



Connectria Hosting talks about competition with the big cloud companies

Summary: *The CEO of Connectria Hosting talks about how his company is competing with big cloud service providers like Amazon, Google, and Microsoft.*

Joining the big boys in their race to the bottom on price isn't the way.

ZDNet spoke with Rich Waidmann, chief executive of Connectria Hosting, and his colleague Scott J. Azzolina, vice president of marketing, about how focused or regional hosting companies can compete with major cloud services providers such as Amazon, Google, Microsoft, and others.

Hosting, managed services, and collocation

Hosting, managed services, and collocation have been around for decades. Just add self-service provisioning and buy-it-as-you-use-it pricing, and you have cloud computing.

- Hosting services allow an organization to use either a virtual machine or a physical host to support one or more of their IT workloads without having to purchase hardware or software or engage a facilities management team. Many midmarket companies choose this approach rather than create their own IT infrastructure.
- Managed Service is slightly different. In this case, a company purchases hardware and software licenses, but places the system or systems in a service provider's datacenter. The service provider manages the system or systems for the company.
- Collocation services are another spin on hosting. In this case, companies that work closely together and wish to have extremely fast connections between their corporate networks, will install machines in a service provider's datacenter so they can be on the same LAN. The hosting company manages those systems and the network that connects them.

Connectria is one of the few hosting companies I've spoken to that hosts Windows, Linux, IBM AIX, IBM i, HP-UX, and Oracle Solaris, as well as offering Hyper-V and VMware vSphere virtual machine hosting.

Playing with the big boys

We discussed how Connectria and other smaller providers can compete with Amazon, Google, Microsoft, IBM Softlayer and other cloud service providers. Waidmann said that it is madness for a small provider to join the rush-to-the-bottom pricing wars that the industry is seeing now. A better game for smaller providers is to focus on customer service, customization, and customer service and helping organizations in regulated markets deal with things like HIPAA.

Connectria also offers management services for midmarket companies who have chosen to use Amazon's AWS for some applications.

The goal, Waidmann pointed out, is to become a close business partner with clients and not just to offer generic

cloud or hosting services. He said that in the future the company might also help its customers by managing their datacenters as well.

Snapshot analysis

Although our conversation was short, I was impressed with their enthusiasm for helping customers do it their way rather than forcing them to do it Connectria's way. This, I believe, could be the basis for a strong and long-term relationship with customers.

I'm hoping to speak with one of Connectria's clients to learn more.



About Dan Kusnetzky

Daniel Kusnetzky, a reformed software engineer & product manager, founded Kusnetzky Group LLC in 2006. He's literally written the book on virtualization and often comments on cloud computing, mobility and systems software. He's also the managing partner of Lux Sonus LLC, an investment firm.