# Private Cloud, Level 3 Transit Services Support SoftLayer® Technologies' Growth



## Customer Profile

SoftLayer Technologies is a leader in cloud, dedicated, and managed web hosting, and one of the largest privately owned hosting companies in the world. The company integrates and automates all elements of its platform, giving businesses of all sizes complete control, security, scalability, and ease-of-management via a customer portal and Open API. Softlayer currently has 100,000 servers under management and more than 23,000 customers in more than 140 countries.

*"In a cloud-based environment, real-time services are sensitive to hops and latency, and working with Level 3 allows to minimize the network impacts that affect our customers' experience."*

Sean Charnock, VP Business Development, Softlayer

## Overview

### CHALLENGE

Critical to SoftLayer's success is how effective they are in helping their customers deliver a satisfying online experience. In addition to ensuring business continuity, SoftLayer is challenged to help their customers scale to match unpredictable growth trends, balance capital and operational expenditures, and keep pace with demand for support of real-time business processes.

### SOLUTION

Level 3 architected a private cloud formed by implementing a mesh network linking SoftLayer's 13 U.S. data centers and an additional four sites in London, Paris and Amsterdam. SoftLayer's customers access the secure network leveraging Level 3® Intercity and Metro Wavelength transport services as well as IP transit services, which enable data intensive, rich content delivery in real time.

### BENEFITS

- Opens access to enterprise solutions otherwise available only to large enterprises

- Mitigates capital risk and supports OpEx business model

- Optimizes revenue generating applications; scales infrastructure and services to match revenue generating activities

- Establishes consistency in systems, IT strategy

- Fosters desired end user online experience

## Big Growth Driven by SMBs

It's not surprising that SoftLayer Technologies was recognized as the fastest growing business in the Dallas area for 2011. After all, rapid server and cloud deployments are part of what distinguishes the company from other infrastructure providers. Offering the same kinds of cloud, dedicated and managed web hosting solutions to small and medium businesses usually affordable only to large enterprises, they have grown to be one of the largest privately held hosting providers in the world.

SoftLayer's customers typically are involved in social networking, social gaming, software as a service or software as a platform. Their customer base is both diverse and technical; in fact, 30 percent of new customers originate from technology incubators. For these companies, focusing on their core business, not IT system operation and support, is top priority.

## Online Experience Determines Success

The online experience that SoftLayer enables their customers to deliver — whether it's based on real-time interaction among gamers, messaging, or applications central to business processes — is highly dependent on a reliable, secure, optimized network. The experience they enable is also a critical measure of SoftLayer's success as an Infrastructure as a Service (IaaS) provider.

"In a cloud based environment, real-time services are sensitive to hops and latency," says Sean Charnock, VP Business Development at SoftLayer. "Working with Level 3 allows us to minimize the network impacts that affect our customers' experiences."

To facilitate that world class online experience, Level 3 architected a private mesh network interconnecting SoftLayer's 13 U.S. Points of Presence and four sites in London, Paris and Amsterdam. Resiliency is established through redundancy as well as true network diversity. However, striking a

balance between resilience and minimizing potential points of failure as well as network latency also is essential. The cloud Level 3 created has the least amount of network touch points feasible, complementing the strategic distribution of data centers (which brings data closer to end users and speeds delivery of uncached content over the shortest routes), controlling infrastructure capital expenses and instituting scalability that won't hold back future growth.

## Level 3 Runs the Network, Customers Run Their Businesses

SoftLayer's cloud helps their customers enable a winning online experience. They also make it possible for start-ups and smaller businesses to take advantage of the economies of scale an infrastructure provider can offer, which includes doing business in a OpEx, rather than CapEx, model and access to enterprise-scale applications that otherwise are prohibitively expensive.

Changes in the network are executed by Level 3. SoftLayer relays customer service requirements, such as turn up/turn down requests, to Level 3's solution architects for implementation. Consequently, SoftLayer's customers can dedicate resources to perfecting the latest immersive online game or application. And because IT responsibilities are minimized, changes in IT staff don't result in changes to the IT strategy.

Another element in the solution for SoftLayer is connection to the public Internet, which is enabled through the Level 3® High Speed IP service. Level 3's HSIP service reinforces the uptime, low latency and minimal points of failure designed into SoftLayer's private cloud, while creating a secure connection to end users.

Of course, SoftLayer plans to keep on growing. With the help of Level 3, which has more than 100,000 miles of fiber optic network in approximately 450 markets and deep networking expertise, SoftLayer aims to further improve network performance and expand their services globally.
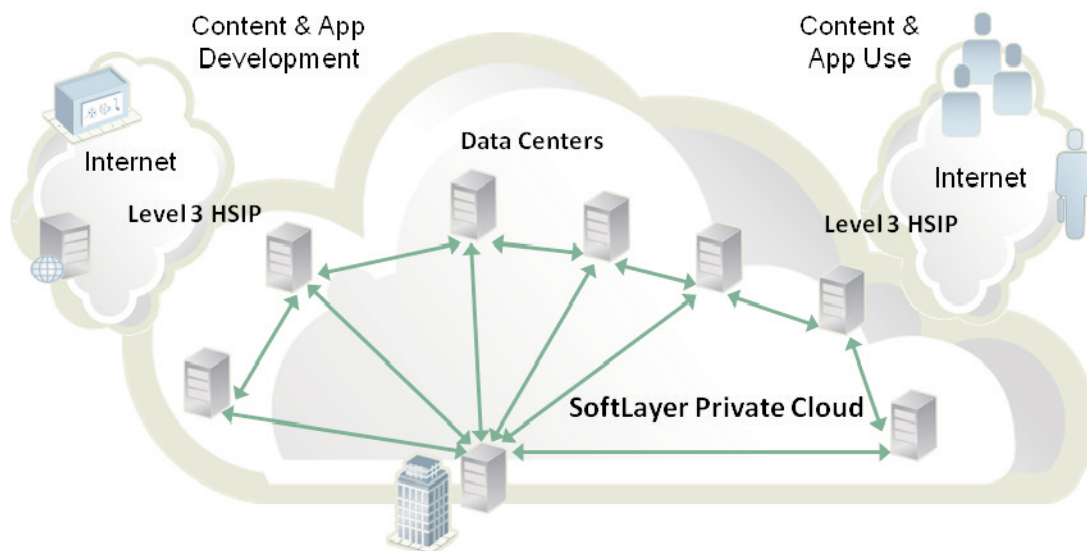


## For more information

Contact your Level 3 Account Representative or call 877-2LEVEL3 to learn more about how Level 3 Communications can support your cloud and network deployment.

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