

The Client

[Warmer](#) is a platform for authentic human connection that brings together users and experts based on shared lived experiences. Its goal is to be an “anti” social media platform, in the sense that it runs on real-time conversations between individuals, rather than posts and pictures. Warmer experts are vetted, trained, and background-checked to ensure not just quality control, but that the platform remains a place of positivity. From career shifts, to getting through cancer, to raising an unruly toddler, or surviving a breakup, Warmer’s philosophy is that no degree or AI search can provide what these experiences teach us. They’re messy, challenging, and real — and give us hard-won wisdom that can make all the difference to someone else.



The Challenge

Warmer built its infrastructure in AWS to take advantage of a discounted program catering specifically to startups. Warmer’s original AWS infrastructure included EC2, S3, WAF, Lambda functions, Redshift, and RDS. The team also utilized third-party tools, such as Mixpanel and Notion; and had two applications, one on Android and another in the Apple App Store. When Warmer started investigating potential security solutions, its security team consisted of Head of Strategic Partnerships Dr. Adam Glasofer, Technical Adviser Ravi Paradesi, and an offshore development team.

From day one, Warmer prioritized cybersecurity. “For me, cybersecurity is table stakes,” said Dr. Glasofer. “It’s the backbone of any successful platform.” Though Warmer provides subclinical services, protecting user data is incredibly important to its team. They are not bound by HIPAA requirements, but maintaining compliance is critical from a functional and reputational perspective.

“Though we aren’t legally required to be HIPAA compliant, from a brand and trust perspective, it’s not really any different than protecting any other healthcare data,” shared Brian McCaffrey, Engineering Lead at Warmer.

Warmer needed a partner that not only understood their needs as a startup, but also their desire to stay compliant in facilitating life-altering connections on their platform and managing data driving deeply personal interaction. Excellent cybersecurity hygiene and compliance demonstrate responsible execution of their core mission to help people feel less alone in their struggles.

Warmer recognized a need for more robust security measures if they wanted to continue to grow, but cost constraints posed a challenge to acquiring a full-time CSO and/or similar in-house security expertise.



Warmer Scales Human Connection Startup Security with Cloudticity



The Solution

Cloud security solutions quickly became the company's focus, and AWS-veteran Dr. Glasofer had previously worked with Cloudticity CEO Gerry Miller on healthcare technology projects. So while Warmer interviewed two or three other solution providers, Cloudticity stood above the rest.

"I knew the Cloudticity team and the quality of work that they did," shared Dr. Glasofer. "It was less about making the case that we needed support and more about choosing the right partner for it."

"It was a dedicated CSO versus having an army of security experts on your side with Cloudticity, so it was an easy value proposition," Paradesi added.

Cloudticity provides top-notch security to Warmer, but also helps them save both time and money. They understand the demands of a startup and address their needs with biweekly compliance reports and update recommendations. Cloudticity was able to get Warmer's expanding AWS environment compliant swiftly, and a clear-cut business model gives the Warmer team confidence that they won't ever be surprised by hidden costs, which was a large draw for a startup looking to grow.

"Cloudticity cares about startups," said Dr. Glasofer. "They work with big enterprises, but they were a startup at one point, so I think they understand the journey firsthand and the challenges that founders face. They've been a very, very good partner for us. That was evident from day one."

The Warmer team also values Cloudticity's seamless integration with AWS. When investigating cloud security vendors, they wanted to choose a partner that would still allow their core infrastructure to run on AWS. Cloudticity Oxygen provides them with real time insights, such as a breakdown of the five domains they are measured against for HIPAA compliance: Access Control, Audit Controls, Integrity, Person or Entity Authentication, and Transmission Security. The Warmer team says this summary is much easier to digest than some of the competitors they explored.

“The speed at which you guys were able to scan our environment, give us direction, and also provide support to be compliant was exceptional,” said Dr. Glasofer.

Warmer was also able to rely on Cloudticity not just from a compliance perspective, but from an infrastructure support point of view as well. While Warmer was switching from one vendor to another and couldn't yet hire an infrastructure architect, Cloudticity shared knowledge and guidance to make sure major infrastructure modifications could still be completed smoothly.

The Benefits

Warmer now has the backing of the Cloudticity team to address their needs in real time.

“It's kind of like having an on demand cybersecurity team, which, when you don't have those internal resources, is really, really important,” shared Dr. Glasofer. “A lot of the other solutions that we spoke with can flag issues, and that's great. But then what do I do with that? Who am I tapping for help?”

When Warmer experienced a serious threat to the security of their new website, Cloudticity jumped in to support right away. Once the threat was confirmed to be legitimate, Cloudticity engaged a rapid response team that included CEO Gerry Miller and a team of engineers who stepped in to assess the situation. Within just two hours of discovering the threat, the Cloudticity team helped Warmer to mitigate it and close the loophole. And within 48 hours, they had implemented steps to ensure they wouldn't be vulnerable to a similar threat again.

“We stopped the threat. We put the defense in place, and we strengthened our infrastructure so it couldn't happen again,” said Paradesi. “That was the whole life cycle, which sounds like a lot, but this was done in just two days.”

Cloudticity also saves Warmer time when bringing to life new features and changes within their AWS environment.

“Time is a very valuable resource at a startup,” said McCaffrey. “I can bring the Cloudticity team an idea, they set up a proof of concept, and I can trust that I don't have to go and do that research.”

The Warmer IT team and Cloudticity team now work together seamlessly to protect their platform.

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-Dr. Adam Glasofer, Head of Strategic Partnerships, Warmer

About Cloudtcity

Cloudtcity, based in Seattle, WA, helps healthcare organizations design, build, migrate, manage, and optimize HIPAA-compliant solutions on the public cloud. Founded in 2011, Cloudtcity has helped providers, payers, and companies that sell to the healthcare industry remain secure, compliant, and highly available to patients and customers that rely on them.

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"The big surprise for me was just how knowledgeable the team was," said McCaffrey. "Having a good product is one thing, but sometimes when you have to interact with support teams, you have to jump through hoops to get to someone who can actually help you. I've never felt like that with anyone on the Cloudtcity team. I can tell they know what they're doing by the way we're having a conversation."

Security is the backbone that helps support any successful platform. Because of Warmer's partnership with Cloudtcity, users can be confident that their data are protected on the platform and Warmer is confident in continuing to grow it and facilitate more connections.

"I think holding ourselves to that high compliance standard is really great," shared Dr. Glasofer. "Having a partner that helps keep us accountable and is a second eye on things has been super valuable. I've very much enjoyed having our Cloud Value Architect, Masaru Horiuchi, and the rest of the team step in to be that extra set of eyes and a security blanket."

Cloudtcity is not only helping Warmer operate with confidence, but also partnering with them to change lives and foster meaningful connection. A member of the Warmer team had a close friend reach out for help when they discovered that a family member was having a drug issue. Literally within minutes, the team member received five different resources on the platform to choose from, not only experts, but experts in that specific drug issue.

Warmer's vision is that, eventually, you'll be able to find support and a person who understands on their platform no matter the issue.

"The ability to do that is very, very validating," said Dr. Glasofer. "But without all the things that happen on the backend, we can't make a difference like that."