

# Splunk® Cloud at MindTouch®

Real-time Visibility and Analytics Used Across the Business to Grow Customer Success



mindtouch™

“With our operations already in the cloud, Splunk Cloud is ideal for us. We get the full functionality of Splunk Enterprise, which means the real-time data and insights to optimize our services, refine our processes and rapidly put software into production. But now, someone else minds the servers and addresses capacity.”

**Software Engineer**  
MindTouch

## OVERVIEW

### INDUSTRY

- Cloud-based Services

### SPLUNK USE CASES

- Application development
- Business analytics
- Digital intelligence
- Real-time monitoring
- Customer service support
- Root cause analysis

### BUSINESS IMPACT

- Tripled customer base without increasing size of DevOps team
- Increased business focus from not having to manage infrastructure
- Customer satisfaction through exceeding 99.9 percent uptime SLA
- High quality application releases
- Fast customer service
- Transformation to analytics driven pricing model
- 24x7 visibility into customer experience
- Consistent application delivery
- Fast deployment of software releases
- Enhanced billing system
- Business analytics for customers and internal users

## The Business

MindTouch, Inc is a provider of cloud based customer success software. MindTouch is transforming how all businesses drive customer success by empowering them to author, capture and serve knowledge to their customers in new ways and by creating insight from customers' behavior. MindTouch creates shorter sales cycles, increases organic site traffic and turns new users into experts and brand advocates. MindTouch is used by millions of people every day. Industry leaders like Intuit, Remington, Hewlett-Packard, Verizon, SAP, Zuora, MakerBot and RSA Security rely on MindTouch to support their customers' success.

## Challenges

To provide a superior user experience, meet SLAs for 99.9 percent uptime and achieve agile application development, MindTouch uses a DevOps team to ensure the performance of its software as a service (SaaS) solution, which resides on the Amazon Web Services (AWS) cloud. The team combines software development with IT operations for an integrated approach to updating and delivering applications quickly. To be effective, however, DevOps requires continuous testing, ongoing monitoring and rapid remediation.

Before new code is put into production, DevOps must verify that it is bug-free. The team has to continuously monitor the firm's authoring environment that lets customers organize and deliver information to their own clientele. It must determine if there are delivery issues in any of its services, such as its contextual help system, its ranking services based on algorithms that learn user behavior or the business analytics that track the behavior of its customers' clients. If any perform below thresholds, DevOps needs to have immediate visibility into the issue. It then has to identify the faltering component within the application stack before the issue can impact customers.

To take their business to the next level, MindTouch wanted to move to an analytics-driven operational, customer service and business model. The company needed a solution that would enable it to monitor all parts of its cloud infrastructure, deliver great performance, diagnose complex customer issues and provide real-time insights to millions of daily users.

## Enter Splunk

MindTouch wanted to focus its resources on core business goals rather than administering an on-premises IT infrastructure, so after an extensive evaluation of six different vendors, it chose Splunk Cloud. Splunk Cloud indexes data from logs and other sources that the DevOps team easily queries and visualizes in dashboards for analysis.

“Everything we can do with Splunk Enterprise, we do with Splunk Cloud, but without any infrastructure to maintain,” says a MindTouch software engineer. “Splunk Cloud gives us the scalability to support our growing multi-tenant environment without worrying about managing hardware, capacity planning or tasks like software patches.”

## Breakthroughs

### Real-time monitoring bolsters service delivery

Before deploying Splunk Cloud, the MindTouch DevOps team had difficulty determining in real time how its various systems were performing. With Splunk Cloud,

## O V E R V I E W

## DATA SOURCES

- AWS servers
- Databases like MySQL & Apache Cassandra
- Memcached server
- Load balancers

“Real-time visibility is the greatest value we get from Splunk Cloud—and the foundation for continuous monitoring is the 100 percent uptime of Splunk Cloud.”

**Software Engineer**  
MindTouch

the team has ongoing visibility into its entire infrastructure in the cloud, including its AWS servers. Dashboards display metrics on the behavior of all key components, including application performance. The team detects potential bottlenecks and takes remedial action before customers experience problems. For example, dashboards track response times of searches within each customer’s knowledge base and if latencies are detected that exceed pre-set thresholds, Splunk Cloud issues alerts that notify on-call technicians.

**Root-cause analysis rapidly resolves issues**

When an application underperforms, administrators must identify the cause of the problem to correct it. The actual source of an application’s latency, however, could originate anywhere within its interconnected sub-systems. Before utilizing Splunk Cloud, technicians had to manually collect and analyze logs from multiple components throughout the application stack, which was very time consuming and costly.

With Splunk Cloud, administrators collect data from all relevant components, from the impacted applications and their downstream databases to servers and load balancers. They then graph the data in dashboards to determine each problem’s root cause. What once took hours, if not days, is now done in as quickly as minutes. Coupled with Splunk Cloud’s real-time monitoring, MindTouch has a feedback loop that permits nearly instant problem detection, rapid remediation and adherence to SLAs.

**Operational insight improves customer success**

With real-time operational visibility provided by Splunk Cloud, MindTouch responds faster to customer concerns. If a customer service issue arises, for example, DevOps can quickly identify the problem by correlating logs across different data sources. Moreover, DevOps can view historical data, whether days, weeks or months in the past, to determine trendlines and proactively address potential problems and bottlenecks.

**Applications are developed with agility and confidence**

To continually improve its services, MindTouch issues software updates and service releases weekly. Without operational insight, these upgrades would be risky because they might introduce flaws that could jeopardize applications. With Splunk Cloud, however, DevOps can quickly test code and closely monitor its performance when in production. The team greatly reduces the time required to prepare new code and can promptly roll back releases if issues are detected. The software engineer notes that DevOps “maintains quality assurance while delivering agile application development.”

**Business analytics lead to business growth**

Usage analytics reports in Splunk Cloud show how MindTouch customers’ varied clientele deploy the MindTouch platform. Metrics include such information as how often a customer’s knowledge base is used and the response times of searches. Thanks to the business analytics gleaned from Splunk Cloud, MindTouch was able to refine its pricing by billing its customers according to the number of relevant search requests their users make each month.

The company has increased its customer retention and grown its overall business, as the 100 percent uptime of Splunk Cloud continues to enable MindTouch to deliver value to its customers around the clock. According to the software engineer, “Since deploying Splunk Cloud, we have been able to triple our customer base while maintaining the same size of our DevOps team.”

In addition, MindTouch uses Splunk Cloud to extract business analytics for its internal users. Administrators can perform ad hoc searches to obtain information for company managers, such as determining the distribution of customers. The firm even displays Splunk dashboards in a breakroom so executives, salespeople, engineers, marketers and others can view the health of MindTouch’s platform.

“Splunk dashboards provide our entire company with daily visibility into our cloud infrastructure,” says the software engineer. “From DevOps and sales to the boardroom, the knowledge we derive from Splunk Cloud is vital to our operations.”

**Free Download**

Download Splunk for free. You’ll get a Splunk Enterprise license for 60 days and you can index up to 500 megabytes of data per day. After 60 days, or anytime before then, you can convert to a perpetual Free license or purchase an Enterprise license by contacting [sales@splunk.com](mailto:sales@splunk.com).