"Liquid Web's Redundant Bare Metal Servers Enabled Pet-Sitting SaaS to Add Features Easily and Compete" — Time To Pet

INDUSTRY

Computer Software

PRODUCTS

High Availability Linux Servers with cPanel
VPS Hosting
Security Add-Ons
Acronis Cyber Backups
Intrusion Detection System

PAIN POINTS

As Time To Pet expanded, the company needed new solutions. Their previous hosting provider, Rackspace, wasn't meeting their shifting needs and was seeking large prepayments and long contracts that did not work with Time To Pet's self-funded business model. Linode and DigitalOcean with third-party management weren't a good fit, either. Time To Pet needed a redundant bare metal solution with management and support. They needed a partner they could grow with.

HOW LIQUID WEB HELPED

The Most Helpful Humans in Hosting® offered peace of mind through fully managed hosting services, allowing Time To Pet's co-owners to focus on expanding their business. In addition, reliable infrastructure helped build brand equity due to data and service availability for Time To Pet customers, and redundant infrastructure and database upgrades provided the ability to pivot their offering and add valuable features during the pandemic.

Time To Pet emerged from a need. In 2014, Mike Grenier and his wife owned a pet-sitting business and were searching for high-quality and reliable software to streamline their business. It needed to be easy to use with features that would simplify management. However, the software choices they found did not meet their needs.

Engineer Kyle Thielk reached out to the couple to test his software, and Thielk and Grenier soon partnered to co-found Time To Pet. Now, the Austin, Texas-based company is one of the top-rated pet-sitting and dog-walking SaaS offerings on the market.
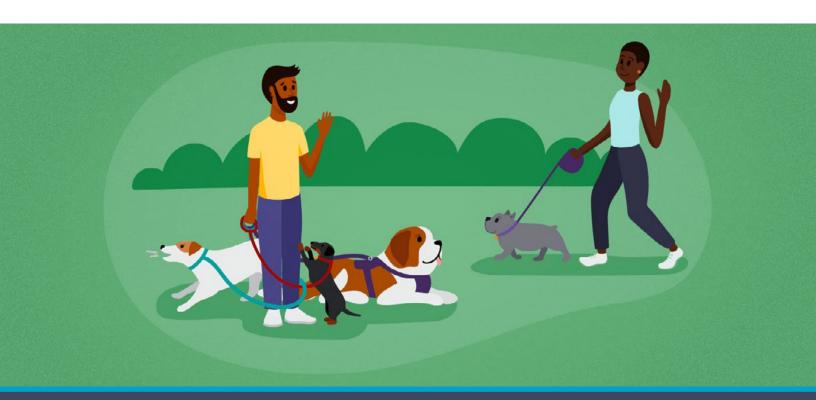
Time To Pet is an **all-in-one software offering for pet-sitting and dog-walking businesses** for client scheduling, invoicing, applications, payments, and a pet parent tipping system to boot. Time To Pet's software replaces setups using Google Calendar and QuickBooks, making customer care more straightforward for the 2,500 pet-sitting businesses that Time To Pet supports.

Expansion Required Better Support

As Time To Pet grew, it became clear that their expanding client base and scaling features for their SaaS would necessitate infrastructure changes.

Rackspace, Time To Pet's cloud provider at that time, changed its business model to require larger prepayments and longer contracts. This simply didn't work with Time To Pet's self-funded model.

Eager for a provider that met their needs, Time To Pet tried using unmanaged hosts Linode and DigitalOcean along with third-party management services, and quickly found this wasn't a fit either. They needed a true managed hosting partner.

The Search for Managed Hosting

Time To Pet's primary requirements from a provider were **fully managed hosting, reliable hardware, and availability**.

Fully Managed

Time To Pet required a true partner that would handle their infrastructure for them so they could focus on building their software. In addition, the co-owners were looking for a partner that delivered on promised guarantees and provided peace of mind. In other words, they needed someone they could fully trust.

Reliable Hardware

With linear and predictable business growth, a bare metal server made sense. Having a dedicated server meant that they could over-provision to be sure to meet demands.

Availability

Time To Pet's customers provided pet-sitting services while people traveled, which fell on weekends and holidays. Data availability and reliability were crucial to the success of the business. Even a few hours of downtime during the weekend could lead to damaging effects on the company's reputation.

Thielk and Grenier frequently checked forums such as WebHostingTalk in search of the right provider. In those forums, **Liquid Web was held in high esteem for its managed dedicated servers**. "For Time To Pet, it was a no-brainer to switch to Liquid Web based on reviews, forums, and the free migration assistance," says Thielk.

