pramata®

Pramata Reduces Cloud Costs Up to 20% with Xi Beam by Nutanix

Xi Beam has become a key component in Pramata's cloud strategy—helping the company optimize the cloud environment further while strengthening cloud security posture

BUSINESS BENEFIT

It can be a battle to keep a cloud platform optimized when a business is growing, and its cloud assets are becoming larger and more complex. Even though Pramata had an optimization tool in place, the company found that it could still improve the efficiency of its AWS platform—while improving security posture at the same time—by migrating to Xi Beam. The company squeezed additional 15-20% of cost savings out of the cloud and started optimizing an environment with two staff when it could have taken 10 to do the same work without Beam. With optimization and security posture better under control, the company has improved the bottom line while gaining a granular view of services consumption across the cloud to help plan better for the future.

"After using Xi Beam and gaining an additional 15-20% cost saving from our AWS Cloud, I saw that all tools to improve cloud performance are not the same. Optimization is taken care of and with real-time threat detection, we have greater control over our policies."

– Bharath Kumar, Senior Director of Engineering and Chief Architect, Pramata Corporation

INDUSTRY

Technology

BENEFITS

- Reduces costs of public clouds by up to 20%
- Saves 80% on potential management costs
- Provides real-time cloud security posture management
- Enables more strategic cloud application development

SOLUTION

- Xi Beam by Nutanix

CLOUD ENVIRONMENT

- Amazon Web Services

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CHALLENGE

Founded in 2005, Pramata, headquartered in California, USA, helps B2B companies maximize their install base revenue streams. The company extracts and transforms data from its customers' contractual agreements and orders, spread across billing, CRM, and CPQ systems using purpose-built technologies and an expert managed services team. It then provides actionable insights and up-to-date information to its customers so they can retain and grow their customer relationships.

Both Pramata's internal systems and customer-facing software-as-a-service products run on Amazon Web Services (AWS). To match business growth, the size of the AWS environment has grown and today contains hundreds of AWS EC2 Reserved Instances (RI) and Spot Instances (SI) running multiple AWS services, including Amazon RDS, Amazon S3, Amazon SageMaker. The environment runs across two regions in North America. Separate Pramata teams manage the internal-facing and customer-facing AWS accounts, split into single and multi-tenant environments. Over time the number of EC2 instances—which are a mix of sizes—is expected to more than double.

Pramata customers are mostly based in the United States with many Pramata employees located in India. Office hours for both groups are different, and they need to access different applications, each with their own compute, storage, and networking requirements. On any given day, demand for the AWS EC2 RIs and SIs constantly changes as does the need for instance sizes. Bharath Kumar, Senior Director of Engineering and Chief Architect at Pramata, says, "To optimize an environment of this kind manually was non-viable—it was too complex. True, the company could have built an entire team just on optimization, but that would have meant moving resources from core competencies." A third-party tool to optimize the AWS services was in place, but Pramata believed the tool wasn't doing enough and it lacked real-time security vulnerability detection.

SOLUTION

To overcome its challenges, Pramata chose Xi Beam to dial up the optimization of its cloud environment and boost the detection of threats. It took just minutes to deploy and a few days to configure parameters around alerts and optimization periods. Even though it seems counterintuitive, optimizing all the time isn't effective because companies don't see the bigger picture around the effectiveness of an IT strategy. The solution is to set Beam to optimize on a weekly or monthly basis depending on the workloads.

Pramata optimizes around 80 percent of its production workloads every month. The insight from Beam through its alerts allows Pramata to manage its cloud infrastructure proactively. "The team configured Beam to send messages such as "your RIs are expiring"," says Kumar. "Clearly, the team has other processes for tracking instances, but nowadays we're so much more automated. I think that's awesome. And if your workloads change a lot and if your cost is varying, you actively see whether you're going up or down to a granular level. There is no mystery."

CUSTOMER OUTCOME

Xi Beam proved that Pramata was right and there was still more optimization to be done. Pramata was able to reduce its cloud costs by a further 15-25 percent using Beam. If no optimization had taken place before that figure could have been around 35 percent.

Without deep visibility into consumption patterns, it is harder to get to the 'sweet spot' where you can be confident that you're really getting the most out of your cloud investment. Kumar comments, "With Beam you have a tracking system that provides a lot of data on top of your current consumption patterns. You see it from multiple dimensions, and it allows you to play around to create the kind of cloud services you need in the most effective way possible."

Every second counts when a cyber-attack is underway, so real-time vulnerability detection is a vital part of any company's defenses. With Beam, Pramata can stay on top of a situation as it evolves and take remedial action straightaway. The company can see what is happening and make sure there are no policy violations. "We've not seen any major alerts yet, but you never know when a threat could appear and if it does, we'll know about it," says Kumar.

Peace of mind is great, unless it requires a lot of time and effort. Beam has high levels of automation so there is no management burden on Pramata. Any manual checking is done infrequently. You can almost set and forget. Beam checks for application security vulnerabilities from an infrastructure standpoint. "Without the Nutanix solution in place, Pramata would need a team of 10 engineers dedicated to optimization and threat detection, and even then, they probably wouldn't be able to do as good a job," says Kumar. The maximum number of people you would need is two with Xi Beam and that would be the case even if the company had a multi instead of a single-cloud strategy.

NEXT STEPS

Pramata's cloud strategy is constantly evolving and the size and mix of cloud services will change along with the business need. Importantly for the company, no matter where Pramata is on its cloud journey, its cloud investment will be running optimally with Xi Beam.

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