotel's business going thanks to Atlantic-IT.net's cloud computing solution, and resume operations quickly when the power came back on.

Power was restored on Friday morning, and the hotel opened its doors to the public Saturday morning at 7:00 a.m. Thanks to the cloud and Atlantic-IT.net, Westminster Hotel was able to serve the community in a time of great need.

"That would not have happened without the forethought that went into building a technology infrastructure that made it possible to continue to operate," said Polese. "Everybody benefited from the fact that the people at Atlantic-IT.net said, 'Maybe you should think about technology this way.' We helped a lot of people during that time and Atlantic-IT.net had a stake in that."



(877) 936-3328

www.atlantic-IT.net