



**CASE STUDY**

# Limesharp

How a Magento Agency leveraged Cloud Hosting to beat Performance Shortfalls.

“ Cloudways is easy to use & offers brilliant support. ”

-Ed Bull, Director of Limesharp

It's simply incredible that eight years ago what started as a two-person startup has now evolved into a full fledged Magento development and design company known as Limesharp.

In those early days, Limesharp used to host clients' projects on VPS servers. Limesharp Director, Ed Bull personally managed every client's server because he firmly believed that terrific customer support lies at the core of lasting business relationships.

Everything worked smoothly, well technically at least ... until the start of the holiday season.

# A Series of Unfortunate Problems

Limesharp observed that they had a series of problems that needed urgent fixing including server scalability, cost efficiency, and an optimized hosting stack.

From the day the client gets onboard, Limesharp takes care of their Magento store by providing full service ecommerce solutions including design, development, hosting and support. They wanted to ensure maximum uptime, timely support, and server scalability for client projects but this wasn't possible with the current hosting provider.

“We had a load balanced multi-tier architecture which hosted all of our sites. On the whole it was pretty stable but very rigid and not cost effective for our clients,” said Ed Bull, Director, Limesharp. “If we wanted to add an extra server for Black Friday, this would entail weeks of getting a server into the stack, testing, configuring, paying for a whole months usage just for two days of peak traffic.”

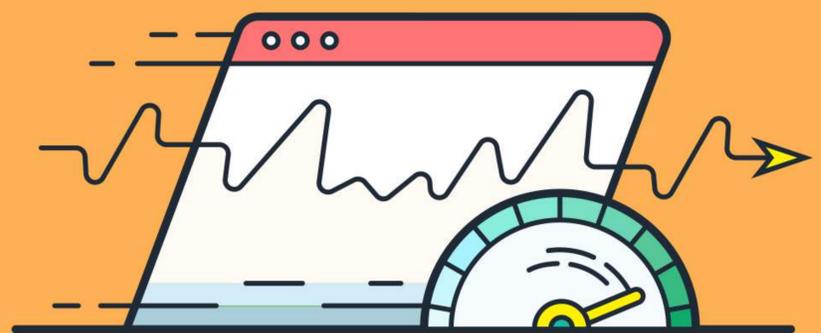
If the servers were not working properly, or the websites were down, this will bring Limesharp's reputation at stake because their clients will start to look for an agency with better hosting management options.

They urgently needed a solution that could scale. But, at the same time, Limesharp was facing another issue. The majority of their clients were using Magento so Limesharp wanted to help improve their site-speed and performance.

## Improve Your Store's Speed by 100%

Cloudways offers lightening fast page load time that contributes to the store's performance

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“We needed a full page cache solution for Magento stores and had seen some incredible demos of Varnish. Unfortunately, we were told this wouldn’t be supported on RackSpace servers so there would be a risk in installing it and not receiving the relevant support we needed.”

At that time very few companies were hosting Magento on the cloud. All the whitepapers & recommendations were in favor of hosting Magento on bare metal. Limesharp wanted to take a novel approach that could allow their clients to scale on demand and cost effectively, cloud seemed a plausible option.

So, they started searching for alternative options.

## Exploring Top-tier Solutions

While searching for a suitable cloud solution, Limesharp shortlisted three cloud providers offering the services it needed. However, it was still unsure which one of these will be a perfect fit for its business. After comparing features offered by the **managed cloud hosting** providers, they came to the conclusion that Cloudways seemed like the best option. The only way to decide this was to directly connect with the business and discuss their problem.



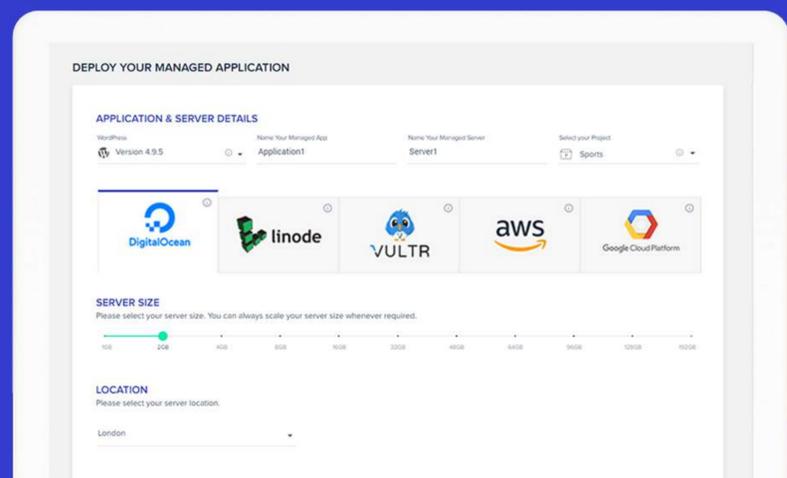
Limesharp's Team in a Planning Session

“I had several conversations with Pere [Co Founder of Cloudways] and was instantly sold on the offering. The choice was a simple one. We would be receiving all the services offered alongside some additional benefits which we now rely on heavily. Cloudways engineers are fully trained and will happily jump in and help identify where the issues lie.”- Ed Bull, Director of Limesharp

## Your Managed Cloud Hosting Platform

A platform that facilitates choice, simplicity and performance.

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## Giving Cloudways a Try

Limesharp decided to give Cloudways a try. They migrated some of their clients just to test if their problems will get solved by using Cloudways.

