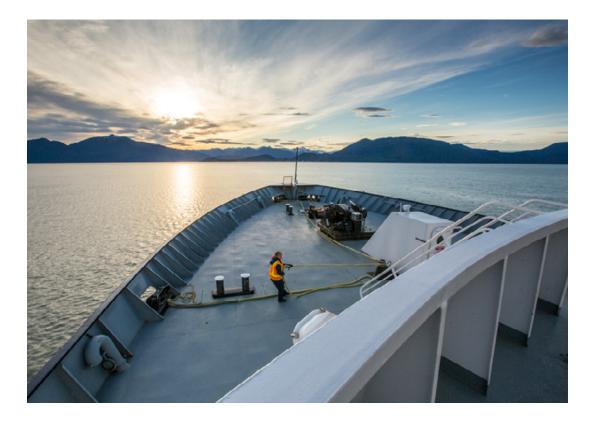# Smooth sailing

Carus gets on board with
IBM bare metal

by Leah Valentine
5-minute read

Every year, all around the world, ferries transport millions of passengers. Getting them to their destinations safely and efficiently presents a great logistical challenge.

That's where Carus, a midsize company based in Finland, comes in. Carus' white label solution supports ferry operators all over the world with an app that passengers can use throughout their journeys.

Before they board, travelers can use the app to reserve tickets, car spaces and cabins. While on the vessel, they can use it to purchase meals and other amenities. And when they reach their ferry destinations, the app facilitates their car rentals, hotel reservations, flights, bus tickets and more.

But operating all over the world comes with a unique set of challenges. When Carus began discussions with a ferry company in Alaska, those challenges became crystal clear. Several of the Alaskan company's destinations were so remote that they didn't always have electricity, let alone a reliable

connection to the internet. Providing security-rich, reliable IT support for passengers headed to these isolated communities represented a new type of problem—one Carus was prepared to solve with help from the company whose servers it has relied on for years: IBM.

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John Bertell, Director of Sales, Carus

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8,870,402

API requests over 7 days

Average response time of

418

milliseconds

Bare metal shines

Carus selected IBM Cloud® Bare Metal Servers on the IBM public cloud to support its new customer. John Bertell, Director of Sales at Carus, explains why they chose bare metal. "It's a challenge for us to use preconfigured cloud servers because we have many different requirements. We need a database server, which doesn't require a lot of processor power but needs a lot of storage. And we need an application server, which requires a lot of RAM but doesn't need any storage. We need a lot of different configurations, and the standard sizing usually doesn't fit. IBM bare metal servers fit us best because we can design and optimize the servers to meet our requirements."

The servers for Carus' Alaskan customer are housed at data centers in Washington,

DC and San Jose, California, and the data is mirrored between the two locations. This helps ensure that the solution remains highly available at all times. Bertell explains why this is

important: "Most of these communities don't have a road connection to another place. Generally, the ferry is their main mode of both transportation and communication."

He continues: "We've had to build some more functionality into our software to make sure it continues to work offline locally and communicates when it can. That might be over satellite from the vessel or it might be from the next port when there's a network connection."

The success of the Alaskan installation convinced Carus to begin using IBM Cloud Bare Metal Servers for some of its other customers, too. Though the challenges may differ from carrier to carrier, the benefits of bare metal help Carus address them all.

For example, for some of Carus' customers, it's not uncommon to load 2,000 passengers onto a ferry in just 30 minutes. Checking tickets and getting passengers to their onboard accommodations efficiently requires Carus' system to be highly reliable during peak times. "That's when IBM bare metal servers really shine," says Bertell. "You need good data communications and good data speed, and all of the different steps in the process need to be very quick if you want to get everyone on board in a timely manner."

Regardless of size and location, security stands out as a common concern among all of Carus' customers. Like all public transit providers, ferry operators have had to step up security in recent years, as have their IT operations. "Security has become more and more important for us. We've seen operators get hit by ransomware attacks. It's all over our industry all of a sudden," says Bertell.

With IBM bare metal servers, Carus and its customers know that their environment is fully dedicated. Says Bertell, "We spend a lot of time and energy setting up security in our data centers to make sure we're maintaining a zero-trust environment," he says.

Repeatable and reputable

Without a doubt, IBM provides Carus with the kind of speed and reliability its customers require. In fact, Bertell reports that during peak times, its customer installations have proven to perform 6,855 bookings per hour. Over seven days, one client installation handled 8,780,402 API requests with an average response time of 418 milliseconds.

Bertell says that IBM bare metal will be the company's preferred configuration going forward, in part because of the platform's repeatability. "We're working on prospects all over the world—the Middle East, Asia, Europe, the US and Mexico," he says. "And we know that we can find a local IBM Cloud wherever we go, and it's going to be the same. We

know we can take exactly what we've done in San Jose and do the same thing in Singapore, Dubai, Melbourne or Baja. It's the same."

Finally, Bertell cites the IBM name as a major advantage for his organization.

"Having a large player like IBM behind us is quite important because we're a small company talking to quite large customers. When they hear that we can tap into the large infrastructure that IBM provides, their interest starts to grow very quickly," he concludes.

Carus

About Carus

Established in 1998, Carus is a global supplier of information systems to the travel and transportation industry. Its solution covers virtually every aspect of the passenger vessel industry, including ticketing, onboard services and more. Carus is based in Finland, and its operations span the globe, from Alaska to Tasmania. The organization employs approximately 150 people, and it serves over 33 million passengers annually.

Solution component

- IBM Cloud® Bare Metal Servers

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