



City of Los Angeles Streamlines File Transfer Process and Cuts Costs with ScaleCapacity and AWS

Executive Summary

ScaleCapacity, an AWS Partner, collaborated with the City of Los Angeles Information Technology Agency (ITA) to create a new serverless secure file transfer protocol (SFTP) solution that runs on AWS Transfer Family. With this new solution, the ITA has simplified report downloading and sharing for its customers, eased employee onboarding and offboarding processes, and avoided spending hundreds of thousands of dollars on annual management and maintenance costs for a third-party managed SFTP solution.

Contending with a Complex File Management System

[The City of Los Angeles Information Technology Agency \(ITA\)](#) supports agencies and departments across the second-largest city in the US. The ITA's 18 divisions deliver 366 different technology services to both internal and external customers. These services include standard IT services—such as computer support, enterprise applications, and a 24x7 data center—plus digital services including a television station, 3-1-1 Call Center, and helicopter avionics system.

For many years, ITA employees relied on an on-premises secure file transfer protocol (SFTP) solution to download and exchange financial reports from a mission-critical financial management system. The solution used a complex Secure File Transfer Protocol (SFTP) to move files, which some workers struggled to use. "Our users are mostly accountants and business users, and the vast majority of them do not use SFTP as part of their daily tasks," says Nima Asgari, financial systems manager at the City of Los Angeles Information Technology Agency. "This also made it difficult to onboard new employees because they had to learn a process they had very likely never encountered before and a technology that wasn't designed to be used by non-IT staff. We wanted an easier system for accessing and delivering reports."



About the City of Los Angeles Information Technology Agency

The City of Los Angeles Information Technology Agency (ITA) works with agencies and departments across Los Angeles to develop world-class IT infrastructure and applications that provide citizens, businesses, and visitors with modern digital services. ITA has more than 400 IT professionals who operate in 18 divisions and deliver 366 different technology services to internal and external customers.

AWS Services Used

- [AWS Transfer Family](#)
- [Amazon Simple Storage Service](#)

Benefits

- Simplifies report building and sharing for customers
- Eases employee onboarding and offboarding
- Avoids hundreds of thousands of dollars in annual costs for a third-party managed solution

“ScaleCapacity helped us build a serverless SFTP environment on AWS that is significantly cheaper than what we had before. This is costing us a few hundred dollars per month, while other managed solutions could easily have cost us up to \$100,000 per year.”

Nima Asgari

Financial Systems
Manager, City of Los
Angeles Information
Technology Agency

ITA also needed an SFTP solution with better disaster recovery capabilities. “We wanted a method to deliver files to users that didn’t rely on an on-premises data center and network, especially if a disaster occurred within the City,” Asgari says. “We also needed to reduce maintenance and the need to maintain an entire server to manage everything.”

Collaborating with ScaleCapacity to Create a Serverless SFTP Solution on AWS

The City of Los Angeles had already adopted a cloud-first technology strategy, and ITA chose to support this strategy by moving to Amazon Web Services (AWS). Specifically, ITA was interested in [AWS Transfer Family](#), a cloud service that securely scales business-to-business file transfers to AWS storage services through SFTP and other protocols. “The fact that AWS has a managed SFTP service was one of the main reasons we chose to go with AWS over other cloud providers,” says Asgari.

ITA engaged [ScaleCapacity](#), an [AWS Partner](#) that helps companies move legacy servers and applications from on-premises data centers to AWS. ScaleCapacity worked with ITA personnel to create a new SFTP solution that was based on AWS Transfer Family and connected to SFTP via an [Amazon Virtual Private Cloud](#) (Amazon VPC). Using the AWS Transfer Family workflow, ScaleCapacity created steps with [AWS Lambda](#) to coordinate all required steps for processing files, giving ITA auditing and visibility capabilities.

The solution is deployed in two [Availability Zones](#) for improved disaster recovery capabilities. File data is stored in [Amazon Simple Storage Service](#) (Amazon S3) buckets, and the bucket contents are encrypted with [AWS Key Management Service](#) (AWS KMS). ScaleCapacity collaborated with ITA to deploy a continuous integration/continuous delivery (CI/CD) pipeline and then led weekly calls to walk the employees through how the solution works. “It was a very good collaboration between both teams,” says Rajwinder Singh Makkar, head of professional services at ScaleCapacity. “From the beginning, we looked at various solutions before coming up with the final solution, which was based on the input gathered throughout the process.”

Simplifying File Transfers and Easing Employee Onboarding

By running its SFTP solution on AWS Transfer Family, ITA has simplified the process of downloading and sharing important financial documents between employees. “AWS Transfer Family gives our financial management team a way to quickly access critical files online using a method they’re already familiar with rather than struggling to understand SFTP processes,” Asgari says. “Our employees no longer need to spend time dealing with SFTP. Instead, they simply go to a website to get the files they need, which frees up more time for them to work on their daily tasks. Also, administrators don’t have to worry about patching or server maintenance anymore.”

ITA has now streamlined onboarding because new employees don’t need extensive training on SFTP and different teams can manage onboarding and offboarding on their own. “One of the benefits of a simplified file transfer

process is that we can give control to managers of each team," says Asgari. "This solution is easy enough that non-technical managers can do it themselves, without needing assistance from IT in granting and removing access to files."

Avoiding Thousands of Dollars in Annual Operating Costs

ITA is reducing operational costs by eliminating the need for an on-premises SFTP solution and the associated licensing and maintenance costs. "ScaleCapacity helped us build a serverless SFTP environment on AWS that is significantly cheaper than what we had before," says Asgari. "This is costing us a few hundred dollars per month, while other managed solutions could easily have cost us up to \$100,000 a year." With the money saved, ITA plans to invest in other future technology initiatives and continue to move applications to the cloud.

Increasing Storage Performance and Improving Disaster Recovery

The organization has also boosted its data storage performance by implementing the AWS SFTP solution. "Our overall SFTP performance has increased because this solution takes advantage of Amazon S3, which theoretically has no storage limit for our files," Asgari says. As a result, employees can download and share reports faster than before.

Additionally, the solution improves disaster recovery for ITA. "Now, if a disaster affected the City, it wouldn't impact our FTP solution because of the AWS Availability Zones, which are far removed from Los Angeles," says Asgari. "This gives us peace of mind that our key financial data will be protected, now and in the future."

About AWS Partner ScaleCapacity

ScaleCapacity, an AWS Partner based in Los Angeles, California, offers technology and consulting services that enable enterprises and other organizations to move workloads to the public cloud quickly and cost effectively. The company has expertise in the design, deployment, management of enterprise cloud environments, data analytics, machine learning, artificial intelligence, and Amazon Connect. In addition, ScaleCapacity offers ready-to-use solutions in the marketplace.

