

CASE STUDY

RateSetter Optimizes Performance with Tintri IntelliFlash™

IntelliFlash



Based in London, United Kingdom, RateSetter launched in 2010 to give people an opportunity to earn more on their money by enabling them to lend directly. This opened a new investment class that fills the gap for investors between the low returns of cash and the high volatility of shares. RateSetter has originated £3.2bn of loans to individuals and businesses across the UK and generated £130m in interest for its 80,000 investors.

RateSetter has also been honored with the prestigious Queen's Award for Enterprise for excellence in innovation. This is on top of its robust lending policies, sound lending decisions and active management of the loan portfolio. The result is that, to date, every RateSetter investor has received all the interest and capital that they expected. Past performance is not a guarantee for the future, but RateSetter's eight-year record of accomplishment speaks for itself.

The Challenge: Needed Better Performance at Lower Cost

Alastair Jones, Director of IT Operations at RateSetter, knew that their costs were too high for the performance they were getting from their legacy systems. They were not getting I/O clock cycles per pound value out of data processing and Azure. "SQL Enterprise, which is what we needed to use both for our data warehousing and for our HA/DR solutions, is the point at which Azure becomes not cost effective. It's simply too expensive," said Jones.

The initiative to search for a better solution became known as 'Project Caffeine.' The driving objective for the project was to spend money more effectively, with 'more bang for the buck' so to speak. They knew that there would be a large CapEx outlay to get the project off the ground, but expected a large ROI as well, in 2 ½ years.

Having come from a SaaS background in a previous job, Jones knew that they could get far more performance for far less cash. "A lot of that kit was home brewed, it was second hand, a lot of it was reconditioned, and I ran that platform when we had a 950% user increase in the 7 years that I was there," he explained.

They conducted numerous vendor evaluations for data center, connectivity, and storage. Jones had conversations with other storage vendors, then chose Tintri IntelliFlash because it was the best product for them based on their internal evaluations and the recommendation of storage experts at CNS (Cognitive Network Solutions), a service provider based in Stourbridge. Jones considers CNS a partner in that they are extremely knowledgeable, helpful and supportive. He described working with them as "a great customer service experience."

The Solution: IntelliFlash N-Series, High Performance NVMe Storage

Jones and his team had certain specifications for the new solution, and they spent a lot of time baselining the performance. They worked closely with the Tintri IntelliFlash team and were able to determine performance results with remarkable precision.

Jones outlined the evaluation process, "Through an analysis that was both broad and deep we knew what we needed to achieve. The Tintri IntelliFlash solution was an order of magnitude better than their competitors."

"The cost of some of the competitors was high, relative to the cost of IntelliFlash," he continues. Jones went on to explain their decision to go with IntelliFlash. "The thing that sold us was the quality and the level of the analytics from IntelliFlash. I spoke to several people and the analysis, the demonstration of how things would improve was far better than anyone else's. Far better. This technology was going to make our lives better." He added that there were bells and whistles in the competitors' offerings that came standard with IntelliFlash.

Challenges

- Operating expenses were too high relative to performance

Solution

- IntelliFlash N-Series, High Performance NVMe Storage

Results

- Dramatically improved performance and cost efficiency
- 30% to 60% faster performance
- More responsive end-user experience
- Ability to adapt to spikes and abnormalities in the banking sector
- System metrics show that storage utilization is still nowhere near full capacity



The Results: Doing 'Everything' Twice as Fast

Jones mentions that they are on track for the 2 ½ year ROI, and on track to save a significant amount of money across their new platform in its entirety. He describes the IntelliFlash experience: "It was great, it was collaborative, it was communicative. We felt looked after, in-person and in the back office, helping us through the process; it was fantastic."

The IT team at RateSetter is now seeing a 30% to 60% performance improvement on the platform depending on the workload. The user experience for members is more dynamic and responsive, with faster performance. Jones cites a 25% to 50% faster response time while navigating around the site. Overnight runs are 10% to 25% faster, again depending on the workload. "Everything is faster, everything is better, best case 60%, worst case 25% speed improvement on everything," says Jones.

These improvements enable them to better adapt to spikes and abnormalities in the banking sector. For example, Easter and Christmas have historically been times of great consternation for the IT team because they must get a great deal of processing done within a finite period of time. It was always stressful not knowing if it was going to be completed.

They do not have those problems anymore. They are spending less time firefighting and troubleshooting performance issues. Life is easier and less stressful because there is certainty now that things are going to work, and that they are going to finish on time.

With this significant improvement in speed and with the hardware bottleneck removed, there is scope to improve the performance even further. They now have the performance headroom on the storage to easily accommodate future growth, all delivered with significant cost savings compared to their former cloud platform.

Jones summarizes the results they've seen from implementing Tintri IntelliFlash: "So, it's possible at the end of the day, once development teams bring their version of Project Caffeine to fruition, that we're going to be doing everything twice as fast, up to 80 or 90% improvement for everything, all the time, across the platform. And you know a significant percentage of that, at least half of that, is because of the IntelliFlash hardware that now sits in the heart of the entire enterprise. It's fantastic. It's great, it's brilliant."

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*Alastair Jones, Director of IT Operations,
RateSetter*

Experience Different! For more information on how IntelliFlash can turbo-charge your business success through a simple, Intelligent Infrastructure, visit tintri.com/intelliflash