

## CASE STUDY

# Diesel Direct Uses the Cloud to Persevere Through Power Outages

Featured Solution: Cloud Strategy, Private Cloud and Disaster Recovery



## Background



When Hurricane Irene hit Eastern Massachusetts last August, the roads were filled with broken trees and downed power lines, leaving many without power for more than a week. When Diesel Direct, a trucking and construction businesses, was affected by this power outage, its founder sought an alternate plan for keeping the business active under such circumstances. He found his answer in the cloud.

Diesel Direct fuels and services trucks nationwide for clients as big as one of the big-2 soft-drink distributors and as small as a local trucking company. Its workers--who ghost in and out of truck-fleet parking yards so early even the crack-of-dawn loaders and drivers sometimes don't see them feeding the trucks--use handheld scanners to record how much fuel and service they give each truck, then upload that data to Diesel Direct, which can then send out invoices for the work that same day.



## The Challenge

The company relied on the expertise of a staff of experienced billing agents, account managers and administrative specialists whose primary tools were one giant customer database built on Microsoft Access, Exchange email and the anachronistic but effective use of paper invoices delivered via fax or snail mail.

This process was effective until Irene made it clear that if power went out in the main office Diesel Direct wouldn't be able to send out that fast flurry of invoices every day. And without that, their cash-flow situation would be greatly impacted very quickly.



Their clients. Fleet managers for distribution companies, understand quickly how Diesel Direct can save them money by letting them trade a few extra cents per gallon of fuel for the FTE cost of having their own people handle the fuelling and maintenance and reporting, plus the cost

of having the truck off the road while they're doing it. Diesel Direct's services allow them to skip most of that. The model doesn't require a lot of technology, but Diesel Direct can't accomplish anything if its minimal IT infrastructure is offline for any length of time.

## Solution

Diesel Direct hired Virtustream, because of the range of alternatives available in each of three categories that it needed--private, virtual private and public cloud.

Diesel Direct hired Virtustream to host its data and slightly upgraded versions of its software so employees could work from the same office using the same interfaces and workflow they always had. The only difference was that the data and apps were all housed in a data center outside Washington, D.C. and replicated to another.

From an operational IT perspective, the biggest benefit of signing up with Virtustream is the rapid, repeatable changes in capacity Virtustream allows its customers. Diesel Direct's business is "bursty"--doubling or tripling from one day to the next, changing with the flow of invoices.

Virtustream's service contract allows Diesel Direct to set a relatively high average baseline, then change its top capacity demand limit as often as it wants--every day if that's what works for the customer. Adding capacity is as easy as changing a configuration screen; so is reducing capacity when the spike disappears.

## Results

Those changes save Diesel Direct both money and time. Rather than running reports and invoices all night Tuesdays, for example, the additional capacity lets the company run those resource-intensive processes during the day rather than overnight. That gets critical work done faster and more accurately than a process left to complete itself unattended.

The benefits from dynamic capacity management and professional management are a perfect example of why people are going to embrace cloud computing even in \$300 million non-tech-focused companies. These companies don't want to spend a lot of money on IT, don't have the budget to do best-practice on-premise infrastructure, so being able to leverage another company's resources like Virtustream's affords them a distinct advantage.



### About Diesel Direct

Diesel Direct is a national fleet fueling solution and management business headquartered in Stoughton, Massachusetts. They manage supply and onsite delivery of fuel directly to their clients' trucks and tanks. Diesel Direct manages supplies, delivers and fuels for more than 50,000 client sites, vehicles, generators and tanks each week and every week. Diesel Direct's data driven fueling solutions provide the value needed to efficiently and cost effectively fuel fleets when our clients need them fueled while gaining essential knowledge needed to manage consumption and compliance.

### About Virtustream

Virtustream is the enterprise-class cloud software and service provider trusted by enterprises worldwide to migrate and run their mission-critical applications in the cloud. The company is headquartered in Washington, D.C. with offices in San Francisco, Atlanta, London and Dubai. Virtustream owns data centers in the U.S. and Europe with service provider partner data centers in Latin America, the Middle East and Asia.