

Nordstromrack.com | HauteLook Gains Newfound Scalability While Lowering Costs by Converting Images in the Cloud



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NORDSTROM  RACK

The Situation

Nordstromrack.com | HauteLook – the online, off-price division of Nordstrom – is unique in the online, off-price landscape by consisting of two sites with different shopping formats (flash sales and persistent), operating on the same technology platform. Every day, the two sites serve up thousands of product images to millions of customers.

The Challenge

When selling fashion and apparel, images are critical to encouraging online purchases. Consumers want to fully visualize a product before they hit the “buy” button. In fact, Nordstromrack.com | HauteLook prides itself on delivering images that allow shoppers to feel as though they are having a live, in-person shopping experience.

With over two-thirds of Nordstromrack.com | HauteLook’s customers on non-PC devices, the online retailer must create a range of image variants to satisfy shoppers on different devices. For some time, the company used an internally developed image management tool to enable this level of visualization. While their software could resize images on the fly, the company was still challenged by management and scalability issues. It was complicated and expensive to maintain the software in its data center. Plus, they struggled to scale the software to support daily peak traffic.

“Maintaining the software and infrastructure to support an internal solution was neither our core competency nor our goal as a company,” explains Herman Radtke, VP of Engineering at Nordstromrack.com | HauteLook

The Goal

Nordstromrack.com | HauteLook needed to meet two key requirements to support its objectives:

- **Ease of management** - The company wanted to reduce the overhead and expense of running its own image-resizing platform.
- **Ability to scale** - It wanted to seamlessly handle the daily traffic surges that are sometimes 10x higher than their off-peak traffic.

Why Akamai

Staying with a Tried-and-True Partner

Having relied on the [Akamai Dynamic Site Accelerator](#) for years to ensure fast, reliable delivery of its dynamic site content, Nordstromrack.com | HauteLook naturally turned to Akamai to fulfill image conversion needs. Akamai recommended its [Image Converter Cloudlet](#), which makes it possible to dynamically manipulate images – including resizing, cropping, and changing quality and format – in the cloud.

According to Radtke, Akamai was the clear choice given its approach to handling image conversion at the edge of the Internet, closest to site visitors. “Akamai is the only just-in-time, scalable image conversion solution in the cloud, allowing us to handle any amount of traffic that comes our way at any time,” explains Radtke. Within days, the sites were up and running with Image Converter. “The transition was fast and easy. Almost instantly we offloaded management of numerous components in our data center by eliminating our on-premise image solution,” he continues.

COMPANY

HauteLook
Los Angeles, California
www.hautelook.com

INDUSTRY

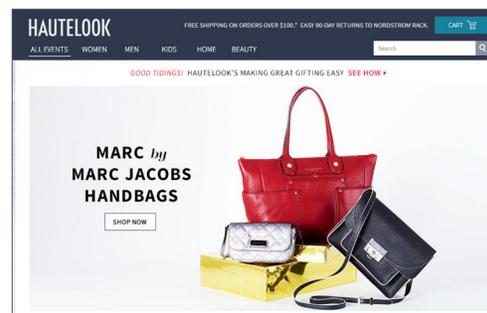
[Retail & Consumer Goods](#)

SOLUTION

[Akamai Image Converter Cloudlet](#)

KEY IMPACTS

- Gained new levels of flexibility and agility around image resizing.
- Scaled to deliver images to any number of site visitors.
- Eliminated unpredictable costs associated with peak traffic.
- Repurposed data center.
- Protected sales.
- Allowed ability to focus on new features.



Nordstromrack.com | HauteLook

Resizing Images on the Fly without Delay

According to Radtke, HauteLook has acquired a new level of flexibility and agility. With Image Converter, HauteLook can scale images appropriately based on the shopper's device and connection. For instance, it can deliver high-resolution images to those using devices with retina displays over WiFi and lower-resolution images to those on smaller phones and slower cellular connections. Moreover, being able to instantly access new versions of image resizing software helps ensure the retailer's daily product releases without delay.

Enjoying Predictable Web Performance and Costs

Radtke also knows the retailer's image delivery will scale to support virtually any amount of traffic – without the company incurring unexpected costs. In fact, HauteLook repurposed its data center to serve other needs.

Moreover, the consistent uptime and fast response of image conversion and delivery via Akamai ensures that Nordstromrack.com | HauteLook delivers the best possible web experience for its customers. "Just as important, by eliminating the need to manage the image conversion software, we can focus on new features that delight our members," concludes Radtke.

About HauteLook

HauteLook, acquired by Nordstrom in March 2011, is an online destination for members to find the top fashion and lifestyle brands at amazing savings. Each day at 8AM Pacific, new sale events begin featuring the best names in women's and men's fashion, beauty, and home décor at up to 75% off.



As the global leader in Content Delivery Network ([CDN](#)) services, Akamai makes the Internet fast, reliable and secure for its customers. The company's advanced web performance, mobile performance, cloud security and media delivery solutions are revolutionizing how businesses optimize consumer, enterprise and entertainment experiences for any device, anywhere. To learn how Akamai solutions and its team of Internet experts are helping businesses move faster forward, please visit www.akamai.com or blogs.akamai.com, and follow @Akamai on [Twitter](#).

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