



# CASE STUDY: RENT-A-CENTER

## COST EFFECTIVE CLOUD SECURITY

# RENT-A-CENTER'S CLOUD-FIRST APPROACH ON AWS

Using AWS Marketplace, Rent-A-Center adopted Alert Logic Professional as a service to reduce management overhead, simplify regulatory compliance, and gain the freedom to innovate rapidly while protecting data. Rent-A-Center operates more than 3,000 stores in the United States, Mexico, and Canada, offering name-brand furniture, electronics, appliances, and computers through easy, affordable rent-to-own agreements. Rent-A-Center uses Alert Logic from AWS Marketplace for complete protection across its AWS environment, including advanced threat detection, monitoring, and alerting, fully managed 24/7 by security experts.

## THE CHALLENGE

The retail environment has become increasingly challenging in recent years with the acceleration of digital technology and ecommerce. "There's a short window for competitive advantage," says Gary Sprague, senior information security manager at Rent-A-Center. "There's always pressure to move faster, cut costs, and deliver better customer experiences."

Technology underpins virtually all of Rent-A-Center's operations, from point-of-sale terminals to in-store displays to e-commerce, yet they strive to maintain a lean IT team. That made cloud services an attractive option.



## ABOUT

Rent-A-Center offers brand-name, rent-to-own furniture in more than 3,000 stores across the United States, Canada, and Mexico. No-cost repairs and a no-credit path to ownership deliver a unique customer experience.

## SOLUTIONS

### ALERT LOGIC® PROFESSIONAL

An integrated suite of intrusion detection, vulnerability scanning and log management for the cloud, on-premises, hosted, and hybrid infrastructures.



"We don't have a huge IT staff, and we needed ways to speed up delivery and improve service in our stores," says Sprague. "Using the cloud had the potential to increase our efficiency and enable us to continue growing without opening our own physical data centers across the country."

However, Rent-A-Center couldn't afford to ignore security when adopting cloud services. As a public company, it is governed by strict Sarbanes-Oxley security and privacy requirements. And, because it takes credit card payments, it must adhere to the Payment Card Industry Data Security Standard (PCI-DSS). "We're a PCI-DSS Level 1 merchant, meaning we process more than 6 million card transactions per year," says Sprague. "If we have a security incident, it could put us in the news—and not in a good way."

Prior to adopting a cloud-first approach, Rent-A-Center partnered with Alert Logic for 24/7 incident management. "Alert Logic is a managed service that identifies which security issues need our attention," says Sprague. "They ensure that we're spending our time on issues that matter so we can use our time wisely and manage genuine security issues effectively." Rent-A-Center wanted to continue getting this high level of security assurance after moving to the cloud.

## WHY AMAZON WEB SERVICES

Rent-A-Center chose to move its IT platform to Amazon Web Services (AWS) to achieve the agility it needed to continue innovating and growing. "Using AWS, we were able to get out of the business of maintaining our own data centers," says Sprague. "We no longer have to worry about keeping networking up to date, managing power and cooling systems, and ensuring disaster recovery and business continuity."

While AWS provided a high level of platform-level security and compliance capabilities, Rent-A-Center wanted to continue using a managed security service to reduce the cost and management overhead of protecting applications, devices, and data, and to minimize risk as it moved to a more agile development approach. Rent-A-Center discovered that Alert Logic was available on AWS through the AWS Marketplace, an online store that helps organizations find, buy, and use software and services on AWS. The company quickly decided to adopt Alert Logic in the cloud based on past positive experiences.

Alert Logic on AWS is designed for the cloud, empowering Rent-A-Center with advanced threat analytics, detection, and alerting across its applications and services. Using full-packet inspection within the AWS environment, it uniquely protects against threats that proliferate inside an organization's cloud environment as well as attacks coming from outside.

It also helps the company stay on top of what's going on in a fast-moving environment "Along with the Alert Logic services we were already using on-premises, we now subscribe to Alert Logic Professional, which provides a graphical view of what's going on in our AWS cloud," says Sprague. "With multiple IT and business groups on AWS, we need to be able to understand what they're doing and where our data resides. Using Alert Logic, we can see if someone has inadvertently moved something into the cloud that shouldn't be there."

## THE BENEFITS

The increased visibility from Alert Logic and AWS cloud management tools gives Rent-A-Center's IT staff peace of mind. "You might think you're safer on-premises managing things yourself, but it can actually be harder to know what's going on," says Sprague. "When you're in the cloud and the tools are designed to show you what's most important, you can be more proactive."

***"USING ALERT LOGIC ON AWS MARKETPLACE PROVIDES COST-EFFECTIVE, 24/7 SECURITY COVERAGE OF OUR ENTIRE ENVIRONMENT, THE EQUIVALENT OF SIX FULL-TIME SECURITY EMPLOYEES. THOSE RESOURCES CAN NOW BE USED TO CREATE BETTER SERVICES AND EXPERIENCES."***

- Gary Sprague, Senior Information Security Manager, Rent-A-Center

Using AWS and Alert Logic has enabled Rent-A-Center to transition to a cloud-first approach. "When we upgrade applications, we migrate them to the cloud," says Sprague. "if that's not possible, we shift to a different solution that works in AWS. We definitely won't be building out any more data centers."

Alert Logic offers security expertise in addition to advanced security technology. "Using Alert Logic on AWS Marketplace provides cost-effective, 24/7 security coverage of our entire environment, the equivalent of six full-time security employees," says Sprague. "Those resources can now be used to create better services and experiences." Rent-A-Center has leveraged AWS Marketplace extensively during its transition to the cloud. "Using AWS Marketplace, we could verify which tools had a cloud presence," says Sprague. "That made it easier to plan our migration." Terry Kraft, senior manager of customer advocacy at Alert Logic, points to a distinctive synergy among the three companies as a driver of the successful relationship. "Rent-A-Center, Alert Logic, and AWS all have to continuously prove ourselves to our customers," she says. "It's a natural fit, and we look forward to helping Rent-A-Center keep innovating securely in the cloud."

Sprague agrees, saying, "Using AWS, the AWS Marketplace, and Alert Logic gives us the efficiency and agility to help us maintain our competitive advantage and deliver the best customer and employee experiences possible."

## LEARN MORE

Learn more about [the breadth of cloud solutions available on AWS Marketplace](#).