MotivHealth unleashes growth while reining in cloud costs

motivhealth®

Overview
Health insurer MotivHealth took a proactive look at ways to optimize their cloud expenses and support future growth. Pythian provided detailed analysis of their cloud usage and expense drivers, along with guidance to negotiate a five-year Google commitment that will optimize their costs and efficiency.

❚❚ With Google, you get to work hand-in-hand with a market innovator— a partner that's looking for a mutual win."

Josh Dobbin
Architect & IT Director
MotivHealth

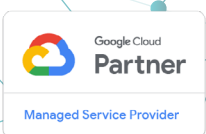## Pythian helps health insurer lock in performance and savings

MotivHealth was born digital. Since its inception in 2015, the Utah-based health insurer has run its entire operations, from member enrollment through claims and reimbursement, in the cloud.

"More than 90 percent of everything we do is in the cloud," said Josh Dobbin, MotivHealth's Architect and IT Director.

With so much riding on the performance, reliability and security of their technology, optimizing their work with Google Cloud is mission-critical. Just as important for Dobbin is staying on top of cloud expenses as the startup company grows.

Pythian recently teamed up with MotivHealth to identify their future needs. This proactive approach, along with detailed analysis from Pythian, enabled Dobbin to lock in a five-year Google commitment that includes sustained and enterprise use discounts.

Already, he estimates the health insurer is realizing approximately 13 percent savings in cloud expenses.

Google Cloud Partner
Managed Service Provider

Pythian

Challenges

MotivHealth needed a cloud platform that could:

- **Meet healthcare regulations.** When the company launched, only Amazon Web Services (AWS) offered a HIPAA-compliant platform, which came at a premium cost for MotivHealth.
- **Operate efficiently.** Customers, members, brokers and employees all depended on the health insurer's technology. Fast, reliable and secure performance was a must.
- **Leverage the latest tools.** Open-source solutions and other tools enable MotivHealth to improve its offering and reduce healthcare costs for customers. Timely access to new innovations was essential.

❚❚ We started with Amazon Web Services six years ago. When we switched to Google Cloud, we saved 90 percent on cloud hosting."

Josh Dobbin
Architect & IT Director
MotivHealth

Solutions

They switched to Google for:

- **Greater value.** Leaving AWS for Google Cloud reduced MotivHealth's cloud expenses and significantly improved their speed and performance. They also found stronger alignment with Google's values and culture.
- **Proven innovation.** Dobbin appreciates Google's commitment to pioneering tools and services, particularly the accessibility of their machine learning and artificial intelligence capabilities, which the health insurer hopes will help reduce costs for its customers.
- **Respect for open source.** With a reliance on Linux, Kubernetes and other open-source solutions, MotivHealth wanted a cloud provider equally committed to a cooperative environment.

Cloud costs and frustrations add up with previous provider

When they started the company, MotivHealth's founders knew they wanted to launch a cloud offering. However, the strict data privacy and security requirements of healthcare's HIPAA legislation limited their hosting options. Ultimately, they chose AWS.

Dobbin recalled, "We started with Amazon Web Services six years ago because they were the only offering with HIPAA compliance. The problem was, they charged a lot of money for that."

Fortunately, the playing field soon opened up. Google created a HIPAA-compliant cloud that was perfect for MotivHealth's needs. After just two years, they left AWS.

"Cost was the main driver, but Google had always been an innovator in cloud operations," Dobbin noted. "With Google, you get to work hand-in-hand with a market innovator—a partner that's looking for a mutual win."

Google's embrace of open-source solutions was another deciding factor in the switch. MotivHealth uses Linux, Kubernetes and a variety of open-source libraries in their applications.

"Our company is more philosophically aligned with Google than we were with Amazon," he said. "We appreciate the support and respect they have for open-source projects."

Switch to Google improves performance and boosts innovation

The move to Google Cloud was simple and efficient.

"The migration of our entire infrastructure was done in a weekend with one person," Dobbin recalled. "That gives you a sense of how easy it was for us to move to Google Cloud."

