

INSTANA
an IBM Company

Bringing fresh content to 62 million readers every month

Leaf Group ensures website
performance using Instana

Instana, an IBM company

4-minute read

Leaf Group builds and operates some of the most popular lifestyle and marketplace sites on the internet, including Livestrong.com, eHow, Well+Good and Saatchi Art. Its sites receive more than 62 million unique views each month.

Leaf Group's mission is to deliver engaging online experiences that foster community between creators and their audiences. Doing so means maintaining the responsiveness and reliability of multiple websites at scale, without losing focus on innovative design.

When the group recently containerized its applications for greater agility, it integrated [IBM® Observability by Instana®](#) into its deployment pipeline, giving development teams the ability to ensure performance in all stages of build and deployment, optimize their tech stack, and save more time for innovation.

Leaf Group achieved a

66%

reduction in monitoring costs

The solution

reduced

error rates, response times and latency

Ensuring scalability for business growth

Leaf Group's TechOps team is responsible for building and maintaining support infrastructure platforms within the company, with the ultimate purpose of enabling the Developer and Product teams to focus entirely on building the best possible reader experiences for their brands.

"Our business is growing, and we needed to ensure that our environments and processes could scale up automatically to allow for that growth," says Marcus Sengol, Senior Vice President (SVP) of Technical Operations at Leaf Group.

"We had a legacy infrastructure in place, and we automated wherever possible through configuration management," adds Sengol. "But we found that there were still too many manual steps when a deployment happened, requiring someone from DevOps to sync with developers to make sure everything deployed smoothly."





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Marcus Sengol, SVP of Technical Operations, Leaf Group Ltd.

Instana over the competition

With automation in mind, Leaf Group decided to make a shift to containers.

During the transition from traditional to containerized workloads, the TechOps team discovered that their legacy Application Performance Management (APM) solution did not provide the level of automation and visibility required to tackle the complexity that containers, microservices and Kubernetes introduce. “The support for containers was nonexistent,” explains Sengol. “We basically had to translate how they viewed a container as if it was a server, and that did not translate well.”

Seeking a new solution that could automate monitoring and match the speed of the new, containerized CI/CD workflows,





Leaf Group’s six development teams participated in a bakeoff between Instana and Datadog—with Instana emerging as the winner.

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Today, Leaf Group utilizes Instana to automate distributed tracing and root cause analysis, and to track website speed, page load times, latency, and logs, all while making strides to scale the business through automation.

Lower costs, higher performance

By using Instana to automate observability, Leaf Group reduced its monitoring cost by 66% while decreasing latency, error rates and response times.

“After implementing Instana, we had visibility into things that we never saw before,” says Sengol. “Instana makes it very easy for us to drill down into each of our top KPIs and metrics, allowing us to optimize different parts of our stack and locate performance issues. We’ve made improvements based on those metrics, and to this day, continue to do so.”





About Leaf Group Ltd.

[Leaf Group](#) (external link) operates a diverse array of creator-driven websites and online marketplaces targeted at popular lifestyle categories, such as health and wellness and home décor. The company was founded in 2006 and is based in Santa Monica, California.

Solution component

- IBM® Observability by Instana®



About Instana, an IBM Company

[Instana](#) (external link), an IBM Company, provides an [Enterprise Observability Platform](#) (external link) with [automated application performance monitoring](#) (external link) capabilities to businesses operating complex, modern, cloud-native applications no matter where they reside—on premises or in public and private clouds, including mobile devices or IBM Z® mainframe computers.

Control modern hybrid applications with Instana’s AI-powered discovery of deep contextual dependencies inside hybrid applications. Instana also provides visibility into development pipelines to help enable closed-loop DevOps automation.

These capabilities provide actionable feedback needed for clients as they optimize application performance, enable innovation and mitigate risk, helping DevOps increase efficiency and add value to software delivery pipelines while meeting their service and business level objectives.

For more information, visit instana.com (external link).