

Info Mart Corporation

CASE STUDY

Accelerating Business Growth with CenturyLink® Private Cloud

The online platform that connects businesses together

Overview

Info Mart Corporation operates an online business to business (BtoB) commerce trading platform for different industries in Japan. It offers platform matching, ordering, standards database, invoicing, contracting, quoting, industry news and data portal. The company was founded in 1998 and is based in Tokyo, Japan.

The Customer

Info Mart: Bringing buyers and suppliers together online.

Info Mart Corporation brings more than 300,000 companies together by offering a new business management model through its **BtoB Platform**. Their online commerce solution supports a wide range of businesses throughout Japan.

For more than 20 years, Info Mart has progressively enhanced its portfolio and offerings by providing businesses with a secure and reliable platform that they can trust. Since the inception of their platform, they have seen tremendous growth in Japan. Info Mart is on its way to competing on the international stage.

The **BtoB Platform** product brings business interactions into the digital realm and has grown to handle everything from simple business transactions, to navigating the complexities of negotiating deals.



At a Glance

Industry: Software Industry

Challenge: Requires uninterrupted and reliable uptime of Info Mart's BtoB platform

Solution: CenturyLink Private Cloud

In early 2019, Info Mart's **BtoB Platform** was servicing more than 300,000 companies and handling JP¥8.4 trillion or US\$75.6 billion in sales transactions for its customers; pioneering new territory as the online trading platform for the food and beverage (F&B) industry in Japan.

The Biggest Challenge

Establishing an uninterrupted and reliable service to more than 300,000 businesses throughout the year.

In today's digital economy, every business and organization functions 24 hours, seven days a week, 365 days a year. In the F&B industry specifically, restaurants work on tight timelines and at different hours than most businesses. After closing and checking their inventory, they often place orders late at night and into the early hours of the morning.

Wholesalers or producers must confirm the orders before loading and dispatching products later that day. This hidden process often takes place as most of Asia Pacific is still fast asleep. System



interruptions—even the slightest—can hurt businesses and disrupt valued relationships. Hence, the need for reliable IT management to deliver a seamless and secure experience to end users is imperative.

Osamu Nagahama, Info Mart's Executive Vice President, knows his customers well, and he understands that each customer has their own unique needs that demand dependable and uninterrupted services on a daily basis.

“We insist that our IT infrastructure is steadfast in protecting not only our business, but the heart of our business; our 300,000 customers.”

Info Mart's customer base saw exponential growth between 2015 and 2019, rising from 40,000 customers to 300,000. They recognized the need for a solution that scales, something they knew they could not manage on their own.

The Solution

CenturyLink Private Cloud, a custom-built, private cloud solution to improve application interaction and response time.

Info Mart required a custom-built private cloud solution to ensure that they could offer uninterrupted service for end user customers, while also allowing them to implement unique specifications that is highly tailored to the individual needs of each customer. In addition, Info Mart's business requires a scalable IT environment to meet the dynamic demands from end users who speak different languages.

“Without CenturyLink, we would have been hard-pressed to bring our BtoB Platform to market and manage the scale of operations we handle today,” adds Nagahama.

The **BtoB Platform** now promises uninterrupted service every hour, every day of the year. As part of Info Mart's digital business commitment to maintain its service level to end users, Nagahama had a

vision to build in new redundancies for disaster recovery with the help of CenturyLink. Any system fault will now automatically trigger a switch to the backup, ensuring that Info Mart's customers can run their businesses without ever encountering a single glitch.

Through an agile IT infrastructure supported by CenturyLink, Info Mart's mission-critical application has achieved great success in meeting the demands of its customers.

The Results

Reliability. Security. Scalability.

With CenturyLink customized IT agility solutions, Info Mart continues to see record growth. In 2018, its **BtoB Platform** saw its customer base increase by 59 percent, ultimately boosting its sales transaction value by a stellar 71 percent.

“CenturyLink is always delivering solutions and offering recommendations with our business in mind. This is reassuring, and the company's competitive pricing that emerges from its global activities exceeds our needs.”

—Osamu Nagahama

Info Mart continues to pursue its digital business journey by strengthening its **BtoB Platform** for contracts, and with the help of blockchain technology, will further improve their approval processes and ordering data in the coming years. When they accomplish that, a further optimized **BtoB Platform** will offer services to international markets—enabled by the CenturyLink global, expansive and adaptive network.

With a clean business database that lists 4.5 million companies in Japan, exceptional engineering clout, and its **BtoB Platform**, Info Mart has the edge to take on the global market, while also tailoring solutions to local needs; all supported by its trusted technology partner, CenturyLink.

Customers like Info Mart are realizing their digital business vision through CenturyLink IT agility solutions, adopting a customer-led, data-driven approach to accelerate their growth for the digital future.