

For Punchbowl, the holiday party season means big business—and over a million registered users

Many web entrepreneurs associate the holiday season with shopping, but one clever startup has found a niche in that other wintry rite: parties.



Punchbowl.com is the one-stop site that helps smart moms and savvy professionals plan a party from start to finish. Punchbowl offers a modern, effortless way to plan a celebration with party-planning features including customizable digital invitations, potluck organization, personalized favors, and local vendor search. Punchbowl is taking parties well beyond the online invite, and offering logical services that party-planners need.

Over the last year, Punchbowl has grown significantly. They've built a product that their customers love to use, established several key partnerships, and have garnered the support of key industry executives whom they've added to their board. They also recently launched their new Digital Invitation Studio, a collection of customizable online invitations, envelopes, postage, and decorative embellishments for events and celebrations.

But all this success was predicated on having the right hosting solution. Punchbowl's first hosting solution wasn't flexible enough to meet their needs. "As a fast-growing startup, we're very agile and require a hosting solution that gives us flexibility to make changes quickly and at little or no additional cost," says Blake Carlson, Chief Architect, Punchbowl.

In their previous set-up, Punchbowl had a static hosting configuration that required a time-consuming, costly process to make changes. "We wanted something that was more on-demand and could grow with us," says Carlson. "We really like the cloud solution because it's self-service and allows us the flexibility to make changes."

To get on the cloud, Punchbowl turned to Rackspace. "We chose Rackspace because we were already an existing customer for dedicated hosting. Our customer support experience was positive so we felt comfortable using The Rackspace Cloud—we knew Rackspace would be responsive to our individual needs."

Punchbowl has been very happy with their hosting solution from Rackspace, and they complement the Cloud's scalability and quick deployment with offerings from Rackspace dedicated hosting. "We use Rackspace Cloud Servers for application servers, databases and other backend processing and internal applications," says Carlson. "We also use dedicated hosting for our various outgoing email needs and other email applications."

Thanks to the flexibility and 100% uptime of The Rackspace Cloud, Punchbowl is gearing up for the holiday season with confidence and focus. "We have been able to grow our business as we've needed while keeping hosting costs stable," Carlson says.

Punchbowl now counts more than one million registered users, and they're continuing to grow rapidly. In addition to powering Punchbowl.com, they also license their technology to leading retailers such as Oriental Trading Company and 1-800-FLOWERS.

"There are several cloud providers available but we chose Rackspace because they have a proven track record as a leader in cloud hosting," says Carlson. "Our customer experience has also been extremely positive. The Rackspace reputation combined with outstanding customer support makes Rackspace one of the best options for cloud hosting."