

ANTAGONIST DEPLOYED



ELASTIC SITES WITH CLOUDLINUX OS

case study

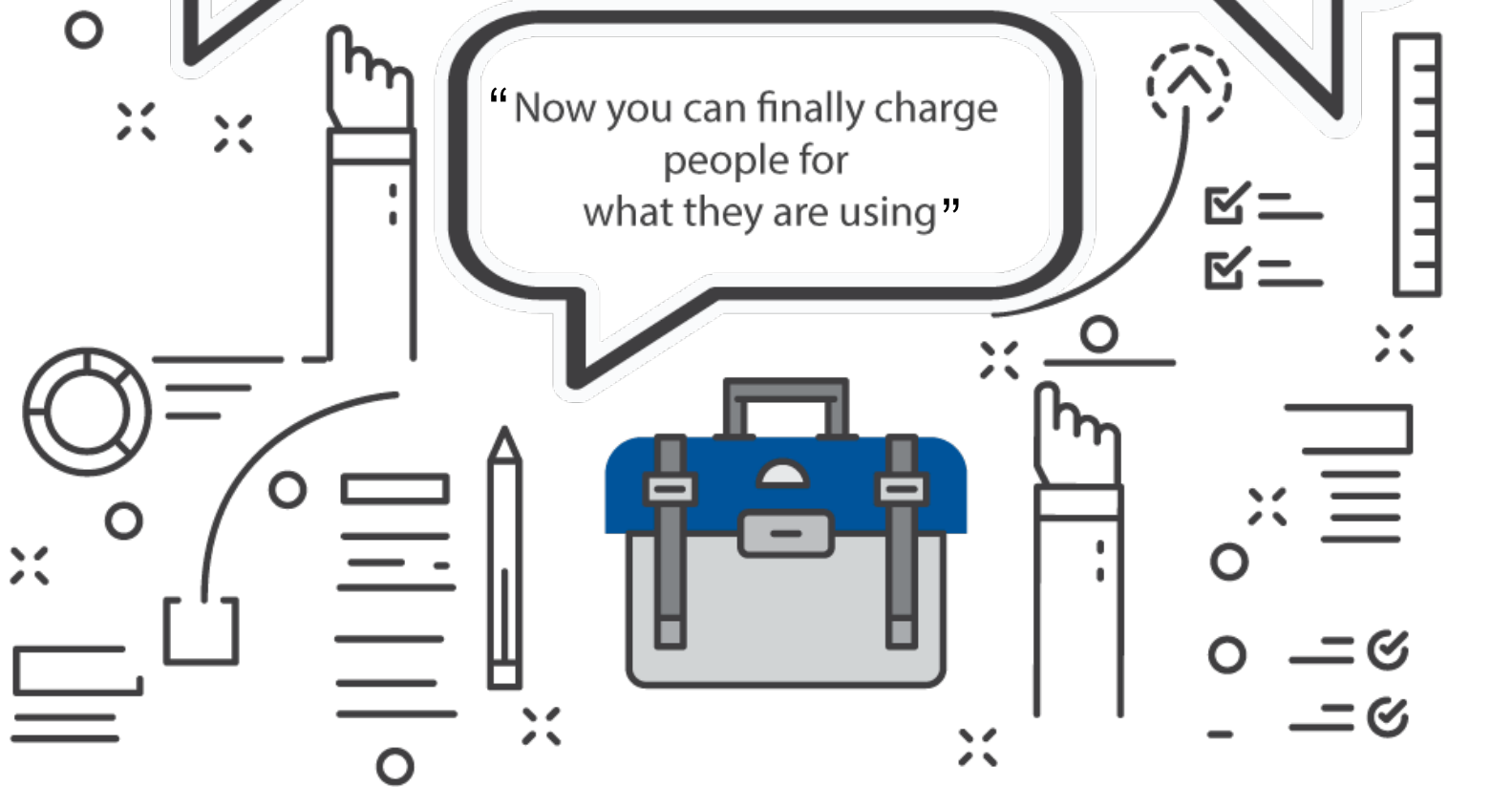


“It’s awesome and it’s automated.”

“All of this is based around the idea that you start somewhere and then you grow.”



“Now you can finally charge people for what they are using”



ANTAGONIST uses ‘Elastic Sites’ powered by CloudLinux OS to give its customers an upgrade path with less headaches than VPS.

Again and again, once Antagonist Web Hosting customers grew beyond a certain point, they had to leave for a VPS provider, and they were less happy with the struggles of managing a VPS than they had been hosting with Antagonist.

Antagonist solved this problem by offering **‘Elastic Sites’** —shared hosting plans with as much RAM and CPU as any VPS. Antagonist customers love having access to these resources without the hassle of managing their own VPS — they see it as the cheapest managed VPS around — and Antagonist has been able **to increase average revenue per user by 26%**.



*Wouter de Vries,
Founder of Antagonist*

“We were losing our best customers,” says Antagonist founder Wouter de Vries, “because they had outgrown shared hosting.”

