

At a Glance

Vitals

Employees 3,000

Annual Revenue \$700 million

Location Eastern United States

The Competition

vRealize Automation

Red Hat CloudForms

Homegrown Application

Technology

Virtualization VMware vCenter

Public Cloud Amazon
Web Services

Configuration Manager
Chef (multiple instances)

Orchestration vCloud
Orchestrator

Ticketing ServiceNow

Operating Systems RHEL,
CentOS, Windows

VMs 10,000+

CloudBolt Dramatically Reduces Time-to- Value, OpEx for Major Software Enterprise

This enterprise designs learning and education software for enterprise/school groups. It's a global leader in enterprise technology and innovative solutions that improve the experience of millions of students and learners around the world every day.

Challenge

Before CloudBolt, the enterprise relied on a complicated integration of vCloud Orchestrator, Chef, and a ticketing system to run their server provisioning processes. They struggled with slow turn-around time, a lack of governance, and difficulty understanding their costs.

Solution

With CloudBolt, the enterprise enabled:

- ✔ Dramatically faster VM provisioning and customer onboarding times
- ✔ Chargeback/shameback with cost tracking and transparency across lines of business
- ✔ Policies and quotas for controlling usage and access to resources
- ✔ Deployments that conformed to company security and operations policies
- ✔ Real-time software license management and tracking
- ✔ Self-testing of the operations environment

Improved margin reporting and pricing

Interactive reports of infrastructure usage allowed enterprise IT to provide accurate actionable information to line-of-business owners about resource costs. This information was used to set pricing and report on margins. IT was also able to differentiate high-value clients from ones that required more resources than they were paying for.

Customer satisfaction through better availability

Because the enterprise utilized CloudBolt's multi-tenant capabilities to expose provisioning capabilities to their hosted customers, it was critical that every step of the process worked perfectly. They used CloudBolt's Continuous Infrastructure Testing (CIT) to perform end-to-end testing of the entire provisioning process. If a hypervisor or orchestration tool fails, CIT warns system administrators, giving them time to proactively address the issue before end-users notice.

Faster turn-around with smart automation and integrations

CloudBolt's orchestration hooks feature enabled the company to tightly integrate with existing workflow components. For example, InfoBlox was configured within CloudBolt for IP address management during provisioning and modification of networks. Orchestration hooks also enabled CloudBolt to create ServiceNow tickets when provisioning requests were approved and to update those tickets as servers were modified or deleted. CloudBolt allowed existing infrastructure to be partitioned into "environments" using characteristics such as hypervisors, networks, applications, OS templates, and more. These environments were exposed to end-users via simple order forms and a unified API that let them request systems and application stacks without regard to where those resources would be deployed. **The time required to provision a single VM was reduced from one business day to just 15 minutes. The time to onboard new hosted clients was reduced from seven days to under 30 minutes.**

Building a hybrid cloud with CloudBolt didn't mean starting over

In addition to discovering the enterprise's pre-existing servers, CloudBolt also connected to their Chef installation and automatically imported the available Chef recipes, cookbooks, and roles. Chef content was then ready to re-use from within CloudBolt as applications that could be added to and removed from servers. CloudBolt did the same for their vCloud Orchestrator environment, exposing the flows so that they could be executed automatically or manually at any point during the server lifecycle.

Benefits

Here were the benefits experienced by the enterprise thanks to CloudBolt:

- ✔ Time-to-value — 2.5 days to implement core functionality and integrate with existing systems and tools
- ✔ Simple and powerful solution — implementation performed without lengthy professional services engagement
- ✔ Lower OpEx — CloudBolt was less expensive to operate and maintain than prior solutions
- ✔ Capability — successfully met all the enterprise's use cases out of the box
- ✔ Flexibility — provided the enterprise an extensive choice of clouds and tools
- ✔ Governance — Cost & license tracking provided management with unified environment visibility
- ✔ Value — Unique features such as license management and self testing added significant value

CloudBolt was less expensive to operate and maintain than prior solutions.

During the enterprise's evaluation of CloudBolt, they were impressed by the speed of implementation. After day one, CloudBolt was integrated with Chef, vCloud Orchestrator, and vCenter. After day 2, all required use cases had been met. Subsequent time was spent configuring additional integrations with the enterprise's workflows by using CloudBolt's upgrade-safe orchestration hooks feature.

Compared to the competition, the enterprise's IT preferred CloudBolt's flexible and powerful user interface/API combination. The intuitive self-service interface meant users would not require ongoing training to make changes and alterations as their needs evolved. And the API meant DevOps teams could access IT resources programmatically. The enterprise also liked the seamless upgrade process: CloudBolt is updated just as easily as it installed, and customizations are upgrade safe.

Overall, the enterprise cited CloudBolt's capabilities as being both compelling and accessible. When coupled with dramatically reduced OpEx and time-to-value measured in hours rather than weeks, CloudBolt's advantages were clear.