

Canvas Uses Aria to Rapidly Scale to Serve Enterprise Customers

Overview

Industry:

Mobile Workforce Technology

Headquarters:

Reston, VA

Challenges

- Fast-growing company needed fully scalable billing solution
- Needed support for multiple usage-based billing models

Solution

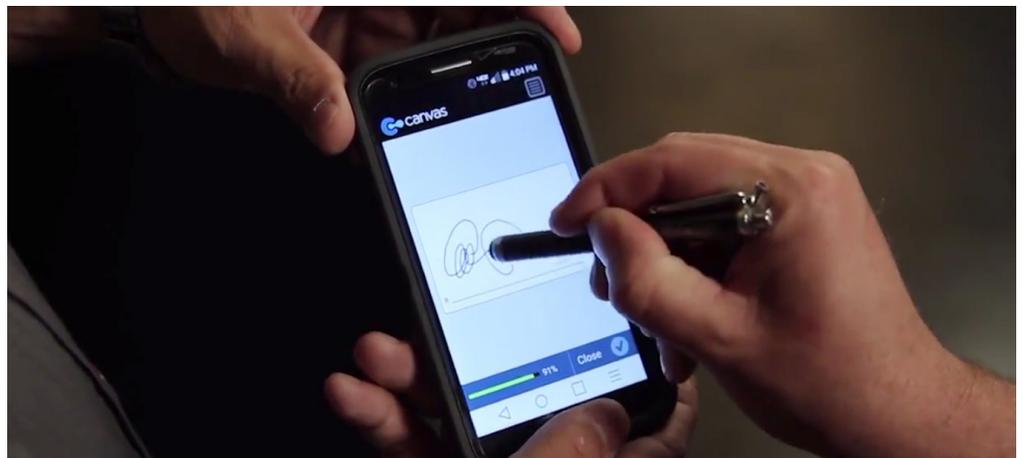
- Easily adapts for both SMB to enterprise customers
- Scalable for unfettered growth

Benefits

- Scaled from hundreds of dollars in monthly billing to nearly \$1 million in seven years
- Gained flexibility to serve small businesses and large enterprise accounts
- Able to offer seamless upgrades and customer self-service

Canvas founders James Quigley, Chris Morrisette and Matt Warner know relying on paper forms and manual processes not only feels a bit silly in the digital age; it leads to an immense amount of time and money wasted due to inefficiencies. When forms are filled out on paper, they can be lost or damaged, filled out with illegible chicken scratch, slow to get back to the office, hard to store, and introduce transcription errors when they are made “digital.” Not to mention that you can’t really customize a paper form or automate where the data goes. In 2008, they set out to do something about it and founded Canvas.

With the Canvas mobile platform, companies can automate their work, replacing slow paperwork and outdated processes. Canvas customers can take any paper form or work process, such as reports, invoices, work orders and estimates, and create digital versions to enable them to collect, share and learn from their data instantly. Major utilities like PG&E have adopted Canvas to eliminate paper forms and increase productivity, and companies in every industry from architecture to waste management are ditching the filing cabinets for Canvas.



The Challenge

Like most startups, Canvas started small with just a few customers as they perfected their product. It quickly became obvious that the demand for its products would be vast and growth would be furious. With just a handful of customers, Canvas was handling billing on a spreadsheet-based homegrown solution. With a growing number of offerings that could be billed in several different ways—simple subscription, per-use, per-submission, etc., it knew that it needed a different billing solution. Canvas needed the ability to: quickly add and customize these offerings, provide self-service portals with instant provisioning, support free trial-to-purchase models, and above all, scale from a few dozen customers to tens of thousands or more.

The Solution

After researching its options, Canvas chose Aria because of its ability to scale to virtually any number of products, offers, billing models and customers. “We could have chosen a simpler solution at first, but then we would have had to switch to something like Aria later when we outgrew it,” said Chris Morrisette, Chief Architect and Co-founder at Canvas. “Of course, that wasn’t an option. We chose Aria because it would work back when we had 10 customers and when we have 100,000.” Aria also gives them the flexibility to handle SMB accounts with independent contractors or huge enterprise accounts with Fortune 100 companies, without any time-consuming code-based customization.

The Benefits

In 2009, when Canvas got started with Aria, they had a couple dozen accounts and were billing just a few hundred dollars a month. In 2017, they have hundreds of thousands of accounts and their revenues have grown exponentially. Today, Canvas is the leader in paperless office technology solutions. “There’s no way we could have knocked out 30,000 invoices a month from spreadsheets,” said Morrisette. “Aria allows us to focus on making our products better, provide better solutions and service to our customers, and continue to grow without worrying about reaching the limits of the billing system’s capabilities.” Aria has enabled Canvas to scale their business and to easily onboard new customers via its integrated self-service page.

Aria gives Canvas the flexibility to offer multiple plans from startup to enterprise-level, and users can upgrade themselves online at any time. The plans are based upon tiers, number of users plus the number of submissions per month. With Aria, Canvas can more efficiently handle invoicing. Canvas can automatically add additional charges for submissions if a customer passes its per-user limit, and it also gives them the ability to send automatic notifications when they reach usage thresholds. This lets customers upgrade before they incur overage charges or at least be aware that they are coming. “Aria allows us to provide excellent customer service with a lot less effort, and having happy customers always leads to having more customers.”

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—Chris Morrisette, Chief Architect and Co-Founder, Canvas

For more information go to www.ariasystems.com
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