

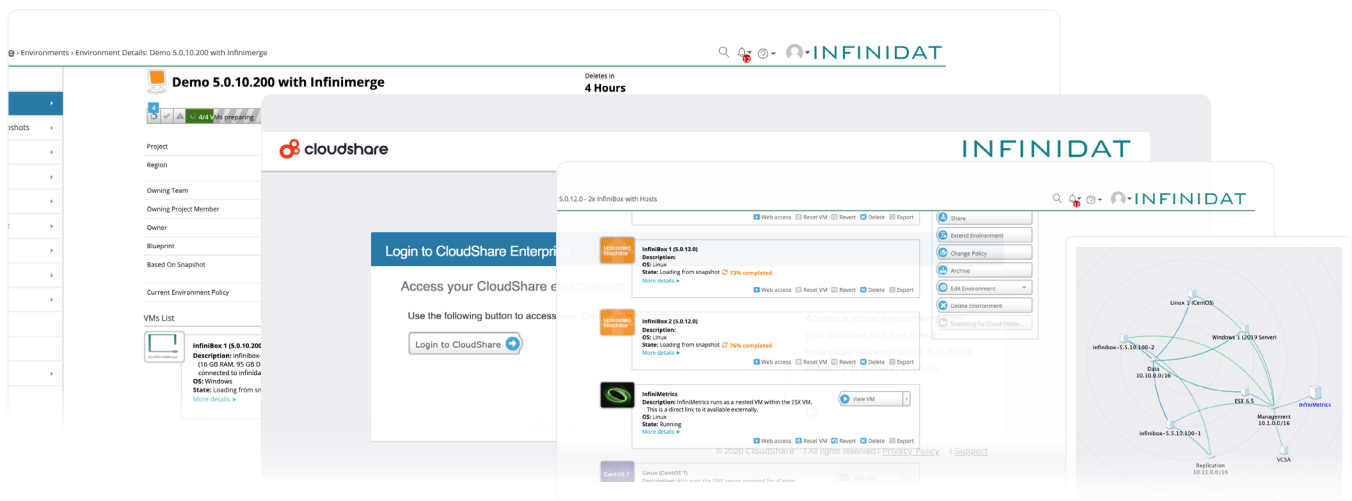
Empowering a Global Sales Force to Sell, Rather Than Set Up

Sales and Training Teams Gain Independence in a One-Click, Universal Product Version, Ready for Every Demo

Client Overview - Infinidat

Industry: Information Management/Data Storage and Backup | Headquarters: Waltham, MA

Founded in 2011 by storage industry pioneer Moshe Yanai, Infinidat helps customers empower data-driven competitive advantage at multi-petabyte scale. Infinidat's software-focused architecture, an evolution and revolution in data management design over 30 years in the making, solves the conflicting requirements of bigger, faster, and less expensive. Infinidat technology simultaneously delivers sub-millisecond latency, seven nines of availability, and hyperscale capacity with a significantly lower total cost of ownership than incumbent storage technologies.



The Challenge

Salespeople and trainers presenting demos to customers and partners were spending too much time installing and configuring the latest version of software that was constantly updated.

The Solution

CloudShare provided Infinidat with a platform that presented a single, centralized version of the latest release, was always available, and used an instantly-accessed web-based UI to access, launch and monitor user activity.

Results

The global team of customer-facing reps could now focus on their jobs rather than spending hours each day on technical configuration issues. This translated to measurable, ongoing savings.

The Challenge

Painless, Global Distribution of a Unified, Functional Demo of Frequently-Updated Software



Itai Weisman
Solution Engineering Team
Leader

“It made no difference whether the presentation was remote or in person. Preparing for it by installing a copy of the latest version was a process in itself. And because even our best channel partners – a key part of our sales strategy – are not part of our internal organization, we simply had to trust that they were doing this reliably.”

Infinidat's suite of backup and storage solutions is broad and always growing; each product offers feature sets that are also improving on an ongoing basis. As such, the company's sales force faced a significant challenge in presenting fully-functional demos of their product line, without a centralized, single representation of each product – guaranteed to be cleanly installed and updated to the latest versions. These demos were used every day by their globally distributed sales force, as well as by partners presenting and selling their products on their behalf.

Aside from sales pitches to new, uninitiated customers, every substantial update and upgrade triggered the need for presentations to educate their partners and customers about these improvements. These sessions, which sometimes lasted many days, were sometimes conducted remotely, but often involved physically arriving at the customer or partner location with a static, physical implementation to demonstrate with.

Offering access to a demo system via a functional, online infrastructure was impossible because partners (not to mention customers) would not have VPN access into the company's network. Even more challenging was the process of setting up these demonstrations. Each demo would require the salesperson to install a clean copy of the software, configure it correctly, and make sure that no data was left over from the previous usage. Often, this meant consulting with Infinidat's IT department to troubleshoot the setups. In short, the entire process took a significant chunk of time from the sales process and training sessions.

As Itai Weisman, Solution Engineering Team Leader at Infinidat, explained, “Our key corporate values are offering customers scalable storage and backup solutions with no limitations on performance or capacity. Ironically, we really didn't have those advantages leveraged in our own sales tools. Configuring, scaling and running demos took significant back-office effort that chipped away from the time we had to sell.”

