servers.com and Nitrado
Building a seamless partnership to help expand support for game studios!

S servers.com

Ever played Studio Wildcard's ARK: Survival Evolved? Minecraft? Bohemia Interactive's DayZ? Then it's likely you've played on a Nitrado game server.

A big name in the game server hosting world, Nitrado provides a fast, safe, and above all, reliable gaming experience for its customers.

It also plays an increasingly important role in helping game developers and publishers bring their game to market with products and solutions, such as the Nitrado Enterprise Console – a dashboard for managing game server infrastructure. Its infrastructure and expertise help developers turn games into amazing multiplayer experiences.
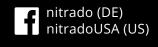
In fact, the B2B side of the business is a huge growth area for Nitrado, as Felix Oechsler, chief technology officer at Nitrado explains:

"Our work with game studios has always been a key focus for us. But to be the best partner for them, we've recognized that we need to make working with us as straightforward as possible.

"In the past, we spent a lot of time creating individual solutions for each customer, which isn't easily scalable. So, we've changed tack and are now creating products with a generic approach that continue to suit the needs of our customers but that can be replicated and tailored easily.
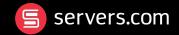
"A big part of making this new B2B approach successful whilst continuing to provide an enjoyable gaming experience for our B2C customers is having trusted partners onboard. Partners like servers.com."

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Challenges:

Over the past few years, Nitrado has experienced enviable success. That success has resulted in growth, which has brought with it hardware challenges. Updates to Nitrado's portfolio of popular games titles, as well as entirely new game releases (such as Valheim), have demanded more and different hardware classes.

"We've been working with servers.com since 2020, after a meeting at Gamescom in Cologne. We host the base capacity for players and game studios in our own data centers but in recent years, soaring numbers of users meant we needed to expand outside of our own environment and use external providers to help cover this increased demand and burst capacity at peak periods. The launch of Valheim, for example, required unforeseen amounts of additional hardware."

servers.com has also worked with Apex Hosting since 2020, (Nitrado acquired Apex Hosting in 2021) to support with similar challenges. Apex Hosting saw a 2.5x growth during the pandemic, which coincided with a major Minecraft update. The level of growth was unexpected but servers.com was able to provide the team with instant support, providing 200+ machines at one point.

"servers.com has been a great business partner over the years, supporting us in multiple regions to fulfil orders during peak demand. They not only provide powerful hardware, DDoS protection and alerting, they are an awesome team to work with," said Dan Bethel, infrastructure lead at Apex Hosting.

"Similarly to Apex Hosting, bringing on servers.com as a partner has allowed us to expand our global server environment much quicker than if we had to procure our own servers, which can take weeks. Having hosting partners like servers.com, that we can rely on to provide dedicated servers at short notice makes our lives and our customers' lives so much easier," said Felix.

"But we can't just partner with any hosting provider. They have to reflect our values of quality and reliability. If our customer sits down to play a game on a Friday evening and can't connect to the server or the server is down, they'll be angry with the server provider. Understandably so - we've ruined their evening.

"Similarly, the reputation of game studios and their game will take a hit if the player experience is poor. They heavily rely on the quality of service we provide because it's not just someone's evening we've disrupted but the profitability of their business. We simply cannot provide our customers with a service – whether it's a B2C or B2B customer – that delivers anything but the best gaming experience. The high-quality product that servers.com provides from data centers around the world, makes it a great partner for us."

Solutions:

Working with servers.com has allowed Nitrado to provide more hardware capacity on demand for multiple game updates and react flexibly to peaks in player numbers. Gamers around the world are able to login to a nearby server and instantly immerse themselves in a different world. Even when long-awaited and popular game updates launched, Nitrado has been able to keep up with demand for game servers and get them up and running immediately.

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"By partnering with servers.com, we've ensured downtime and disruption doesn't happen. Even during peak times, like when a Minecraft update lands or a new game is released, servers.com covers the burst in players seamlessly. Their standard DDoS protection is also far better compared to other hosting providers, so we feel confident that we're well protected," said Marlon Stange, hardware operations manager at Nitrado.

"We've also been able to expand our infrastructure into new locations, such as Virginia with the servers.com data center in Washington D.C. These additional locations help us reduce latency to players wherever they are in the world.

"But perhaps our favorite part of working with servers.com is the relationship we've built.

"Our excellent support at Nitrado is what sets us apart and it's also what sets servers.com apart from other dedicated hosting providers. Since day one of our partnership, we haven't dealt with faceless, corporate figures who disappear as soon as the deal is done. We've had a very down-to-earth, human relationship with the servers.com team and the people we met in that very first meeting are still the people we deal with today. If we have a query or want to chat through something, we just drop them a message and they get back to us very quickly.

"This approach to customer support is a big reason why we prioritise servers.com over other hosting providers. They're also our engineers' preferred provider because they find it so easy to work with them. All of us appreciate the human-led support that servers.com provides."

Future:

"In the last few years, Nitrado has grown from a team of 50 people to over 200. What's next? More success and more growth. We want to continue to build on the experiences that we offer to our B2C audience and expand the suite of managed service products we offer our B2B customers," said Felix.

"The B2B area, in particular, holds huge opportunity for Nitrado and we want to work with more developers and publishers to help them launch successful games. Because our partnership with servers.com has been so successful, we are looking to hand over the infrastructure side of upcoming projects to them so that we can focus on delivering incredible managed service solutions."

If you are a managed service hosting company for the gaming industry and are looking to partner with an infrastructure provider, check out our gaming solutions and speak to a member of the team.

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