

How a Shipping Container Nearly Cost Me My Best Career Opportunity - IO



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IO Blog



How a Shipping Container Nearly Cost Me My Best Career Opportunity

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As a contractor for nearly 9 years working with the U.S. Military and government, I was extremely fortunate to travel globally to military bases in order to provide support for and to deploy a cyber-security software solution. I made multiple trips to both Afghanistan & Iraq to train our active duty military members and steer them on the correct route. On my last trip to Iraq I had my first experience with what was described to me as a "Modular Container Data Center" to which we had to enter & upgrade a server. I had been to a few data centers before while working in Iraq and had stayed in a "CONEX" (an acronym for "Container Express", which is used by the military), but I couldn't picture how a data center could work in a container.

To my surprise as we pulled behind the warehouse a container just like the ones I viewed on cargo ships was sitting in front of us, with what appeared to be a bundle of cables protruding from the side. The members of the military I was with were laughing because I was shaking my head in amazement that this was where the server was stored. They opened the double doors; racks on wheels filled the container, and hanging on the walls were apartment-style

air conditioning units. The hole from which the gaggle of wires was escaping from looked as if a chainsaw had been used to make more room to fit even MORE wires. Behind the container outside was what looked like.....a basic generator, the kind you would find in your neighbor's backyard.

The last memory I have about the experience is being back in the classroom, and the guys laughing when I told them I had visited their "Datacenter Double-wide."



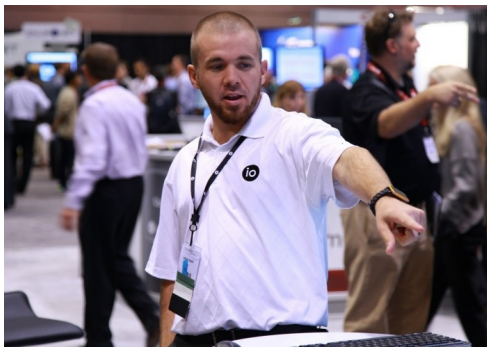
A couple of years later, I was out of the government contracting sector and actively looking for a job in IT that could match my drive and desire to be on the cutting edge of technology and innovation. I utilized multiple job sites and social media platforms searching for an ideal position when I came across a job title that seemed like a perfect fit. But after clicking on the link and reading the headline: "Company is a Leader in Modular Data Centers", I immediately flashed back to my Iraq experience and thought to myself; there was nothing innovative or exciting about those containers, so no WAY would I want to work with modular data centers.

Looking back now I realize I couldn't have been more wrong. I was comparing a double-wide trailer or a shipping container to the IO.Anywhere® manufactured, factory-tested, UL-listed, and software-defined data center infrastructure modules being deployed by IO.

No comparison, as I was about to discover.

About a week later I landed on a YouTube video titled "**The Last Snowflake**". It features IO's CEO & Product Architect, George Slessman, presenting the keynote at Uptime Symposium in which he vividly describes the solutions that IO provides as a company. A key section that drew me in was when he used a powerful, relatable metaphor on how businesses slap an "advanced" sticker on a pickup truck to advertise their company when there is nothing advanced about it....except for the words on the decal.

After watching the video I immediately visited io.com and submitted my application and resume. Listening and digesting the CEO's message pulled me in to apply, but throughout the intensive hiring process I was amazed by the entire company. Beginning with the recruiting manager who could actually discuss software and engineering with intelligence, to my first glimpse of the jaw-dropping data center in Phoenix, it was evident that IO was doing big things and I needed to be a part of it all.



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Fast-forward to today and I am the Director of IO.OS® Technology Training here at IO, collaborating with some of the smartest and most experienced engineers in the data center world. I am thrilled to be a team member with an industry leader (and companies like McLaren and Goldman Sachs seem to agree) that is reinventing the entire approach to data centers.

I feel lucky to have found a place that is more than just buzzwords.

Brian Fanzo is Director of IO.OS® Technology Training at IO.

Tags: Brian Fanzo, CONEX, data center, data center 2.0, Data Center Container, datacenter, Goldman Sachs, government, i/o ANYWHERE, IO.OS, McLaren, military, modular, Modular Data Centers, symposium, technology training, The Last Snowflake, training, Uptime

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