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AutoUncle Goes from Startup to Industry Mainstay with Postgres from the Very Start

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Key Takeaways

Designed and architected with the foresight to scale from start-up to enterprise and beyond, Postgres helped achieve massive scale without needing to re-architect.

Achieved scalability for massive database infrastructure, avoiding performance bottlenecks with database growth

Expanded from startup to regional market leader, without needing to re-architect.

Optimized backup and replication solutions to future-proof architecture

Improved management, indexing and archiving capabilities for vital data

Saved significantly on management costs by avoiding the need for an in-house DBA team

Products

360 EDB Community 360

Industry

Automotive

About AutoUncle

Based out of Aarhus, Midtjylland, Denmark, AutoUncle is a site dedicated to helping individual buyers find used cars at the best possible price and sellers get accurate valuations of their own used vehicles while promoting them via AutoUncle's site. In layman's terms, AutoUncle is the only site that tells its users if the price advertised is higher or lower than what you should pay.

Serving 14 countries in Europe, including Italy, Sweden, the UK and Germany, AutoUncle strives to become the premiere online marketplace solution for used vehicles—offering everything from classic cars to the latest models.

But it's not just convenience and market ambition that defines AutoUncle. At the core of the organization is a fundamentally human approach to innovation that extends to all of their employees. AutoUncle's focus reaches beyond a compelling product to the importance of community, trust and fairness. Not only has this earned them respect from their customers, but it makes AutoUncle an employer of choice for those looking to innovate in a collaborative and supportive environment.

Challenge

When AutoUncle's Senior Developer, Co-Founder and Owner Niels Kristian Schjødt thinks about the challenges his company faced, he immediately goes back to the beginning. "What I constantly think about is when we started more than

10 years ago—a really small startup with this huge ambition of making the used car market more transparent," Kristian Schjødt says. "We wanted to make it possible for ordinary people to buy a fantastic car without being experts. It was a big promise and some people thought it was impossible!"

In order to achieve this vision, AutoUncle would have to provide two things:

- A search engine that could let customers search used car markets across multiple countries based on where they reside;
- A database that would allow AutoUncle to process massive amounts of pricing data in order to present site users with the best price for the vehicle of their choice, in their region.

> "The search engine was the first part of our product," explains Kristian Schjødt, "but the other critical part was about accumulating pricing data to create a pricing model that allowed us to put a price on a car that fairly represented its value."

Solution

When it came time to invest in a DBMS solution, AutoUncle had the foresight to choose a flexible, scalable solution. That was easy to manage for a start-up but could scale for an enterprise.

> **"Postgres was the go-to recommendation for rails developers back [when we started] and it still is,"** says Kristian Schjødt. **"And so, the framework we chose to go with had Postgres as our first choice."**

Postgres' reputation has long been a selling point—for those who care about open source database projects, PostgreSQL is often considered the gold standard. Kristian Schjødt relates that AutoUncle quickly realized why.

> **"There are reasons that you come to Postgres, but the reason to stick with it and grow with it is that it's so extendable and easy."** He continues: **"This is exactly what you need right when you're a small startup. You need to be able to iterate fast; so, the fact that you don't have to constantly familiarize yourself with new fundamental technology that has to be maintained from scratch is fantastic."**

The ease of use was vital because from the start, AutoUncle had so much to build out in order to handle the massive flow of data into their database. But in order to continue to build and innovate, AutoUncle would need to invest in Postgres expertise.

As per Kristian Schjødt, the Postgres community was their first resource. "You get so much from the open source version. There's always someone who has made a Postgres extension for something you need—a key value store, a geographical query, a free text search."

But AutoUncle believed they needed even more personalized support.

AutoUncle gets more Postgres mileage with a database specialist

"I think this is true for many people—we found ourselves in kind of a disaster situation," says Kristian Schjødt. "And when it all hits the fan, you need someone who has the knowledge and the expertise to help you solve it."

What specifically alerted AutoUncle to the value of a specialized database partner?

"We were hit with extremely rare cases of data corruption and we needed someone who could walk us through that."

Before EDB brought 2ndQuadrant under its umbrella, AutoUncle worked with that organization to manage their Postgres environment. Their first priority was navigating their corruption issues and getting effective counsel on backup and replication strategies.

