

The Seattle Times Case Study: Cloud Transformation

By Maddi Merrill

“1Strategy helped us understand our usage needs and subsequently, we’ve purchased reserved instances across the gamut of services and that appears to save us in the neighborhood of 60%; which is awesome!” – Carey Butler, CTO at The Seattle Times

Customer Profile

[The Seattle Times](#) is a news media company serving Seattle, Washington and the Pacific Northwest. [Seattletimes.com](#) attracts nearly 7 million unique visitors a month, making it the biggest local digital network in the region. The Seattle Times print edition is the second largest newspaper on the West Coast, setting the news agenda for Seattle and the region. Founded in 1896, The Seattle Times remains a family-owned business deeply rooted in the community and committed to principled, investigative news coverage. The Seattle Times is the winner of 10 Pulitzer Prizes, journalism’s highest honor, and two prestigious Online Journalism Awards for its digital news coverage.

Partner Profile

1Strategy is an Amazon Web Services (AWS) Advanced Consulting Partner, with experts deploying workloads to AWS since 2007. They specialize in helping customers migrate workloads to AWS, Big Data, DevOps transformations, CI/CD, and automation. 1Strategy provides an On Demand, On the Spot, or On Reserve consulting services by offering the right help at the right time, with scalable services to meet your needs. 1Strategy partners with customers to design scalable, automated, and maintainable AWS solutions while offering and including the support and training to maintain those solutions over time.

The Challenge

The Seattle Times started to migrate [seattletimes.com](#) to AWS in August 2015. Their accelerated deployment and migration to AWS brought upon a new challenge: they moved to the cloud but needed help optimizing and transforming their cloud environment. They needed a layered security model and automated deployments for their application stack.

The Seattle Times' goals were to: (1) transform their cloud environment to become cloud-native, (2) increase security of the core AWS services and layers through full use of the AWS security feature set, (3) use automation throughout their stack, and (4) reduce costs.

Additionally, by leveraging services like Lambda and API Gateway, the Seattle Times made better use of their existing computing budget for future innovation on the AWS platform.

Why Amazon Web Services

The Seattle Times has started to leverage additional AWS services like Lambda for image re-sizing and are investigating API Gateway and other AWS services. They originally selected the AWS platform for the value added by autoscaling and the elastic nature of AWS. Because the seattletimes.com workload is very spiky in nature, the team at The Seattle Times felt AWS was a preferred platform when they were evaluating other cloud service providers.

“It is my hope that we will be able to engage with 1Strategy in the future, both for training purposes but also for future product initiatives,” said Anita Nesbitt, Software Engineering Manager, The Seattle Times. “Indeed, I’m confident that CEO Rich Uhl and 1Strategy will continue to be a valued partner to both Amazon Web Services and The Seattle Times.”

Solution and Benefits: Turning to 1Strategy

The Seattle Times' rapid pace of adoption so early in their journey to the Amazon cloud led them to 1Strategy. Once they had migrated, they recognized that they were not running in a cost-optimized way, and needed help transforming their processes to take advantage of the AWS ecosystem. 1Strategy helped The Seattle Times in their cost-optimization efforts by showing them a more economical approach while eliminating unneeded costs. At the same time, 1Strategy codified their manual processes, enforcing compliance dynamically and at scale. In the first hour with 1Strategy, they were able to identify cost reductions of over 15%.

1Strategy built CloudFormation templates to automate the creation of VPCs, subnets, Security Groups, ELBs, and Autoscaling groups. These templates combined with the efforts of the DevOps lead are enhancing the security and automation of their platform, moving them towards their goal of blue/green deployments.

“1Strategy has helped us greatly improve our security and deployment positions on AWS. They helped us to quickly distill and codify the various loose ends remaining after cloud launch of seattletimes.com,” said Jesse Lee, DevOps Engineer at The Seattle Times.

Additional cost savings were identified and implemented by 1Strategy, as well. They worked to determine the right instance types to right-size The Seattle Times' infrastructure and adjusted their auto-scaling policies to be more efficient. The team then automated the starting and stopping of non-production resources during off hours. These efforts resulted in a 15% monthly cost savings since engaging with 1Strategy.

Learn More

- For more information about how 1Strategy can assist your company develop AWS solutions, secure systems, and custom training, visit [1Strategy.com](https://1strategy.com).