

Nitrado | Intelligent Networking | Europe | Germany | Internet

Nitrado improves network quality even further

Client profile

Nitrado, owned by marbis GmbH, is a leading global provider of gaming servers and application hosting that was founded in 2001. The company provides infrastructure and expertise that aims to turn games into amazing multiplayer experiences, and partners with games studios and publishers. With headquarters in Karlsruhe, Germany, the company has 80 employees and more than 6,000 servers worldwide.

As gamers themselves, Nitrado's team knows the ingredients of a great gaming experience. This helps them to focus on a customer-centric philosophy that offers low latency via cutting-edge hardware and the use of Tier 3 data centers across the globe – in Frankfurt, London, New York, Miami, Los Angeles, Sydney, Singapore, and Moscow.

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Marcel BöBendörfer,
CEO, marbis GmbH

Summary

Multiplayer online gaming is a fast-moving market that has seen rapid growth in recent years, with open world games such as Minecraft, ARK and DayZ ramping up the demand for computing and storage capacity.

As a leading provider of gaming server hosting with more than 20 years of professional experience in this arena, Nitrado has been there to see the market flourish over time.

In a bid to enhance its business and expand, the company was looking for a reliable partner to provide high-quality IP transit at a worldwide scale and on-the-go support for any issues, thereby aiding Nitrado's own growth and solidifying its strengths as a global games server.

This came in the shape of NTT which began working with Nitrado in 2018. Apart from offering strong connectivity to eyeball networks, it is also providing Nitrado with its VLink virtual transport and DDoS protection services. As a package, these services are jointly aimed at helping the hoster to fulfil its goals in a secure way.

Vision

Great gaming, uninterrupted

Nitrado is set on providing uninterrupted gaming to give players a first-rate experience. 'Gamers are probably the most demanding customers,' said Marcel BöBendörfer, CEO at marbis GmbH. 'Every millisecond counts. For gamers, latency is super-important. Imagine you're in a fight in-game and there's slack or something that is disrupting gameplay, this is something they don't like.'

The company views a quality experience as being based around maximizing three key components: power, internet, and server hardware. While having its own solutions in these areas, Nitrado was seeking a partner that could also grow around these central aspects, ensure proximity to eyeball networks, and build up and bolster its backbone in its main focus markets of North America, Europe and Asia-Pacific.

Meanwhile, in a gaming world that faces continuous DDoS attacks, the company has developed its own customized DDoS solution, SteelShield™. At the same time, the risk of high-volume attacks is always on the rise in line with the increasing bandwidth of home connections.

To provide a flexible solution with different levels of protection, Nitrado was thus seeking a service to play an additional complementary role to its existing solution, helping to mitigate well-known attacks before they even hit its infrastructure, and allowing it to focus its own efforts on offering a bulletproof solution at Layer 7 level.

Which services?

- DPS (DDoS Protection Services)
- IP Transit
- Ethernet Services

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Marcel Bößendörfer,
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Transformation

A cross-section of services for reliable, secure gaming

NTT was selected as the partner of choice for its ability to aid with Nitrado's business expansion strategies and provide several services that aligned with the company's goals. The partnership leverages a cross-section of products across the range offered by NTT via its Global IP Network, helping the client benefit from a robust, joined-up service.

After first linking up Nitrado to a location in Frankfurt with a single IP transit port, the relationship has expanded rapidly on the global scale, with connections added in the couple of years since in London, Los Angeles, New York and Miami, followed by Singapore and Sydney, and upgrades carried out in most places to 100G. The next location is planned in Tokyo.

Nitrado uses the VLink product from NTT, a virtual transport service that merges the flexibility and scalability of Layer 3 technology with the dynamic traffic paths and management capabilities of Layer 2. This helps increase the capacity that Nitrado has available.

NTT has, meanwhile, delivered a mesh solution connecting Nitrado's three locations in the US as well as Sydney. This further improves latency and provides a better experience for seamless gameplay, helping underpin Nitrado's status as a high-quality hosting company.

In addition, Nitrado has adopted the DPS Control product from NTT to complement its own SteelShield™ DDoS protection service by offering an extra layer of support on top. Via this, the game server company provides access control lists (ACLs) to block the network from certain types of traffic it has defined.

Last, but certainly not least, by partnering with NTT, Nitrado gains access to an experienced Network Security Team and Global Network Operations Center (NOC), allowing the company to access continuous support whenever needed, to experts with the right know-how.

'This is a great example of a partnership that is grounded in trust, teamwork and mutual success,' said Gabor Reich, Strategic Client Manager for the Global IP Network division at NTT in Germany. 'Nitrado, being an agile player in the gaming industry, was aiming to partner up with a Tier-1 IP transit provider that offers a rare combination of high-quality network, comprehensive set of BGP communities and award-winning customer service, and we were able to offer that.'

Results

Complementary services with first-class support

The continued relationship and rapid expansion with NTT are testament to the benefits that Nitrado has gained from using the range of services offered by the Global IP Network, helping the company to scale and grow on global markets, while achieving its aim of building long-term relationships with partners.

The low latency and stable connections that have been bolstered under the partnership have helped align with one of Nitrado's central goals – which is, at the end of the day, to provide a great gaming experience.

Bößendörfer said the partnership has further acted as a gateway for his company to high-quality peering connections, as well as DDoS services that work effectively alongside Nitrado's own solutions. Through these, NTT has been able to filter out high-volume attacks before they hit the network, while allowing Nitrado to focus on its own SteelShield™ DDoS service.

On top of that, Bößendörfer has been impressed by the quality of support from NTT, with access to the NOC and the company's engineering experts meaning a quick route to people in the know who can address any issues, and no need to battle through 'first-level support'. By having great access to the teams at NTT, the partnership has also built over time and achieved more of a consultative nature rather than the traditional buyer-seller relationship.

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