



Accurate, independent and on demand

Drugs.com provides fast, reliable
medical information with help
from IBM Cloud

by Leah Valentine

5-minute read

Drugs.com provides reliable information about more than 24,000 different medications—their indications, side effects, potential drug interactions, and alternate drug treatment options. This is critical, potentially life-changing content that people across the US and around the world have grown to trust and rely on in the two decades since the company was founded.



Given the importance of the information [Drugs.com](#) provides, the reliability and scalability of the infrastructure behind the website are of paramount importance. Key, too, are the quality and responsiveness of the infrastructure's customer support team.

Since 2011, a combination of [IBM Cloud® Bare Metal Servers](#) and [IBM Cloud Virtual Servers](#) has met—and exceeded—all of these business requirements.

“We use IBM Cloud Bare Metal Servers for our main production servers because we need the most dedicated, most stable performance we can get.”

Andre Sencioles, System Administrator,
Drugs.com

Drugs.com
has as
many as

50

million web visits per month

The website's
page speed
boasts

1 second

download time

High standards

Drugs.com was established in 2001, when its founder purchased the domain name and developed a plan for the business. “The model was to collate the most accurate and ethical medicine information from the most trusted sources, thereby creating the most comprehensive and trustworthy independent medicine resource on the internet,” explains Paul Wager, Chief Operating Officer at Drugs.com

He continues: “Our model is based on advertising return, and our content remains totally unbiased. We have gained an advantage over the years by having incredible depth of information and high ethical standards.”



In fact, Drugs.com has more than 50 million users every month, the majority of whom are in the US. Those users include both patients and healthcare

professionals, and these days they can do more than learn about medications. They can also access an interaction checker for people prescribed multiple



medications, as well as a pill identifier, which serves up current images of medications on demand. “Taking all of that into consideration, we have the potential to deliver hundreds of millions of pages,” says Wager.

The information Drugs.com provides comes from a variety of sources, including the [IBM® Micromedex® with Watson®](#) platform. All content is reviewed and edited by medical professionals before being stored on

dedicated IBM Cloud Bare Metal Servers located at the IBM data center in Dallas, Texas.

Andre Sencioles, System Administrator at Drugs.com, explains: “We use IBM Cloud Bare Metal Servers for our main production servers because we need the most dedicated, most stable performance we can get. Some of the adjacent, supporting services run on IBM virtual machines because of their flexibility and lower cost.”

In 2020, after nearly a decade on the IBM Cloud infrastructure, Drugs.com found that it was approaching the maximum capacity of its dedicated servers during peak hours. This was easily remedied by migrating to a different data center, a process that Sencioles describes as simple and straightforward. “And with the new servers,” he says, “we have lots of room to expand. We basically doubled the performance on each server when we moved to the new data center.”

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Speed and reliability around the clock

In addition to providing trusted, accurate, and ethical information about thousands of medications, Drugs.com prides itself on the speed with which it supplies that information. “We want to make sure that we are always faster than our competitors and always have better content,” explains Wager.

Thanks to web pages built with very light code, thoughtful discretion when selecting advertisements to run, and the power of the IBM Cloud servers, Drugs.com pages are delivered at lightning-fast speed, with an average page download time of less than 1 second.

Having dedicated IBM Bare Metal Servers at the core of its business has helped Drugs.com become a go-to site for people all over the world. But there’s more to it than that, explains Sencioles. “The IBM support team is excellent. Every time we need to interact with someone, we get an immediate response. We don’t need to go through three or four different levels of support to get the information we need. That’s a big advantage for us.”



About Drugs.com

Drugs.com launched its website in 2001. It provides accurate, up-to-date information about more than 24,000 medications, including both prescription and non-prescription medicines. The organization prides itself on providing unbiased, accurate information.

Solution components

- IBM Cloud® Bare Metal Servers
- IBM Cloud Virtual Servers
- IBM® Micromedex® with Watson®

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