It was smooth sailing for Time To Pet after migrating to Liquid Web in 2015. Throughout the next five years, the partnership with Liquid Web provided exceptional service and dependable hosting. Although Time To Pet initially turned to Liquid Web for reliable metal servers, 2020 required additional growth. As their customers shifted to a digital-first approach to pet sitting, Time To Pet needed to rethink how their business model would function. This digital-first approach would require new features to stay competitive and keep them in front of their customers. In other words, they realized it was time for a significant expansion for the company, and with Liquid Web, they were positioned for success.

Major Growth Required Changing Infrastructure

To meet the demands, new infrastructure such as a database expansion along with increased storage drives and RAM would be needed— all with no downtime during the upgrades. With a phone call to Liquid Web, a **custom solution was quickly architectured** for Time To Pet that included real-time data replication over redundant Linux servers and cPanel high availability. This would ensure their data was always available and ensure failover during any hardware issues or upgrades.

Navigating these types of infrastructure hurdles with an unmanaged provider would have been cumbersome, time-consuming, and stressful. But with Liquid Web's Managed Engineering Services, it was a breeze.

> "We knew we needed infrastructure upgrades to power the features we were launching during the pandemic. We needed a partner we could grow with."
>
> - Kyle Thielk
> Co-Founder, Time To Pet

Staying Innovative—and Competitive—with Liquid Web

Time To Pet needed to stay flexible to navigate the complexities that their pet-sitting business customers were facing. They needed to **drive cash flow for payments** and tips for pet-sitters while adding new abilities such as setting up gift cards and tips through the software to natively drive profits up. These leaps forward were **fueled by a trusted partnership with Liquid Web**.

Time To Pet was certain that these innovations would have been impossible without the trusted partnership they had with Liquid Web. Because all of their hosting needs were covered, Thielk and Grenier were free to focus their energies on their business, creating features to support and delight their customers.

Reliable Support

"We depend on Liquid Web for 24/7/365 support," says Grenier. Having a hosting provider they could depend on at any time of day or night was essential for Time To Pet. "I'm non-technical," says Grenier. "But I can get the phone and talk to a tech at Liquid Web in a non-technical way, and they can easily translate that into a technical solution quickly to fix the issue. We can always count on Liquid Web for any infrastructure needs."

> "Liquid Web's Support Team can easily translate a non-technical question into a technical solution and fix the issue."
>
> – Mike Grenier
> Co-Founder, Time To Pet

Liquid Web Offers Reliable Support for Continued Growth

As Time To Pet grows in 2021 and beyond, they know they can count on Liquid Web to support whatever infrastructure needs may arise.

And in the meantime, they can continue to rely on Liquid Web to provide the **consistent uptime and data availability** that fuels their growth. "We don't even talk about hosting in our day-to-day business decisions," says Grenier. "We know we can trust Liquid Web."

Thanks to their partnership with Liquid Web, stable infrastructure, and overkill on their setup, Time To Pet has earned a reputation for reliability. Customers now share positive experiences all over social media communities about Time To Pet, further building their reputation as a service that pet owners can trust. And as the company moves into the unknown future, Time To Pet has the infrastructure performance to weather any storms ahead.

> "We didn't know we needed Liquid Web until we had Liquid Web. Now, we can't imagine hosting with anyone else."
>
> - Mike Grenier
> Co-Founder, Time To Pet

The service, support, and reliability offered by Liquid Web have set the new infrastructure and service standards for Time To Pet when it comes to hosting. A partnership with Liquid Web offers the company unparalleled peace of mind. "We didn't know we needed Liquid Web until we had Liquid Web," says Grenier. "Now, we can't imagine hosting or growing with anyone else."

ABOUT LIQUID WEB

Building on 24 years of success, our Liquid Web Family of Brands delivers software, solutions, and managed services for mission-critical sites, stores, and applications to SMBs and the designers, developers, and agencies who create for them. Liquid Web (Managed Hosting), Nexcess (Digital Commerce Cloud), and StellarWP (WordPress Software and Tools) have more than 500,000+ sites under management, have over 125,000 software subscribers, and 2 million+ free version software users. Collectively, the companies have assembled a world-class team of industry experts, provide unparalleled service from solution engineers available 24/7/365, and own and manage ten global data centers. As an industry leader in customer service, the rapidly expanding brand family has been recognized among INC. Magazine's 5000 Fastest-Growing Companies for twelve years.