

# Protagonist's evolution from web hosting company to cloud services provider powered by LuxCloud

*Dutch web hosting company, Protagonist, employs the LuxCloud automated provisioning and billing platform to broaden its business model and deliver greater value to its customers.*

## Partner background

Founded in 2000, Protagonist is a web hosting company providing a high quality service at a fair price; with a customer base of private individuals and businesses in Holland and Belgium. Initially, its service utilised shared hosting packages in US-based facilities, but in 2002, demand from the Dutch market was so strong that the company switched to dedicated, co-located hosting in Holland. At the same time, the company built its own domestic network with its own Point-of-Presence and connections, and so gained full control of its infrastructure.

In 2006, Protagonist launched its Hosted Exchange email service; it proved highly successful and the business flourished. However, by 2010, the company's Hosted Exchange outsourcing partner were no longer providing the essential high levels of service; potentially jeopardising Protagonist's relationship with its customers. Concurrently, new opportunities in the provision of cloud services and social media consulting were entering the market, providing Protagonist with a possible solution.

## Business situation

After a lucrative first decade operating in the web hosting market; 2010 saw a shift in the market that Protagonist could not ignore. Along with the drop in levels of service from its outsourcing partner which was threatening to harm the provider's ability to meet its promise of 'high quality at fair prices'; business customers were increasingly demanding upgrades to Hosted Exchange 2010, and cloud services such as online backup and web security. With the threat of losing customers immediate action was required, but as with many companies there were budget restraints and manpower issues to consider.

Protagonist's aim was to migrate Exchange customers from older platforms to the state-of-the-art Hosted Exchange 2010, to do this they had to find a new outsourcing partner for their existing web hosting and Hosted Exchange business; a partner that was also capable of supporting expansion into cloud services. Protagonist approached LuxCloud and spoke with Marco Houwen, founder and CEO; a new partnership was discussed and Protagonist began the evolution from web hosting company to cloud services provider.

## Solution

Protagonist tested the LuxCloud platform with very positive results, leading to the company selecting LuxCloud to provide a fully automated provisioning platform for delivering Hosted Exchange 2010 and a wide range of cloud services. LuxCloud supplied Protagonist with all the tools and professional services required to ensure a smooth migration of existing customers' mail accounts to the LuxCloud platform, without service disruption or downtime; all was achieved within just one week.

While the LuxCloud platform can also provide integrated billing and control panel functionality, Protagonist opted to use its own solutions in these areas. The LuxCloud platform, being fully flexible and bespoke to each customer, easily accommodated this requirement, and integration between the systems was fast and straightforward.



## Business situation summary

Protagonist needed a reliable outsourcing provider to help it upgrade its existing customers to Hosted Exchange 2010. It also needed a partner capable of helping it meet increasing customer demand for cloud services such as Microsoft Office 365, online backup and security, and many others.

## Solution summary

Protagonist selected LuxCloud to deliver a fully automated provisioning platform for delivering Hosted Exchange 2010 and a wide range of cloud services to its customers, without having to invest time, money and resource into building its own infrastructure.

## Benefits summary

### LuxCloud is helping Protagonist

- offer its customers a range of state-of-the-art Web hosting, Hosted Exchange and cloud services with minimum investment;
- deliver all the advantages of Hosted Exchange 2010 to customers quickly, and with no service disruption or downtime;
- free up resources to focus on its core business and customer service by automating technical provisioning and simplifying customer management;
- evolve successfully from web hosting company to cloud services provider.

## Business benefits

Despite the relationship between Protagonist and LuxCloud being relatively new, the business benefits already delivered are very real.

- Upgrade to a state-of-the-art platform for Linux and Windows web hosting, Hosted Exchange and cloud services, with minimum investment for necessary knowledge, hardware and software.
- A seamless upgrade for customers to Hosted Exchange 2010, allowing them to take advantage of all the latest features.
- Significant time saved on technical management and administration, freeing resources to focus on core business growth and customer service.
- Effective management of customer orders and accounts via the reseller control panel.
- Easy, fast expansion of Software-as-a-Service portfolio with new applications.
- Complete ownership of the end customer relationship.

As Protagonist founder and CEO Coert Coomans explains, the relationship has already proved to be very successful. "LuxCloud provided a smooth migration of 350 existing email accounts to their Exchange 2010 platform. This has allowed us to re-focus our resources from product maintenance to customer service. Moreover, we can offer new products from the LuxCloud application catalogue to our customers. This is a great way to boost ARPU, and all can be achieved in just a few weeks. We only work with the best quality of service, which LuxCloud provides us day in and day out."

## Working together towards an exciting future

With the relationship still in its early stages, LuxCloud and Protagonist are working closely to add new services to its portfolio, including Hosted 365, website security solution, StopTheHacker; these, and more; to be added over the next 18 months.

Coert Coomans sums up the partnership, "Our relationship with LuxCloud has opened up the biggest and best upselling opportunity we have ever had over the last two years. There is a huge opportunity for us to leverage the LuxCloud platform to build even closer, stronger relationships with all our customers in the future."

*"We only work with the best quality of service, which LuxCloud provides us day in and day out."*

Coert Coomans,  
Founder and CEO, Protagonist

## About Protagonist

### Partner profile

Protagonist provides Web hosting, Hosted Exchange, cloud services, SEO, and social media integration consultancy to businesses of all sizes in the Netherlands and Belgium.

### Country

The Netherlands & Belgium

### Industry

Web hosting and cloud services provider.

### Partner size

Protagonist provides internet services since 2000, ranging from virtual and dedicated hosting to international domain name registration. As of 2012, the team consists of 14 enthusiastic professional with years of experience in their own field.

### For more information

For more information about protagonist visit [www.protagonist.nl](http://www.protagonist.nl)

**LuxCloud**

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