Independent Health

CASE STUDY

Independent Health has Tagged Over 90% of its Cloud Resources with Tag Manager, Significantly Advancing its FinOps Journey

"Tag Manager enables us to easily make tag changes across our cloud environment, advancing us on our FinOps maturity roadmap. We are rapidly approaching our target of 100% resource tagging."

Cathi Replogle, Independent Health
IT Program Manager

Independent Health achieved its ambitious resource tagging goals with Cloudsaver's Tag Manager. By unlocking Tag Manager's powerful features they made great strides advancing their FinOps journey.

Introduction

Independent Health is a highly rated nonprofit health insurance corporation with more than 1,100 associates serving nearly 380,000 members. As part of their cloud optimization efforts, Independent Health is pursuing a FinOps methodology, beginning with an accurate chargeback practice and subsequently expanding their focus to encompass other FinOps objectives. Their long-term vision is to migrate all compute operations to the cloud. To facilitate this transition, they plan to thoroughly tag 100% of their cloud resources by the end of 2023.

Challenges

Initially, Independent Health faced challenges implementing necessary tags for their cloud resources due to limitations existing in the tools available on their native platform. They had defined 12 mandatory tags based on a Gartner framework but had only managed to tag around one-third of their resources. Many resources remained either untagged or incorrectly tagged, hindering their progress toward accurate chargeback capabilities.

The Role of Cloudsaver Tag Manager

To overcome their tagging challenges, Independent Health turned to Cloudsaver Tag Manager. This SaaS solution became the central piece in achieving their chargeback goal. Tag Manager supercharged the tagging process with its robust features and empowered the organization to tag nearly all their cloud resources efficiently and accurately.

Priorities and Results

Independent Health approached their cloud optimization with clear and strategic priorities. Up first was the need for accurate chargeback capabilities, a seamless display of their entire tag environment, and complete tagging of all resources with the correct tags. They sought a tool that would not only tag cloud resources, but also extend this functionality to cover resource subcomponents, particularly those that AWS automatically generates when certain resources are created. This meticulous approach to tagging would enable them to identify and eliminate unused or unnecessary resources, resulting in significant cost savings, and open the door to a successful chargeback practice.

Data Privacy

Given the sensitive nature of much of Independent Health's data, it was imperative that any cloud resource management tool they chose adhere to stringent security measures. Integration with existing security protections was a must, ensuring that data remained private and well-guarded. Moreover, the tool had to be sufficiently robust to efficiently handle the large volume of data generated by the organization's operations. Tag Manager met these criteria and Independent Health could confidently navigate its cloud environment while upholding the utmost data security and operational efficiency. Numerous specific benefits emerged as Independent Health increased its use of Tag Manager.

Ease of Use and Efficiency

Because resource tagging was crucial to its FinOps journey, Independent Health needed an intuitive and widely accessible solution. Tag Manager fulfilled this requirement, making the complexities of resource tagging easy to manage. The platform's user-friendly interface enabled anyone responsible for cloud resources to resolve issues with a simple click. As Marcus Olander, Independent Health Infrastructure Architect, related:

"Ease of use is the number one reason we promote Tag Manager within our company. Anyone can access resources, easily build filters, and identify and solve problems with a simple click. No more reports, spreadsheets, or nagging. Instead, the ability to just click it and fix it has been the driving force behind our continued use of this platform."

The ability to make the complex simple is one of the features that encourages ready participation by IT employees.

Monitoring and Cost Savings

Independent Health effectively monitors the vast majority of its resources through tagging. Resources with "application team" tags facilitate immediate notification to the responsible team when issues arise. Untagged resources are promptly identified and frequently deleted, resulting in substantial cost savings. Active resources are not only tagged, but correctly tagged, leading to increased cloud cost savings and successful chargebacks.

Visibility

Independent Health primarily uses AWS as its cloud platform. Like many AWS users, Independent Health has multiple AWS accounts. Its cloud infrastructure includes approximately 700 active Lambda functions and a smaller number of EC2s. It also has a number of Azure resources so multi-cloud functionality is important. Independent Health found great value in using Tag Manager's single dashboard for a comprehensive view of all its resources in one place.

Cloudsaver

Service Remediation and Performance Improvement

Independent Health also gained greater flexibility and focus when remediating services that were underperforming. Filtering resources based on specific tags enabled identification of the responsible individuals who could then promptly correct resource issues. This streamlined the troubleshooting process, enabling quicker resolution and improved overall service performance. Avinash Bhumireddy, DevOps Manager, stated:

> *"We use tags for services that have incurred unexpected costs. Filtering by application, we can pinpoint the responsible person to correct the issue."*

Integration with Security Measures

Utilizing Tag Manager, Independent Health fortified their security practices by seamlessly integrating Identity and Access Management (IAM) with resource tagging.

This integration provided enhanced control and segregation based on tags. As Avinash Bhumireddy affirmed, "We are currently using Tag Manager to segregate access to resources through tags," adding an extra layer of protection to Independent Health's security measures.

Conclusion

Utilizing Cloudsaver Tag Manager is a game-changer for Independent Health's cloud optimization journey. The tool's ease of use and efficiency drove widespread adoption within the company, making cloud resource management accessible to all team members, promoting a culture of accountability and speedy issue resolution. Through thorough tagging, Independent Health achieved greater visibility and control over its environment, successfully reaching their FinOps goals of accurate chargebacks and cost savings. Independent Health exemplifies how the power of a well-executed tagging strategy using Tag Manager drives cloud optimization.

About Cloudsaver

Cloudsaver unlocks the value of the cloud through innovative software and consulting solutions. We equip customers with tools, resources, and best practices to maximize their cloud investments. Located in Overland Park, KS, Cloudsaver is a leader in cloud optimization, serving a client base of global organizations ranging from mid-size companies to Fortune 50 enterprises. For more information, visit **Cloudsaver.com**.