

# AWS Partner Story: Stonehenge NYC & Klika Tech – Bringing the Apartment of the Future to Today’s Tenants



*“By integrating Alexa for Business with Salesforce and by using AWS IoT to connect things within apartments, we believe we can create an enjoyable and delightful experience and provide peace of mind to our tenants in completely new ways.”*

*- Thomas Parisi, chief technology officer at Stonehenge NYC*

## In a digital world, it’s up to the real estate industry to keep pace

Anyone who has ever rented an apartment has likely experienced the outdated rental approval process that many property management companies use. The inefficiencies don’t stop after approval: submitting maintenance requests, finalizing lease renewals, and giving guests permission to come in and out of a building can be time-intensive and frustrating experiences.

Stonehenge NYC knows its tenants deserve and expect better. And since its founding, the company’s invested time, resources, and brain power to explore how technology can simplify and enhance the rental process. “We want to make every aspect of renting with us easy and delightful for tenants,” says Tom Parisi, chief technology officer at Stonehenge NYC. “Our focus on using cutting-edge technology throughout our organization allows us to differentiate ourselves in the real estate market.”

## Leveraging technology to provide a better rental experience

“We believe experimenting with and implementing new technology solutions within our processes and teams are key for us to be even better,” says Eyal Reggev, Stonehenge NYC president. Stonehenge NYC wanted to differentiate itself in the market by becoming technology-driven on its backend to drive efficiencies throughout its entire organization that result in a better customer experience. To modernize the sales and leasing process, the team turned to [Salesforce](#), a Customer Relationship Management (CRM) platform leader.

“We initially explored how we could go digital to manage the company more efficiently, and we found success early on using Salesforce throughout the organization,” explains Reggev. “With time, we understood that the technology we use to drive internal efficiencies could also help us improve the rental experience and our ability to build more of a connected community for our tenants.”

## About Stonehenge NYC

**Stonehenge NYC and its affiliated companies are a vertically integrated, private real estate group with expertise in investment management, property management, development, design, construction, and leasing.**

## Goals

- Modernizing rental processes to provide a better tenant experience
- Using technology to differentiate itself in the real-estate industry
- Building a Digital Native Apartment

## Benefits

- Providing a new, digital-first experience for tenants
- Giving management faster insight into data
- Streamlining responses to tenant requests



## Salesforce inspires Stonehenge NYC to dream big

Salesforce plays an integral role in Stonehenge NYC's relationship with technology. "Imagine you're an artist: you have a crisp, clean piece of paper with nothing on it, and you have your palette with millions of colors. That's Salesforce for us," says Parisi. "By using Salesforce, we feel we have the paper and a palette with all of the colors we can dream up, and we can design and do whatever we want. That's the value Salesforce brings to us. It's a platform that's easy to integrate with. It's extensible, it's scalable, and it's secure. It just works." Stonehenge NYC uses a wide range of Salesforce products, including: [Marketing Cloud](#), [Sales Cloud](#), [Service Cloud](#), [Chatter](#), and [Pardot](#).

After building an automated leasing process, Stonehenge NYC continued to customize its Salesforce application, adding system integrations and eventually creating its own proprietary system. As the company continued to develop its Salesforce application and explore how new technologies, such as Internet of Things (IoT), would be key to its digital transformation journey, it chose to migrate its applications to Amazon Web Services (AWS). "Today, everything is managed through Salesforce and stored on the AWS Cloud," says Reggev.

## From tenant to partner to game changer: Klika Tech helps Stonehenge NYC take Salesforce to the next level

At the heart of Stonehenge NYC's evolution of its Salesforce system and adoption of AWS technology is its longstanding partnership with [Klika Tech](#). As a former tenant, Klika Tech's president and chief operating officer Gennadiy Borisov knows his way around a Stonehenge NYC-managed apartment. "After living at a Stonehenge NYC-managed property for many years and getting to know the Stonehenge NYC team and their willingness to use technology in new ways, we found we had a lot to offer the company to help evolve its technology footprint."

