

COACHING FROM THE DATA CENTER: A BERLIN START-UP RELIES ON THE OPEN TELEKOM CLOUD



Always find the right expert for the job with IT resources from the public cloud

A few years ago, Jennifer Meister and Katja Manger noticed there was no quick and effective way to find a qualified expert for a given subject. The two managers from Berlin decided to change that – so they created Coachimo. The web portal efficiently matches coaches with potential customers, who receive an overview of qualifications, ratings, and prices of experts in their area with the click of a mouse. The two entrepreneurs relied on IT resources from the public cloud to realize their idea. But their initial cloud provider could not meet the data protection and security expectations of German customers. The solution: The Open Telekom Cloud.

AT A GLANCE

- Berlin-based start-up creates portal for efficiently finding coaches and experts: Coachimo.de
- The start-up relies 100% on the cloud for development and operation of the web portal
- The company's initial provider couldn't meet its requirements for data security, and data protection in Germany completely
- So the web entrepreneurs decided to switch from Amazon Web Services (AWS) to the Open Telekom Cloud

THE TESTIMONIAL IN DETAIL

THE CLIENT: COACHIMO.DE

Whether manager coach, life coach expert or IT specialist – Internet users can find the coaching help they need on Coachimo.de. Two web entrepreneurs from Berlin, Jennifer Meister and Katja Manger, founded the start-up end of 2014. “We noticed that there were countless experts and coaches online. But it’s extremely inconvenient trying to find and choose one quickly,” says Meister. The online marketing manager came up with the idea for Coachimo a few years ago with IT project manager Manger. “We wanted to create a platform that quickly and clearly lists and connects people to experts,” says Manger. “It’s easy to find coaches sorted according to topic, with detailed information including prices and ratings.”

THE CHALLENGE

The two founders sought out partners to turn their idea into reality. Eventually, they met the IT consultant Stephen Sullivan at a start-up event in Berlin. The British expat was immediately convinced – and they got to work.

To keep development and operating costs to a minimum, the entrepreneurs used cloud solutions right from the start. Sullivan, now the start-up’s chief technology officer (CTO), initially used the platform Heroku for their first proof-of-concept (POC). After it was proven that Coachimo worked, Sullivan ported the web application to the public cloud of Amazon Web Services (AWS). “However, for the real operation with customer data AWS ultimately was out of the question,” says Sullivan. “German customers are extremely sensitive when it comes to data security and data protection.” Which is why Coachimo started to look for a cloud provider that could securely host the online expert network for the long-term.

THE SOLUTION

The start-up soon chose the Open Telekom Cloud for its needs. The public cloud offering from Deutsche Telekom provides flexibly scalable IT resources from highly secure German data centers. Several independent testing agencies have certified the high level of security and data protection. “Plus the Telekom brand already has a very good reputation that engenders trust,” says Meister. “And trust is one of the most important aspects when it comes to coaching. That’s why no other solution except the Open Telekom Cloud came into consideration for us.”

Along with data protection concerns, transparency was a decisive criterion. “Transparency is enormously important to me with a public cloud offering. I can’t have the feeling that I’m unaware of things happening there,” says Sullivan. The Open Telekom Cloud is based on the open standard Open-Stack. “That means the source code is always accessible,” says Sullivan. Another plus for Coachimo was the support provided. “We always had a contact person available to us. For example, regarding the migration. You unfortunately can’t expect that with American providers like Microsoft and Amazon,” says Sullivan.

THE CUSTOMER BENEFIT

Coachimo migrated its entire web portal from AWS to the Open Telekom Cloud. The Berlin-based start-up now relies on two servers and storage at Deutsche Telekom data centers in the eastern German state of Saxony-Anhalt. “We have 100 percent of our IT in the Open Telekom Cloud, we aren’t running anything at all locally,” says Sullivan. Just a few days after launching, Coachimo had already signed up 100 users. The number of register users has since climbed to 1,600 people, with 800 of those active experts and coaches. “We have grown by 360 percent within a year – all without a marketing budget,” says Meister.

And that was just the beginning. Coachimo has a lot planned. Next up, the founders want to introduce a payment system allowing users to pay coaches directly on the platform. The ratings system is also set to see its functionality expanded. “That will give our users an even better overview of the skills of our coaches,” says Manger. After that, a so-called automatic matching algorithm is in the works. The principle is similar to a dating service – only for coaches: The users answer a few question regarding their requirements and preferences, so Coachimo can suggest appropriate experts from its database. “The algorithm will learn as it goes along. For this we will make use of the resources from the Open Telekom Cloud in the future.”

The young company certainly has big plans for the future: “We want to expand our service especially for businesses. HR departments and consultancy firms have huge demand for it,” says Sullivan. “The market for it is giant. But to make it reality, we first need a bigger user base. We’ve already set the IT foundation for this with the Open Telekom Cloud, which can be adapted to any company development.”

The logo for Coachimo, featuring the word "Coachimo" in a red, cursive script font. A small red graduation cap icon is positioned above the letter 'i'.

CONTACT:

T-Systems International GmbH
Hahnstraße 43 d
60528 Frankfurt am Main
Email: referenzen@t-systems.com
Internet: www.t-systems.com

PUBLISHER:

T-Systems International GmbH
Hahnstraße 43 d
60528 Frankfurt am Main
Germany