



rackspace

Customer Case Study – Industrial Manufacturing

Cole-Parmer grows quickly through global acquisitions

Rackspace helps Cole-Parmer transform IT through integration of disparate IT systems.

Our customer

Since 1955, Cole-Parmer has been a leading global source of laboratory and industrial fluid handling products, instrumentation, equipment and supplies for companies in the fields of temperature measurement and control, control and electrochemistry.

The obstacles they faced

Cole-Parmer pursued a global growth strategy centered on acquisitions that resulted the need to rapidly consolidate and integrate disparate IT systems while implementing cloud-based technologies to support future acquisitions.


How we helped

Managed Hosting – Dedicated Servers, Infrastructure; Productivity and Collaboration – Microsoft® Office 365, SharePoint/Lync Admin, Skype for Business; Professional Services - Application Services/DevOps - Oracle ERP; Virtualization – VMware®; Email – Microsoft® Exchange®; Security

What we achieved together

In less than six months, Rackspace helped architect a PCI-compliant solution, developed a transition plan and began to execute on the build-out and migration to a new, highly secure IT infrastructure that accommodates additional growth.

 **Cole-Parmer**



“Rackspace helped us by delivering its service on-time and under-budget.”

Bill Berry
VP of Information
Technology, Cole-Parmer

Cole-Parmer

Since 1955, Cole-Parmer has been a leading global source of laboratory and industrial products, instrumentation, equipment and supplies, with deep expertise in the fields of temperature measurement and control, electrochemistry and fluid handling.

After being divested in 2014, Cole-Parmer had a very brief window to migrate all its systems out of its parent company’s data centers and deploy on entirely new infrastructure. “I was looking for a partner that was going to be flexible, enough, knowledgeable enough and aggressive enough to help us meet that

timeframe,” said Bill Berry, VP of Information Technology at Cole-Parmer.

In the end, it chose Rackspace for its agility, breadth of portfolio and unbiased expertise. “Rackspace helped us by delivering its service on-time and under-budget.”

Supporting aggressive acquisition-based growth

After being divested, Cole-Parmer pursued a growth strategy centered on acquisitions. According to Berry, quickly consolidating the various systems of the new companies Cole-Parmer acquired (e.g., networking, email

and Identity and Access Management) posed significant challenges.

But it was an absolutely critical part of ensuring that Cole-Parmer could continue to operate as a single unified, collective business while bringing the newly acquired businesses’ products to the marketplace. The broad technical expertise offered by Rackspace specialists proved invaluable.

“This wasn’t easily done,” said Berry. “There’s a lot of behind-the-scenes work. Infrastructure, phone systems, networks, emails, and then the core ERPs ... It’s been really helpful to have Rackspace, letting us focus on the business aspect and how we integrate the products and the people in

those acquisitions. And we really leverage Rackspace to help us get all the technical and the systems integration and all the infrastructure working well together.”

When Cole-Parmer acquires a new business, Rackspace meets with that company’s technology leaders to understand its unique IT systems, applications and infrastructure. “Rackspace knows our standards,” explained Berry. “They help support our standards, but the real trick is meeting with the acquired businesses and quickly figuring out how we’re going to assimilate them into our standards.”

The right expertise for the job

Pete Hummel, Manager of infrastructure at Cole-Parmer, reiterated the massive scale of the acquisitions challenge. “We went from 350 people to well over a thousand,” he said. “It was [a pace of acquisitions and migrations] that I had never done before.”

“Every one of these acquisitions comes with something different that I’ve never tackled before. But somewhere in the Rackspace team, somebody has.”

Pete Hummel :: Manager of Infrastructure, Cole-Parmer

In addition to experienced project managers, networking teams and Windows experts, Rackspace also offered access to app-specific expertise in managing Microsoft® Office 365. “Every one of these acquisitions comes with something different that I’ve never tackled before,” said Berry. “But somewhere in the Rackspace team, somebody has. Now we have a plan that we go through every time, and everybody knows what they’re doing...it makes my job a whole lot easier.”

Similarly, Cole-Parmer relies on Rackspace to help ensure their environment is secure and PCI-compliant, through services such as penetration testing. “It’s been really helpful to partner with Rackspace because they have all these areas of skillsets, and we call on them as we need,” explained Berry.

Offloading infrastructure and ERP management to focus on app development

In addition to migrations and integration, Cole-Parmer also relies on Rackspace to manage the day-to-day operational burden for key mission-critical apps such as enterprise resource planning (ERP) apps. These apps “have to keep running or you don’t get products out, you don’t make money and you’re not servicing your customers,” said Berry.

Entrusting Rackspace with the management of infrastructure and ERP systems means the Cole-Parmer IT team can stay focused on application and product development. It knows that advice and critical services are always available. “We love that the help desk is 24 hours,” said Berry.

“So my team that’s doing the application development and the web development can come in fresh every morning even though there might have been an operational problem in the middle of the night...that’s so very helpful for us, to just continue to focus on enhancing our applications and our website rather taking a lot of that time and just operating [infrastructure].”

Making the right technology decisions for the future

As Cole-Parmer continues to grow, it has also turned to Rackspace for unbiased advice and expertise on the cloud technologies that will best support its unique requirements in the future.

“We’ve been struggling to get an apples to apples comparison [between AWS and Microsoft® Azure®],” explained Berry. “And

that’s where I think Rackspace comes in...it truly understands our needs and what fits.”

Rackspace’s experience optimizing clouds for others has really been a benefit for Cole-Palmer, Hummel says. “We can’t really know, for instance, the utilization requirements. But it’s something that Rackspace has done before. Their experts are there to help us out and to tell us, after an evaluation, exactly how things will change, and what the differences will be.”

“It’s really helpful to have a partner that has the experience and can bring us along to make sure that we minimize the disruption of those transformational activities from a business perspective, making sure that the business is comfortable with what we’re going to do, as well as helping the internal IT staff have the knowhow to implement it as effectively as possible,” said Berry. “This is not the first time that Rackspace has done these things.”

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Bill Berry :: VP of Information Technology, Cole-Parmer

About Rackspace

At Rackspace, we accelerate the value of the cloud during every phase of digital transformation. By managing apps, data, security and multiple clouds, we are the best choice to help customers get to the cloud, innovate with new technologies and maximize their IT investments. As a recognized Gartner Magic Quadrant leader, we are uniquely positioned to close the gap between the complex reality of today and the promise of tomorrow. Passionate about customer success, we provide unbiased expertise, based on proven results, across all the leading technologies. And across every interaction worldwide, we deliver Fanatical Experience™ — the best customer service experience in the industry. Rackspace has been honored by Fortune, Forbes, Glassdoor and others as one of the best places to work.

Learn more at www.rackspace.com or call **1-800-961-2888**.

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March 1, 2019 / Rackspace-Case-Study-Cole-Parmer-DED-10027