Almost immediately, their first challenge of server scalability was resolved by the Cloudways server scaling feature. Limesharp was able to scale the servers of their clients to sustain traffic during peak times, with great cost-effectiveness, thanks to the [Pay-as-You-Go cloud](#) billing model.

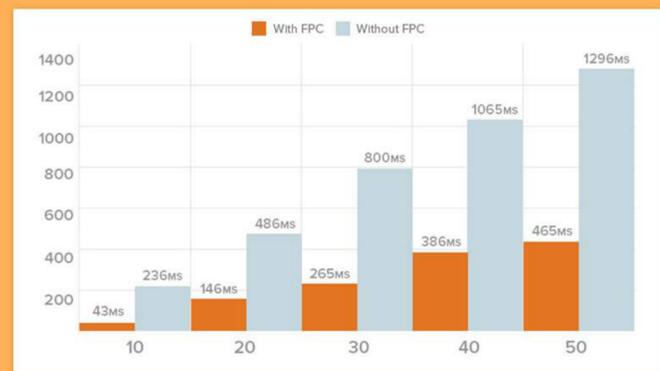
“We are able to adjust server configurations ourselves such as increasing memory limits, timeouts etc. All done through a nice web interface with engineers there if we need advise and help.”

Limesharp's second problem was of integrating advanced cache to the server. This was solved because Cloudways stack is built with top of the breed technology with pre-configured caches such as Varnish, MemCached, PHP-FPM, NGINX, and Redis. Particularly for Magento 1 stores, Cloudways offers a built in full page cache, powered by Amasty that takes care of the store speed issues.

## Load Your Magento Store in Under 1 Second

Leverage the power of Built-in Free Magento Full Page Cache Extension

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“Magento on a whole is pretty slow out of the box, it needs to be hosted on a stack configured and optimised specifically for that application. With Cloudways we get a highly optimized stack which changes depending on the application you are launching which I think is a brilliant feature,” Ed, Director, Limesharp on the level of support Cloudways offers. “Moreover, Cloudways engineers are fully trained on Magento & Wordpress so will happily jump-in to help fix issues. That level of support for us has been incredible so far.”

Before Cloudways, the previous hosting solution was also providing optimum level of support to Limesharp. So, the expectations after switching to a managed cloud hosting platform were even higher.

“With Rackspace we always received a good level of support, their engineers are skilled and on the whole get back to you quickly so we expected to be getting that level of support from Cloudways at the very minimum,” Ed’s expectation from Cloudways.

Cloudways also understood that they had to deliver above expectations because the bar was already set high. With expert and caring support, they were able to deliver what Limesharp expected. Additionally, Limesharp was able to get great value through the [Cloudways Premium Support Add-on](#).

“We have often found service levels dip after a period of time but that has not happened with Cloudways. We still receive instant responses to our queries and issues even after five years of using Cloudways.”

# It All Worked Out Perfectly

Thanks to the flexible cloud hosting solution that Cloudways offered, Limesharp was able to grow and maintain a high-profile clientele while achieving complete peace of mind and breeding a ‘family type culture.’

“We can’t speak higher of the service, platform and team at Cloudways. They are constantly improving and evolving their offering to make things even smoother. We love the instant responses to our issues, Slack channel communication and an easy to use web interface,” Ed’s thoughts after using Cloudways for five years and beyond.

Changes and revisions in clients’ websites are an unavoidable challenge for agencies like Limesharp who take care of a number of Magento and WordPress websites. The **Cloudways Staging** feature greatly simplifies the workflows and allows Limesharp to test and alter the websites without affecting the Live versions.

“Currently we have multiple clients on Cloudways using Magento & WordPress. We also host our staging environments on the platform which enables us to have standalone instances that are identical to the live environment,” adds Ed while emphasizing on hassle-free management of multiple websites and importance of staging feature in the day-today agency operations.

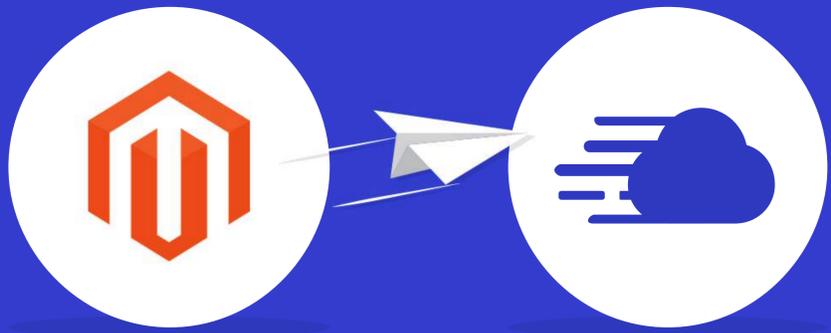


Limesharp's Team at Work

Cloudways was able to provide Limesharp a solution that helped them deal with the challenges of managing the diverse client requirements. Thanks to Cloudways easy server scaling features and pre-configured caches, Limesharp was able to scale their clients’ websites to ensure uptime during traffic crunches (such as the Holiday Season sales), all within very reasonable budgets.

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For Limesharp, partnering with Cloudways brought delight to existing customers, as well as a healthy boost in the number of new clients. Overall, the relationship with all the clients improved dramatically and this was reflected in the growing profits for the agency.

Wrapping up the discussion, Ed says happily, “We have lost count of the number of clients we have hosted on the Cloudways platform!”



# About Cloudways

A Managed Cloud Hosting Platform Where Teams Can  
Build, Deploy, Scale & Manage Phenomenal Web  
Applications

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