

At a Glance

Vitals

Annual Revenue \$1.8B+

Employees 7,300

HQ Denham, Buckinghamshire,
England

NYSE IHG

Technology

Virtualization VMware, AWS,
Azure, CenturyLink Public
Cloud, Google Compute
Engine, Nutanix Acropolis

Configuration

Management Chef

Enterprise Ticketing

ServiceNow

IP Management Infoblox

Load Balancing F5

OSs RHEL, CentOS, Windows

VMs 7,000+

CloudBolt Creates Unified Cloud Interface for IHG

InterContinental Hotels Group (IHG) is an English multinational hotels company headquartered in Denham, UK. IHG has more than 5,000 hotels and nearly 750,000 guest rooms in almost 100 countries around the world. Its brands include Candlewood Suites, Crowne Plaza, Even, Holiday Inn, Holiday Inn Express, Hotel Indigo, Hualuxe, InterContinental and Staybridge Suites.

Challenge

Because of the size and complexity of their IT infrastructure, IHG utilizes four different public clouds. They want the flexibility of multiple public clouds so they can use the platform that provides the optimal environment for each workload, as well as to protect themselves against price increases and instabilities in any one public cloud.

The challenge this created was that administrators needed to understand and use four different interfaces to locate, manage, and provision compute resources.

They have used VMware's vRealize Automation (vRA) for managing VMware servers, but it did not provide support for all four of the public clouds that they need. Furthermore, they found vRA to be extremely time-consuming to maintain, with upgrades requiring a multi-month processes, and a large professional services cost. Finally, for the clouds vRA could deploy to, the process of installing multi-server, multi-tier apps on any one of these public clouds was onerous and required the administrator to use multiple different interfaces (the public cloud console, Chef, and the new VM itself).

Solution

IHG initially selected CloudBolt as their Cloud Management Platform for their four public clouds while they still used vRA to manage VMware. In under 10 months, and multiple years left on their vRA contract, **IHG decided to move all managed resources from vRA to CloudBolt** due to the ease of use, extensibility, and broad technology support.

CloudBolt provided IHG a single user interface and API through which they can now deploy complex apps to VMware and any of the four public clouds they use, manage these apps and their constituent servers over the course of their lifecycle, and automate their business policies and best practices surrounding server deployment and management.

Their IT group has built blueprints in CloudBolt for deploying 40+ node Apache Hadoop clusters to the public cloud. After being deployed, these services can be scaled up and down from CloudBolt, and eventually decommissioned. Since CloudBolt has native Chef Enterprise integration, they are able to perform these tasks without the end user needing to separately work in the Chef UI. CloudBolt coordinates the bootstrap of the Chef agent on new VMs, associates nodes with the proper roles in Chef, and checks for success or failure of the Chef runs.

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Benefits

After implementing the CloudBolt solution, IHG experienced benefits in the following areas:

Self-Service

CloudBolt's interface is available to development, QA, and production support groups at IHG, so they are now all empowered to order what they need, when they need it without having to open a ticket for IT and wait for that group to fulfill the request.

Agility

Since consumers of IT resources can get what they need when they need it, they have eliminated a blocking step that is present in many companies when a new project starts up. Developers can deploy complex application stacks within minutes of realizing they need them, which means they can deliver valuable results to the business.

Vendor Independence

Having the abstraction of CloudBolt over the various public clouds means that they are insulated from changes that those vendors make, and can more easily switch from one to the other without user retraining.

Cost-Reduction

CloudBolt brings tools for managing VM sprawl and protecting against unexpectedly large bills from the vendors. Through the use of expiration dates for servers, configurable expiration behavior, visibility into all VMs across all technologies, quotas, cost tracking, and easy deprovisioning of servers & services, IHG is ensuring that they are paying for only what they need and use.

VM Power Scheduling

IHG now has out of the box functionality to run VM power schedules for all VMs across clouds. For non-production servers this is used to automatically power off the VMs each night and turn them back on in the morning saving money on idle VMs when developers are not accessing them.

Resolving Shadow IT

The usage of GCE at IHG started as a development group using it under the radar. The central IT group learned of this and was able to use CloudBolt to bring GCE into the fold and make it a sanctioned, controlled option, rather than trying to fight it and alienate one of their internal customers.



In the era of cloud, **CloudBolt** helps IT and developers work better together by empowering them with better visibility, control, and self-service. CloudBolt delivers the world's most user-friendly cloud management platform, so enterprises can provision, orchestrate, and consume IT resources across hybrid cloud, multi-cloud, and container environments.