

## Leaf Group Reaches 62 Million Passionate Readers Every Month



### Tech Stack

Java, PHP, Node.js, Python, AWS, Docker, Kubernetes, Nginx

### Challenge

Gaining visibility into Containers, Microservices and Kubernetes

### Solution

Automated Distributed Tracing and Root Cause Analysis

### Results

- Monitoring costs reduced by 66%
- Decreased latency
- Reduced error rates & response times

Try Instana

After transitioning to containerized workloads, Leaf Group decided to adopt automated observability to match the speed of their new CI/CD workflows. By integrating Instana into their deployment pipeline, their Development teams are able to ensure performance in all stages of build and deployment, optimize their tech stack, and focus on innovating for their audiences.

Leaf Group builds enduring, creator-driven brands, such as Well+Good, Society6, Saatchi Art, Hunker and Livestrong.com, which reach over 62 million passionate unique visitors every month (source: July 2020 comScore).

Being responsible for building and maintaining support infrastructure platforms within the company, the TechOps team needed to enable the Developer and Product teams to focus entirely on building the best possible reader experiences for their brands.

**“Our business is growing, and we needed to ensure that our environments and processes could scale up automatically to allow for that growth,”** says Marcus Sengol, SVP of Technical Operations at Leaf Group.

“We had a legacy infrastructure in place, and we automated where ever possible through configuration management. But we found that there were still too many manual steps when a deployment happened, requiring someone from DevOps to sync with Developers to make sure everything deployed smoothly,” Marcus added. With automation in mind, the company decided to make a shift to containers.

During their transition from traditional to containerized workloads, they discovered that their legacy Application Performance Management (APM) solution did not provide the level of automation and visibility required to tackle the complexity that containers, microservices, and Kubernetes introduce when it comes to observability. “The support for containers was non-existent. We basically had to translate how they viewed a container as if it was a server, and that did not translate well,” says Marcus.

Seeking a new solution that could automate their monitoring, the six development teams participated in a bakeoff between Instana and Datadog -- with Instana emerging as the winner.

### “We chose Instana for several reasons:

1. It's intuitive, automatically providing the visibility required for our containerized applications
2. Instana is cost-effective, being one-third of the cost of our previous APM solution
3. The support is second to none. The best I've ever seen,” explains Marcus.

**“After implementing Instana, we had visibility into things that we never saw before.”**

Today, Leaf Group utilizes Instana in various ways, from tracking website speed, page load times, latency, and logs, all while making strides to scale the business through automation.

**“Instana makes it very easy for us to drill down into each of our top KPIs and metrics, allowing us to optimize different parts of our stack and locate performance issues. We've made improvements based on those metrics, and to this day, continue to do so.”**