"They got us going with BARMAN and other backup tools, so we had constant functionality," Kristian Schjødt relates. During this time, they also received key support on how to migrate essential schema with minimal hassle, ensuring that their architecture stayed intact and no critical data was lost.

Continuing forward with EDB

AutoUncle immediately adopted EDB's Community 360 plan following the acquisition of 2ndQuadrant.

When Kristian Schjødt talks about his company's work with EDB, the first thing he mentions is experience: "We essentially have access to a war room of core Postgres contributors who we can work with on any given problem."

He continues: "We were assigned a personal contact who was very flexible and connected with us a couple of times a week. During these meetings we were able to resolve a lot of bottlenecks and design issues we had, and keep our Postgres database stable and functional."

For AutoUncle, stability and agility were essential to what they needed to achieve, and the combination of EDB and Postgres made sure they did so.

Results

"There's no doubt that EDB has made Postgres better for us," says Kristian Schjødt. "The company has vast resources and experience, and—I truly believe—you always get the most out of something when you talk to the people who know it best, who are experienced at dealing with it."

Making the most of their money

EDB's experience hasn't just helped AutoUncle manage their data, though. It's also helped them manage their spending.

"We haven't had to hire any internal database administrators (DBAs) since working with database specialists like EDB," notes Kristian Schjødt. "This has saved us a lot and let us take better advantage of our resources."

In fact, he emphasizes that both Postgres and EDB's services have been key to the cost savings, AutoUncle has seen: "I feel pretty confident that had we gone with a Microsoft stack or an Oracle stack from the beginning, our licensing and staff expenses would have been very different than they are today."

For AutoUncle, it's not just about the savings, though. Because they're not spending on license costs or a full DBA team, the organization can utilize that money elsewhere. As per Kristian Schjødt, in "business, development, innovation and growth."

Attracting the best talent

Ambition and innovation within the industry have long been top of mind for AutoUncle. With the help of Postgres and EDB, the organization has been able to build and sustain a rapidly growing and evolving database that's both remarkable to behold, and exciting to work with.

When it comes to attracting passionate developers, this has been a great strength.

"Developers like solving problems," Kristian Schjødt explains. "They like a challenge. While many people might think that developers are all about new technology, I don't think that's always the case. But, the thing about Postgres is it's like a Swiss army knife; it gives you new ways to tackle problems and challenges. I think that's very appealing, when you're trying to attract people who want the challenge of making stuff better."

This appeal is only amplified by AutoUncle's commitment to community. "We want to be the most human company possible—to build collaboration and connection," Kristian Schjødt emphasizes. "That's extremely important to us.

In some ways, Kristian Schjødt thinks that might be one of the reasons he and his team are drawn to Postgres. "It might be a very loose connection," he says, "but the PostgreSQL community is also very collaborative—everything everyone does benefits everyone else. That fits with what we care about, too."

Future

As AutoUncle accelerates forward, continuing to strengthen and future-proof their ever growing data sets is front of mind. "We're looking to do more logical replication," Kristian Schjødt notes. "EDB resources are helping with that."

For an organization like AutoUncle, future-proofing is essential; it's also difficult, considering the size of the database.

"I think businesses with databases that are smaller than ours face far fewer complications when it comes to things like backup and recovery," he specifies. "Backing everything up and restoring it can become very heavy when there's so much."

Luckily, with the help of Postgres and EDB, AutoUncle isn't intimidated. Not only do they have access to a wide range of tools and resources, like BARMAN, but a massive slate of experts who are continuing to address every next step they want to take.

AutoUncle is not only ready for the future; they have their foot firmly on the gas.

Want to learn more about AutoUncle and their Postgres journey? **Visit their website** or watch Niels Kristian Schjødt's recent Postgres Vision 2022 session "**Future-proof Your Startup Growth with Postgres**."

Discover how EDB can empower your Postgres database.

About EDB

EDB provides enterprise-class software and services that enable businesses and governments to harness the full power of Postgres, the world's leading open source database. With offices worldwide, EDB serves more than 1,500 customers, including leading financial services, government, media and communications and information technology organizations. As one of the leading contributors to the vibrant and fast-growing Postgres community, EDB is committed to driving technology innovation. With deep database expertise, EDB ensures extreme high availability, reliability, security, 24x7 global support and advanced professional services, both on premises and in the cloud. This empowers enterprises to control risk, manage costs and scale efficiently. For more information, **visit www.enterprisedb.com**.

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