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Paying It Forward: Recharge Positions Itself for Rapid Growth with Google Cloud and Splunk

As a subscription management solution, Recharge is at the forefront of the fastest-growing area in ecommerce, helping more than 15,000 merchants process $10 billion in transactions from 50 million subscribers. With a goal to be the best-in-class subscription service solution to merchants of all sizes, Recharge requires a modern multi-cloud infrastructure that's highly available, performant, and secure.

The company also wants the ability to provide value-add analytics for its customers. It needs clear visibility into this complex, mission-critical infrastructure, which is why it chose to deploy Splunk to monitor its proprietary applications.

When Mark Hatch arrived in 2018 as the company's Director of Infrastructure, he sought a cloud platform on which the rapidly growing company could scale operations quickly and smoothly with Kubernetes and serverless computing. Careful evaluation brought Recharge to Google Cloud. When Google Cloud partnered with Splunk in 2020, that partnership opened an entirely new set of opportunities for Recharge.

Fast Facts

Company: Recharge

Founded: 2014

Business: Recharge powers repeatable transactions for some of the most successful subscription brands today.

Scale: 15,000 merchants; $10 billion in transactions; 50 million subscribers

Google Cloud and Splunk products used: Compute Engine, Cloud SQL, Google Kubernetes Engine, AI Platform, Dataflow, Splunk Cloud, Splunk Enterprise Security

Google Cloud customer since 2018

Splunk customer since 2019

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A growing list of use cases for Splunk on Google Cloud

Recharge has been using Splunk for its application performance monitoring (APM) needs since 2019. At the time, the Infrastructure Team evaluated a number of different alternatives to their current solutions and concluded that Splunk was the best opportunity.

But it didn't take long before the team recognized the Splunk solution's wide capabilities beyond aggregating logs and debugging. Splunk quickly became part of Recharge's operational infrastructure, which allowed the Infrastructure Team to retire some of the other components they'd been relying on. They took advantage of Splunk's many out-of-the-box integrations, using it to build rich dashboards and perform drill-downs around queries as well as perform trend and pattern analysis.

Soon enough, the developer community at Recharge started using Splunk as well. For example, it recently facilitated the development of a new solution for managing user workstations to support Recharge as a remote-first organization.

Most recently, the company added Splunk Enterprise Security (ES): The security team is rolling up all of its tooling into Splunk, which is acting as the company's primary SIEM dashboard.

"As time goes on, we keep exploring and exploiting more value, more corners, and more features of Splunk," Hatch says, "and we continue to build more and more evolution of the business on top of the platform."

Migrating to Google Cloud

The decision to begin moving Recharge workloads to Google Cloud in 2018 revolved around the company's ambitious strategy regarding organic growth and new partnership opportunities. From previous experience, Hatch knew that Google Cloud would provide the scalability, metrics monitoring, consistency, and reproducibility that Recharge needed; a side-by-side comparison with other cloud providers bore that out.

First, Google Cloud's industry-leading configuration management meant Hatch and his team could focus more on strategic initiatives than on day-to-day maintenance. Hatch also cited Google's invention of and ongoing investment in Kubernetes, which is critical to Recharge's future plans to make nearly every component of the platform accessible via an API. And Google Cloud's many integrations create new opportunities for orchestration within the CI/CD pipelines.

> Google Cloud has been a great partner with respect to helping us with cost forecasting and talking us through how to use Committed Use versus Sustained Use Discounts.
>
> — Mark Hatch, Director of Infrastructure, Recharge

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Recharge began by migrating three workloads to Google Cloud:

Web services, which were already containerized and therefore the perfect candidate to initiate the move

Data tier, which had been manually supported by the internal team. Hatch wanted to move to a hosted solution, and Google Cloud SQL fit the bill. As he explains, "We could just instantiate a database instance and then scale it up, offloading all of the complex, under-the-hood components in the process."

Jobs system, including Redis Cache and other behind-the-scenes components that Google Cloud exposes as SaaS services

When Hatch and his team began migrating mission-critical workflows to Google Cloud, he asked if it would be possible to host Recharge's Splunk instance on the platform to save on data egress costs. Splunk and Google Cloud did him one better. The partners were already working closely together to simplify data ingest from Google Cloud to Splunk to accelerate time-to-value for customers like Recharge. Now, instead of running a specific instance, Splunk would run natively on Google Cloud.

But the partnership meant more than just data transfer savings. With Splunk in the Google Cloud Marketplace, Recharge could use its Splunk subscription against its Google Cloud commitment. In addition, by moving their Splunk licensing from an ingestion-based payment model to a compute-based model, Recharge saw considerable financial savings without any operational change.

Benefits and Results

- Rapid and smooth scalability with Kubernetes and serverless computing
- Reproducibility and consistency for multi-cloud strategy
- Substantial savings via Committed Use discounts, an ingestion-based payment model, and Marketplace integration
- Reduced data egress costs
- Managed services free up IT team resources
- Rich performance-monitoring dashboards
- Trend and pattern analysis
- Streamlined APM and SIEM with a single solution
- Security orchestration via Splunk SOAR and Google Cloud prebuilt playbooks

> Google's focus on open-source compatibility is really the key feature for me.
>
> — Mark Hatch, Director of Infrastructure, Recharge

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Creating a secure multi-cloud future

Recharge's next step, Hatch says, is to migrate its remaining production environment to Google Cloud and build it around a serverless containerized infrastructure. Doing so, he says, will give the company the discipline to create a fully platform-agnostic structure.

"One of the initiatives that I'm looking to do is go multi-cloud," Hatch says, "and I think Google is the right place to be first to build it all out, make it cloud-agnostic and then portable. Our current push is 100% Google, and then we'll build out another platform."

Recharge is currently developing analytics capabilities with Google AI Platform and moving all of its extract/transform/load (ETL) pipelines to Google Cloud Dataflow. Hatch sees continued investment and maturity in Splunk in Recharge's future.

"We're only just now enabling Splunk Enterprise Security, and we're going to send more and more data over there," he says. That will allow the company to take advantage of multiple Google Cloud integrations with Splunk SOAR.

To develop the subscription payments solution of the future, Recharge knew it needed the cloud platform and monitoring solution of the future as well. By migrating to Google Cloud and implementing Splunk to capture and report real-time data, Recharge is well positioned for the ambitious growth plans it's set for itself.

To learn more about the ways our customers are able to accelerate time-to-value with Splunk and Google Cloud, visit https://cloud.google.com/splunk.