

Cloud Upstart 9Lenses Makes Big Bet On HP's Enterprise Grade Cloud
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When 9Lenses Founder and CEO Edwin Miller began to face tough questions on cloud security, data controls and data sovereignty from some of the largest companies in the world, he knew it was time to move his company from a public cloud platform to a more robust and secure enterprise-grade cloud.

That's when the serial entrepreneur decided to move his big data insight-as-a-service platform, which counts five Global 50 companies -- including Hewlett-Packard -- as customers, to the HP enterprise-grade cloud.

The seeds of the move came in response to "demands" from a growing Global 100 customer base for stepped-up security and data-control procedures, said Miller.

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Those Fortune 100 vendors, in fact, were peppering Miller with difficult questions on what steps his Sterling, Va.-headquartered company was taking to secure their mission-critical "people analytics data" in the cloud. Those questions prompted a soul-searching look at just what kind of platform 9Lenses was building its business on, said Miller. As a result, 9Lenses began to move its service to the HP Cloud last May, he said, more than a year after HP became a customer.

The breaking point came not from HP, said Miller, but when one of the top 10 companies in the world handed 9Lenses 150 pages of enterprise-data-handling requirements. "When you have a customer handing you 150 pages of data-handling requirements, you have to be sure you are working with a partner you trust," said Miller. "I needed to know that all of those security requirements were being met before we could sign the contract. With HP, I got a team of architects, engineers and account executives dedicated to making sure those enterprise-data-handling requirements were met. They are making sure we have all our ducks in a row to meet the requirements of major Global 100 companies. That, for me, is an enterprise-grade cloud."

Among the protections now afforded 9Lenses, whose customers include Oracle, CSC, MicroStrategy and an unnamed Global 10 company, is a more secure cloud for users of the service, including two-way encryption and much stricter process controls and audit trails aimed at preventing data breaches or unauthorized use of data.

That's no small matter given the nature of the data that is stored in the cloud service from 9Lenses, which has raised \$5.1 million in venture capital including an investment from highly respected management analytics company The Corporate Executive Board.

9Lenses, which now has 44 customers with 26,000 users, provides what it calls an "insight as a service platform" that is used by companies to quickly grab data aimed at accelerating sales and improving customer satisfaction.

With that critical business intelligence data being stored in the 9Lenses cloud, Miller said he needs to be confident that a rogue employee or developer, or even a customer, could not spin up a virtual machine and give access to someone that is not authorized. "Our customers want their data locked down," he said. "They want to know if there is a change in the environment. They want to know if a server is added there is a proper process for it."

With the HP Cloud, Miller said he knows there is a rigid process to "document every single time something has changed" with regard to a customer's cloud environment.

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