As an AWS Consulting Partner focusing on the Internet of Things (IoT), Big Data, and Data Visualization solutions, Klika Tech prioritizes what it calls collaborative co-creation. The Klika team values their ability to gain a deep understanding of a company's needs through continuous discussion and focuses on bringing to life the ideas they create with clients.

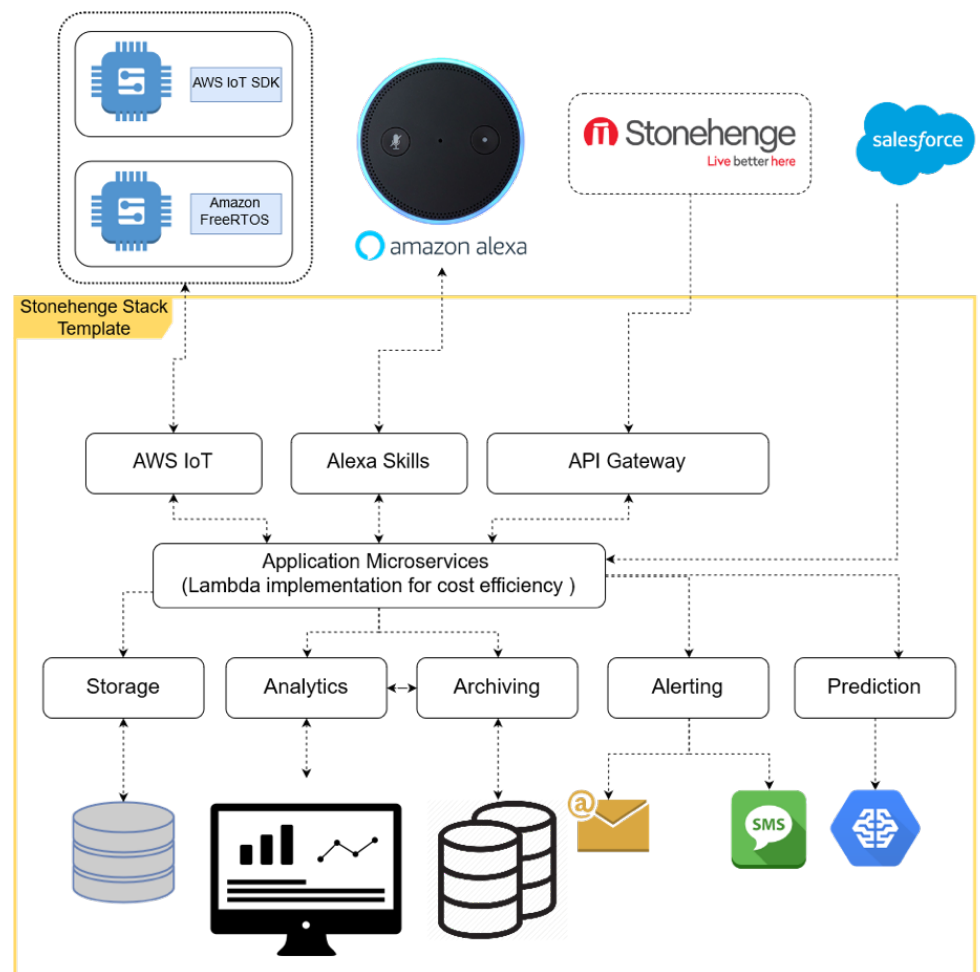
Klika Tech and Stonehenge NYC came together to imagine new ways to meet the needs of technologically-savvy tenants. From those meetings, the group began exploring the possibilities for integrating intelligent voice solutions using [Amazon Alexa for Business](#) with Salesforce and taking advantage of IoT-connected devices streaming data to Salesforce and AWS. "We agreed there was a strong divide between the expectations a digital-first world builds and the experience of renting a traditional New York apartment," says Borisov. "From these discussions, the idea of a new apartment DNA, the Digital Native Apartment, came to life."

