



Highland Capital Partners Case Study

Highland Capital Partners turns to ClearSky Data for hybrid cloud

HIGHLAND
CAPITAL PARTNERS

LOCATIONS

Headquarters in Cambridge, Mass. with locations in Palo Alto and Shanghai

EMPLOYEES

50

IT DEPARTMENT

1-10

DATA FOOTPRINT

20 TB, single data center; looking to expand and also migrate to the cloud

SOLUTION

Replacing Dell Compellent primary storage with ClearSky Data for storage, backup, and DR

SAVINGS

30%

Company Overview

Venture Capital is a challenging, complex and rewarding industry. Companies working in the field are on a mission to help entrepreneurs bring their dreams to reality by creating successful enterprises. Highland Capital Partners takes particular pride in the deep domain expertise, strategic guidance and hands-on leadership it provides to help the companies it invests in transform into industry leaders.

With a 100 percent focus on helping its companies grow, Highland must optimize efficiencies in all aspects of its business, especially in IT and storage infrastructure. It has a lean, efficient IT team it relies on to empower the company's core business.

The Challenge

Highland's Dell Compellent primary storage was coming up on its maintenance renewal, and the company wanted to take that opportunity to change the way it thought of data and IT. The company wanted a hybrid cloud solution that was scalable, didn't require a lot of manual management, and minimized its data center footprint. All these signs pointed to a hybrid cloud, managed service solution.

Highland is entrusted with extremely sensitive data that needs to be protected, both for itself and its portfolio companies. Any project, therefore, had to start with data security. They also need to act quickly, which makes high performance and on-demand access essential. Even a short hiccup in service can have a large effect on Highland's operations.

Practically, these requirements mean securely supporting all Highland's workloads, without any breaks in service. This includes a VMware environment, and production applications with strict performance demands, like Microsoft SQL Server.

This essential data also needs an airtight backup and disaster recovery solution. Getting data offsite was certainly part of the challenge, but Highland also wanted to develop a long-term disaster recovery (DR) solution that fit with its varied needs and could eliminate the need for backup of its VMs.

The Solution

As Highland's primary storage was coming to the end of its life, the company started looking for an alternate solution. It wanted to manage as little of the day-to-day functions of its apps and data as possible, and applied the same stringent process it uses to identify potential investments to select a technology solution.

After thoroughly researching the options, ClearSky Data's combination of primary storage capabilities and built-in backup and DR was the best fit. It also helped that the companies already had a relationship – Highland is a ClearSky Data investor.

The companies worked together and found that ClearSky's managed service offering for primary storage, backup and disaster recovery satisfied Highland's storage needs. Then it was just a matter of implementation.

"ClearSky talks about 'plugging in' to its service," said Rob Bemis, Vice President of Global Infrastructure, Highland Capital Partners. "The technology lives up to the terminology. Getting up and running was about as easy as a big tech implementation can be."

As Highland's existing primary, backup software and storage needs grow, the company will rely more and more on ClearSky Data's service for its IT needs.

The Outlook

With venture capital, proving success can be black and white – is a portfolio company growing, or not? Highland has seen real return on its investment, with reduced costs and IT burden.

And, Highland Capital got a front row seat to ClearSky's backup and recovery service when Amazon had an outage. ClearSky's services came back online quickly, with minimal admin effort. ClearSky support was also in constant contact to make sure Highland was back online, and getting the services it needed.

The cost-effectiveness of bundling services has also enabled Highland to eliminate multiple pieces of physical storage infrastructure, and the licenses, support and manpower they required. In this way, ClearSky has become an extension of Highland's storage team, so the company's lean IT staff is freed from the rote storage tasks that were taking up too much time.

In the future, Highland is looking to implement ClearSky more broadly, especially for DR in the cloud. In addition to its East Coast operations, the company would like to add a West Coast data center. These are tough challenges, but with a partner in ClearSky Data, Highland Capital is set up to scale on-demand for its storage needs.

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Highland is now getting more out of our IT resources, while reducing costs and gaining all the benefits of the cloud. This is an overhaul we never could have done on our own; we needed a partner, and ClearSky continues to be just that.

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Rob Bemis,
Vice President of Global Infrastructure,
Highland Capital Partners

Contact us to learn more about how ClearSky Data's managed service can help your organization stop the procurement cycle roller coaster.

clearskydata.com/contact-us