The Solution

One Platform for: One Update, One Version.
One User Experience.



Infinidat's team explored their options, briefly tried an alternative product, and finally discovered that CloudShare's paradigm offered a comprehensive solution with a series of benefits that address each of their challenges.

First and foremost, CloudShare's platform is designed around the principle of unified, templated, virtual labs that a sales rep or trainer can clone in just a few clicks. "Knowing that, at this very moment, every single demo being run around the world starts from a single 'squeaky clean' blueprint that we control and update gives us peace of mind," explains Weisman.

Creating identical copies of a virtual lab means that each presentation experience is completely clean and free of remnants from previous demos. And, seeing as the platform is cloud-based and completely scalable, there is no limit to the number of concurrent demos the team can run. With dozens of sales reps around the globe doing their jobs and without the need to coordinate their schedules – no one demo is ever going to impact another. Similarly, it requires no additional effort or strategy to plan a training session for one participant, eight participants, 20, or 50.

Weisman adds: "CloudShare's approach also completely relieves us of the need to manage access and authentication; they are essentially working in a virtual 'glass box,' so all we do is send them an invitation to a particular pre-configured virtual lab."

"One of the most intriguing advantages that we have discovered," explains Weisman, "is that by definition, our partners and customers are fairly technical and really don't need that much handholding; many of them actually require only a brief intro to the user interface and features and prefer to conclude the session with us and then go on to work with the system themselves." With CloudShare, this experience is made possible; users can explore at their own pace and on their own schedule.

“For the first time, we know that every customer is seeing the same version of a given product and every partner is representing us in a completely consistent and accurate manner. There's nothing a salesperson dreads more than surprises during a demo. With our CloudShare virtual labs, there are no variables – just a unified experience.”

Itai Weisman

Solution Engineering Team
Leader

Results

Guaranteed Consistency, Controlled Costs, and Time Saved at Every Step



Weisman considers his organization's decision to adopt the CloudShare platform as a powerful shift to an all-in-one self-service model: A single, comprehensive tool not only trims hours each day, but also eliminates a sales rep's reliance on the IT department for setup and troubleshooting.

"Our in-house sales reps, as well as our partners, feel as if they are now completely independent and thereby more productive, as they schedule each interaction. In the past, reps would schedule a demo for a future date, giving them time to set up the infrastructure, either online or on physical hardware, which they would bring to an in-person demo. Now, they simply schedule an engagement and can be instantly online with a fully functional implementation to share, work with – and as a real game-changer – leave behind for the customer to experiment with."

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Itai Weisman
Solution Engineering Team
Leader



Flexible pricing model

The CloudShare pricing model also helps control costs. Whereas they paid for a previous product on a per-user/per-month basis, CloudShare charges only for actual usage. As such, when a customer or partner ceases to use their lab environment to explore the product on their own schedule, the system automatically freezes the account until it is activated again, which simultaneously stops the charges on the account. Accounts can also be pre-configured with a time limit for use. These options mean that the solution is not only technically scalable but the costs associated with using it are directly aligned with actual usage.



Full visibility and control

CloudShare helps Itai's team gauge levels of third-party engagement as well. Using CloudShare's built-in dashboards and analytics, they can now discover which customers have taken them up on the offer to give their products a realistic, simulated test drive. "If they haven't," explains Weisman, "it's an excellent trigger for us to follow up and ask if they need any more information. Similarly, these analytics give us an indication of which of our partners are the most active, running the most demos and which may need some more support, from our team to strengthen their efforts in this area. This is an advantage that we never would have considered in the past. It gives us a very concrete way to accelerate sales and pinpoint weaknesses in our tactics or the activities of specific salespeople or partners."



The COVID-19 challenge

With the COVID-19 pandemic forcing all demonstrations into a remote framework, it has become more critical than ever for the experience to be quick, fluid, and simple for first-time users.

"Leaving a potential customer on his own – whether ours or one of our partners' – to try out our products online is critical to the sales process and any barrier can translate to possible loss of revenue," says Weisman. "With CloudShare, we have virtually eliminated this barrier. If the prospect is technical enough to be discussing enterprise backup solutions, he or she is more than capable of easily managing the user-friendly process on their own, once we have handed over control of their virtual implementation."

At the end of the day...



Our company's DNA drives four key priorities in our products: scalability, agility, reliability, and flexibility. It's what we promise our customers throughout our product line and it's the reason we have felt an incredible synergy with CloudShare. Precisely these values and features, found in their platform, empower us to get more done, more quickly, with the confidence to know that partners are consistently presenting our story empowered by these same tools."

Itai Weisman

Solution Engineering Team Leader

About CloudShare

The world's easiest-to-use virtual labs for software training, sales demos and POCs

CloudShare provides specialized solutions designed to meet a wide variety of business needs including lab environments for demos and POCs, virtual training, and development and testing. All CloudShare environments are completely customizable and offer on-demand access to infrastructure resources such as servers, storage, networking, and software.

CloudShare customers include many leading software and cybersecurity companies such as Palo Alto Networks, Fortinet, Atlassian, ForgeRock, Salesforce, and Check Point Software Technologies.

To learn more about how CloudShare's advanced lab solutions can benefit your business, visit www.cloudshare.com

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