The benefits to MotivHealth were immediate.

"When we switched to Google Cloud, we saved 90 percent of our costs on cloud hosting," Dobbin said.

They also realized a dramatic uptick in speed and performance across their applications, from customer-facing websites to internal databases and systems.

"With similarly provisioned machines, we saw a major increase in performance," Dobbin noted. "That surprised us quite a bit. We saw a marked improvement on all our systems."

Once on Google Cloud, MotivHealth continued its trajectory of rapid growth. Expansion of the business meant greater demand for cloud services—and also increased costs.

After four years with Google Cloud, Dobbin knew it was time for a more proactive approach to managing their expenses. With Pythian's guidance, he explored a variety of commitment agreements and potential discounts available through Google.

"We were aware of committed use discounts; we hadn't been aware of the additional enterprise discounts," he explained. "We were already getting sustained use discounts."

Over a few weeks, the Pythian team took a deep dive into MotivHealth's cloud usage, leveraging detailed data provided by Google.

"Pythian gave us projected estimates in a very fine-grained way," Dobbin said. "We could see what was realistic for our growth pattern, then align our business strategies with our cloud strategy and budget."

The resulting analysis, forecast and recommendations gave Dobbin the confidence to negotiate a five-year agreement that will optimize MotivHealth's costs and efficiency.

"Working with Pythian and Google, we were able to find a sweet spot to leverage committed use discounts, retain sustained use discounts where applicable, and on top of that, get an additional enterprise discount," Dobbin explained.

Committed use discounts create noticeable savings on cloud costs

After just a few weeks, Dobbin estimates MotivHealth is already saving approximately 13 percent in cloud costs, thanks to the new five-year agreement.

"We're getting a deep savings on services we were already running, and able to upgrade our machine types," Dobbin said.

He added, "The committed use discount is an environmentally friendly way to allocate resources and make the dollars work better at the same time."

He also appreciates the time and energy both Pythian and Google devoted to the company, even though the health insurance startup is a smaller organization.

"We have a real engaged team. They were very flexible with us, because one of the biggest concerns was committing to a certain spend. We were more conservative," Dobbin said.

> ❚❚ The migration of our entire infrastructure was done in a weekend with one person. That gives you a sense of how easy it was for us to move to Google Cloud."
>
> **Josh Dobbin**
> **Architect & IT Director**
> **MotivHealth**

Results

Their new five-year agreement provides:

- **Measurable savings.** After just a few weeks, MotivHealth has already reduced cloud costs by approximately 13 percent, thanks to the committed use, sustained use and enterprise discounts in their agreement.
- **More partner opportunities.** When MotivHealth needed a more sophisticated data warehouse, working with approved enterprise resources helped them save an additional 3-5 percent.
- **Greater engagement.** Dobbin appreciates how both Pythian and Google support MotivHealth's goals with information, connections and ongoing collaboration.

> ❚❚ The committed use discount is an environmentally friendly way to allocate resources and make the dollars work better."
>
> **Josh Dobbin**
> **Architect & IT Director**
> **MotivHealth**

The agreement creates a strong foundation for MotivHealth's future. Going forward, Dobbin anticipates continued growth, but with manageable spend on cloud services. He also expects to tap into Google's machine learning and artificial intelligence capabilities to continue to enhance MotivHealth's offering. Every dollar saved on cloud services helps strengthen the company.

"We're able to do more with less money, and that's savings in premiums that pass directly to our membership," he said.

linkedin.com/company/pythian   twitter.com/Pythian   Contact us at +1-866-798-4426 or info@pythian.com

ABOUT PYTHIAN

Founded in 1997, Pythian is a global IT services company that helps organizations transform how they compete and win by helping them turn data into valuable insights, predictions and products. From cloud automation to machine learning, Pythian designs, implements and supports customized solutions to the toughest data challenges.
© Pythian Services Inc. 2021

OFFICES

Ottawa, Canada   New York City, USA   Minneapolis, USA   London, England   Hyderabad, India

Pythian