### ***What is Alexa for Business?***

***Alexa for Business makes it easy for you to use Alexa in your organization. It gives you the tools you need to manage Alexa-enabled devices, enroll your users, and assign skills at scale. You can build your own custom voice skills using the Alexa Skills Kit and the Alexa for Business APIs, and you can make these available as private skills for your organization.***

“Alexa, ask Stonehenge NYC to create a maintenance request for the dishwasher.”

With the full support of Stonehenge NYC’s executive team behind them and unlimited access to a vacant apartment in a Stonehenge NYC building, Klika Tech got to work building a proof of concept (PoC) to demonstrate what’s possible using Alexa for Business, Salesforce, and [AWS IoT](#). As part of the PoC, AWS IoT monitored the AC in the apartment and controlled it using Alexa. They created a system by which tenants can report service issues via Alexa which are automatically entered into Salesforce, where they can be monitored and addressed by management. In the Stonehenge NYC executive offices, Alexa provides reports to management on their entire building portfolio including move ins/outs by date and location, as well as rental and available apartment statistics.



*How Stonehenge NYC uses Alexa for Business, Salesforce, AWS IoT, and additional AWS Services to develop a Digital Native Apartment experience for tenants*

“We thought integrating with Salesforce would be one of the cornerstones of the smart apartment approach, and so we began the project by building Alexa private skills, managed by Alexa for Business, to integrate with Salesforce for both tenants and the back office,” says Andrew Mazur, Head of Delivery and R&D at Klika Tech. “We then developed custom hardware to connect AC units within the apartment to the AWS IoT cloud so that all data being generated by the device would be sent to AWS.”



Klika Tech used AWS IoT SDKs and libraries to connect the devices to AWS, and this integration led to a backend with a serverless architecture approach. “We are using [Amazon API Gateway](#) and [AWS Lambda](#) functions for incoming requests,” says Mazur. “We’re also using [AWS IoT Device Management](#), [AWS IoT Analytics](#), AWS IoT Rules Engine, and are looking at how we can use [AWS IoT Device Defender](#) to track malicious code attempting to spy on devices.” The team is using Alexa voice services, [Amazon Simple Storage Service \(Amazon S3\)](#) for data storage, [Amazon DynamoDB](#) and [Amazon Relational Database Service \(Amazon RDS\)](#) for database services, and [Amazon Simple Notification Service \(Amazon SNS\)](#) and [Amazon CloudWatch](#) for health checks.

### Changing the tenant experience one request at a time

The team at Stonehenge NYC did not think Salesforce could become any more vital to their business. They were pleased to be proven wrong after seeing what’s possible with Alexa and the device data they can collect using AWS IoT.

“The tenant experience is so important to us,” says Parisi. “By integrating Alexa for Business with Salesforce and by using AWS IoT to connect things within apartments, we believe we can create an enjoyable and delightful experience and provide peace of mind to our tenants in completely new ways.”

It’s not just tenants who benefit. “With the data we collect in Salesforce and the ability to open and close tickets on the spot, I’m able to analyze how quickly a maintenance issue was resolved and proactively address any trends I notice with response times, device issues, and so forth,” says Reggev.

Stonehenge NYC has also seen how, with a simple vocal command, technology can help its leasing team better understand inventory in real-time and focus its efforts more effectively. “To be able to give a leasing agent the ability to say, ‘Hey, Alexa, can you tell me how many one-bedroom units are available on the Upper East Side?’, and get an accurate number immediately pulled from Salesforce, opens up a lot of opportunities to both save time and make more informed decisions that drive better business outcomes,” says Parisi.

The next step in the project’s evolution is making tenants’ lives even easier with the combined power of Alexa for Business and Salesforce. “We want our tenants to be able to say, ‘Alexa, Kate’s coming to see me at 6 pm. Give her a key.’ To turn a task that’s still painful in many buildings – getting access for guests – into a simple voice command is so powerful. That’s the potential we see with our Alexa for Business integration with Salesforce,” says Reggev. “And it’s just beginning. For us, the future holds so much possibility. And we love it.”



Klika Tech delivers global software solutions with a focus on IoT, Big Data, and Data Visualization. The company co-creates hardware, embedded products, and software to deliver IoT solutions for its global clients.



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