

RACKSPACE FANATICAL SUPPORT HELPS ITALKI DISRUPT LANGUAGE LEARNING

BUSINESS

Italki is the leading online marketplace for language teachers, reaching over 1.5 million students and 3,000 teachers around the world.

CHALLENGES

As italki expanded, it wanted a hosting company that was just as globally minded as itself.

SOLUTION

Rackspace Managed Hosting

OUTCOME

Italki is free to concentrate on improving its products while Rackspace manages its infrastructure.



You're learning Mandarin and you live in the U.S. Your teacher, with whom you study for an hour every week, is based in Beijing. How did you find each other? Through italki, an educational technology website that is bringing language learning online.

"We can always count on Rackspace when we need them."

JOE LAMBERT :: TECHNICAL DIRECTOR, ITALKI

The platform connects foreign language learners with online teachers and native-speaking language partners. People who want to learn a language can search the site for a freelance teacher and then schedule and pay for language lessons. Teachers on the italki platform create profiles and decide how much to charge; italki charges a 15 percent commission on top of the teacher's fee. After their personalized lesson, which mostly takes place via Skype, students rate teachers, and this feedback builds their reputation on the site.

Officially registered in Hong Kong, with an office in Shanghai, italki was founded by Kevin Chen and Yongyue Jiang in 2007. The company now has millions of users and more than 3,000 teachers worldwide.

THE HUNT FOR A HOST

As a small startup in Shanghai, italki needed the most affordable hosting partner it could find. After a short period using a Chinese provider, it moved to a U.S.-based company for a time. However, as italki's customer base went global, it realized it needed a partner with similar global reach to help it achieve its goal of becoming the world's biggest language learning platform.

A SIMPATICO RELATIONSHIP

The two companies worked in sync from the start. "We use quite a few of Rackspace's services," says Joe Lambert, italki's technical

director. Almost all of italki's infrastructure is based on Rackspace: "We have dedicated servers for our database; we use cloud servers for application layers; and we use cloud files when we are starting with big data."

The italki team sees Rackspace as a vital part of its business. "Every year, italki has been growing at triple digits in transactions and in students. And it is due in part to the strong technical support from Rackspace," says Kevin Chen. The Rackspace cloud platform allows italki to scale very easily and quickly to support its growing customer base. With Rackspace, italki gets the experience, the support and the knowledge that it might not necessarily have as a small company. "We rely on Rackspace's experience to really help us focus on developing new products, as we don't have to worry about managing our infrastructure or dealing with the big problems," says Lambert. The reliability and performance that italki gets from Rackspace's services help it deliver a consistent experience for its global audience.

"Fanatical Support is not just about helping us solve immediate problems. They are always looking towards the future, helping us to look at problems or solve problems we might not even have seen yet."

JOE LAMBERT :: TECHNICAL DIRECTOR, ITALKI

BUILDING A STRONGER FUTURE

The team at italki believes that the future for its business is looking positive, as it can focus on rolling out new products without having to concentrate on infrastructure issues. "For us at italki, Rackspace's Fanatical Support is not just about helping us solve the immediate problem. They are always looking at the future and helping us address problems we might not even have seen yet," says Lambert. "Fanatical Support means that we can always count on them when

we need them." When Kevin Chen is asked whether he would recommend Rackspace, he offers an emphatic yes: "I would totally recommend Rackspace to any startup that is looking for a global solution."

ABOUT RACKSPACE

Rackspace, the #1 managed cloud company, helps businesses tap the power of cloud computing without the complexity and cost of managing it on their own. Rackspace engineers deliver specialized expertise, easy-to-use tools, and Fanatical Support® for leading technologies developed by AWS, Google, Microsoft, OpenStack, VMware and others. The company serves customers in 150 countries, including more than half of the FORTUNE 100. Rackspace is a leader in the 2017 Gartner Magic Quadrant for Public Cloud Infrastructure Managed Service Providers, Worldwide, and has been honored by Fortune, Forbes and others as one of the best companies to work for.

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

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