Antagonist is the Netherlands’ number one provider of shared hosting, and has served over 100,000 customers. Antagonist has been providing quality hosting since 2004 and prides itself on combining cutting edge technology and sincere, proactive support. Antagonist has five star ratings from both WebHosters.nl and ISPGids.com.



“Losing Our Best Customers”

“We were losing our best customers,” says Antagonist founder Wouter de Vries, “because they had outgrown shared hosting.” Antagonist Web Hosting had built a successful shared hosting business on top-of-the-line automation and proactive customer support — a model that has worked for many companies. They did not offer VPSs because managing individual VPSs would take them away from their focus on automation. But, once customers grew beyond a certain point, they needed more resources than shared hosting plans provided. These were users Antagonist had worked with to build successful web presences and these users did not want to leave.

Antagonist recommended them to VPS providers they trust, but the step to VPS was confusing, complicated, and expensive. Customers who had been on a 10 Euro hosting plan now had to pay 80-100 Euros for a VPS, licenses, and management. “Their costs went up 10 times just because they were a little bigger than could fit in a shared hosting plan,” de Vries points out. They might choose not to pay for management, “but there is a reason this person was using shared hosting. He doesn’t have a clue how to manage a server.” Customers would come back to Antagonist a few months later,

flustered, upset, and unsure what to do next, the journey they had started now stalled.

With CloudLinux OS, You Don’t Need a VPS

Elastic Sites with CloudLinux:
hosting plans with large amounts of resources and secure user isolation.

Just because a site was receiving more traffic and consuming more resources did not change anything about the nature of the site. It certainly did not suddenly require the user to have root access or manage the server themselves. These customers, who had been very happy on their previous hosting plans, simply needed higher resource limits. In theory, it should not be difficult for a host to provide that, but, traditionally, shared hosting was always an “all you can eat model,” de Vries explains. You could not limit each user effectively, so you just hoped that, on average, users would not use too much and “you just accepted that there are some people that really can eat a whole lot of meat.” This led to slow, unreliable hosting. But CloudLinux OS changed that. “Now you can finally charge people for what they are using,” de Vries says. With CloudLinux OS’s LVE resource limiting and CageFS security, you no longer need a VPS to get reliable web

hosting. Users are securely isolated and limited to the resources in their plans. Hosts can make sure no one uses too much. “From a customer’s perspective,” de Vries continues, “there is not much difference from a VPS. And the customer does not have to manage it.” Now Antagonist customers would have an option that would not derail their plans.

A Better Choice

Antagonist upgraded all their plans with more resources and more features. Their Pro tier (their highest-level basic hosting package) now has as much resources — 2 CPU cores and 2GB RAM — as a mid-level VPS. More importantly, Antagonist lifted the restraints on how far a customer could grow with them. They began offering further upgrades when customers were approaching their limits. In one-on-one consultation, they would offer customers hosting plans with the same specs as unmanaged VPSs from large VPS providers, but at a slightly higher price. Using CloudLinux OS’s secure, stable environment, Antagonist is able to provide customers with VPS-level safety and dependability in the hosting setup they are used to and already enjoy. The slightly higher price than an unmanaged VPS reflects the understanding that Antagonist will be taking care of all licenses and server management. “It’s awesome and it’s automated,” de Vries

explains. “That’s the biggest complaint we hear about VPS. It’s not automated. With shared hosting, we fix all servers within a few minutes. With managed VPS, you pay hundreds of Euros for the pleasure of someone responding within the hour.” Customers are more than happy with the service, and they love that they can continue

“It’s awesome and it’s automated.”

with the same provider that helped their site become successful in the first place.

Attracting New Customers

The incremental upgrades Antagonist was able to offer were important for growing sites. It did not make sense for customers to make the huge jump in price from shared hosting to VPS. This was especially true for bloggers. “They came in a position where income came a bit later when they got sponsorship contracts,” de Vries explains. A blogger would get popular and outgrow their shared hosting plan, but they still had not gotten a lot of income. Incremental increases in their hosting plans allowed them to grow.

Raising prices across all plans also brought in more discerning customers. These were the types of customer that knew what

dependable hosting was worth. Many of Antagonist's new customers, in fact, have come from managed VPSs. Antagonist saw a small drop in the number of sales, but profits have gone up. True to the old hosting maxim, the customers that complain the most are the ones that pay the least. By raising prices, Antagonist was able to concentrate on their best customers, successful people who understood the value of their web presence and the services Antagonist is offering.

“We will make sure you grow.”

Antagonist's customers are more satisfied, average revenue per user is up 26%, and Antagonist has more capital to use towards continually improving their hosting. Best of all, Antagonist is able to continue being a partner to their customers instead of having to suddenly toss them into an unfamiliar and unsuitable environment.

“All of this is based around the idea that you start somewhere and then you grow. We will make sure you grow.”

For more information on Antagonist, please visit their website at Antagonist.nl.

For more information on CloudLinux OS, visit CloudLinux.com.

To learn more about Elastic Sites, please visit ElasticSites.com.