CASE STUDY

How Spacelift helped Picnic take the pain out of manual Terraform processes

spacelift

PICNIC

3,300
Company size

300
Engineering team size

AWS, Terraform
Stack

Picnic no longer has to deal with the perennial problem of state drift — Spacelift's drift detection feature tackles it promptly.

Spacelift's configurability allows Picnic to adapt to existing workflows as they roll out Terraform automation.

Since adopting the Spacelift platform, Picnic's manual Terraform workload and the errors it creates have reduced massively.

Summary

As it pursues its mission to transform grocery delivery logistics technology, Picnic Technologies wants to free its infrastructure team to do impactful work. Spacelift helps them to create the infrastructure they need, without the pain of manual Terraform processes. Now developers can work efficiently on more enjoyable work.

Picnic Technologies wanted to empower its developers to create the infrastructure they needed while taking the pain out of manual Terraform processes. By using Spacelift, they have achieved this, freeing up the infrastructure team to focus significantly more on impactful work.

Gijs van der Voort and Luca Hennart are part of the company's 18-person infrastructure team, managing its cloud compute, databases, environments, and the tools that empower developers to independently operate them – safe and securely. They spoke to us about how Spacelift has made their work more efficient and enjoyable.

The challenge for Picnic

Picnic used to work with Terraform from its local machines, but that's not a scalable approach, and it's error-prone in many different ways.

As Picnic's service continues to expand into new regions and countries, the team continuously delivers new cloud infrastructure with Terraform. Doing that manually is far from intellectually challenging, so they set out to make those operations quick and painless.

They also wanted to give their developers the power to self-serve the infrastructure they required. Developers know best what they need, so the aim was to provide a platform where they could mix and match the different components that they want to have and deploy their infrastructure entirely independently.

In addition to being more efficient, this would mean the team could focus on providing expertise rather than provisioning on their behalf.

Why Picnic chose Spacelift

Whereas its competitors take a simple, opinionated approach to infrastructure delivery automation, Spacelift adopts a holistic view, with the goal of improving collaboration between teams. That's reflected in its design and how the product is structured to be flexible around the different ways teams work.

Picnic recognized that, as innovations in areas like infrastructure as code (IaC) and tools like OPA transform the way people do their jobs, Spacelift's competitors look increasingly out of date.

They understood that Spacelift clearly saw the trends emerging within this domain of technologies, responding with a platform that makes use of more open systems to facilitate tailored workflows.

"This aligns with our approach to technology at Picnic, and the general energy around Spacelift is a lot less corporate than we see from competitors. It's more in line with what we expect from a company we'd want to collaborate with," says Gijs van der Voort.

Picnic's Spacelift experience

Picnic appreciates Spacelift's ease of use. "Spacelift is really convenient to work with wherever we need it, with a UI that makes it accessible to everyone in the company who needs to use the product," says Luca Hennart.

At Picnic, many decisions are based on data, so the team appreciates that Spacelift is very open with its GraphQL API and exposes virtually everything.

Another key factor in the Spacelift experience is configurability, which is essential to Picnic. "As we roll out Terraform automation, we need to encourage adoption from other teams who already have their own workflows. Using Spacelift means we can adapt to those workflows. And that means it is easy to demonstrate the value we can provide to those teams," Gijs explains.

Spacelift's impact on Picnic

Since working with Spacelift, Picnic's manual workload working with Terraform has reduced massively, as have the errors and issues that came with it.

Drift is another problem that Spacelift solves for Picnic. The team faced the constant burden of having to deal with state drift, adding to the manual effort they faced. Now, Spacelift deals with it instead.

> Spacelift's drift detection means that even if anything falls between the cracks, we detect it within a reasonable time. And that on its own makes our day-to-day work a lot more predictable and fun.
>
> **Luca Hennart**
> Infrastructure Team at Picnic

This could be your story

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