

Private cloud spurs significant growth

blueAPACHE solidifies its leadership position with a cloud infrastructure built on HPE Helion technology

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– Chris Marshall, Founder and Managing Director, blueAPACHE

Objective

Service provider builds private cloud to address customers’ evolving needs.

Approach

Investing in its own cloud infrastructure enables blueAPACHE to evolve and expand its ITaaS model.

IT Matters

- Significantly scaled its infrastructure from one to three data centers
- Created a level of business accountability through complete IT ownership
- Combined engineering expertise and cloud technology to deliver complete end-to-end solutions

Business Matters

- Incrementally grew its cloud infrastructure to minimize upfront investment
- Offered greater relevance to clients through packaged IT services
- Built stronger client relationships
- Significantly grew its annuity services revenue

“To be accountable and to have 100 percent level of influence over those services, you can’t aggregate or use third parties—you need to build and own the technology.”

– Darron Hutchison, Marketing and Communications Manager, blueAPACHE



Chris Marshall, Founder and
Managing Director, blueAPACHE

Leveraging the cloud advantage

There’s no question that information technology is changing at a rapid pace. To remain competitive, businesses must be at the top of their game strategically and demonstrate great foresight. [blueAPACHE](#) is one such company that, keenly aware of evolving trends, found a niche that has enabled the organization to grow exponentially in today’s IT market. Hewlett Packard Enterprise Helion Cloud technology is key to that success.

The Melbourne, Australia-based service provider looked to HPE to help deploy the company’s private cloud. And in five short years since its implementation, the company has been able to scale tremendously, grow its IT as a Service (ITaaS) offering, and differentiate itself from the pack with its unique Disaster Recovery as a Service (DRaaS) solution.

Choosing the right cloud path

While blueAPACHE has been serving clients and their IT needs since the company’s inception in 1998, it wasn’t until 2002 that it started offering its ITaaS model, relying primarily on its technical engineers to meet client needs. It was during this shift from a procurement and implementation company to a service organization, that blueAPACHE began noticing an evolution in the way its clients were consuming IT. The company knew that if it wanted to remain competitive and, more importantly, relevant to its clients, it needed to evolve to the cloud.

The hard choice at the time was whether to invest in its own infrastructure or become a cloud broker and aggregator. According to Chris Marshall, founder and managing director at blueAPACHE, “We are an organization that prides itself on our technical capabilities and the depth of our skill set. A decision was made to make that investment, which would allow us to leverage the capabilities that we have in house and to also ensure that we could be accountable for the solutions that we were delivering to our clients.”

Private cloud drives growth—and more

In deploying its cloud solution, Marshall and Hutchison concur that HPE was the obvious choice. In 2010 blueAPACHE very quickly built its own private cloud using HPE Helion CloudSystem with both HPE BladeSystem c3000 and c7000 Enclosures and HPE 3PAR StoreServ 7400 Storage. One of the key advantages of the HPE solution was that blueAPACHE could start with a modest deployment—and investment—and grow from there. “The ability to scale out as our business grows,” says Marshall, “means that our capital costs are aligned with our business growth without having to make a big investment upfront.”

HPE Services were also integral to the deployment and configuration of the solution, especially as the company’s infrastructure has grown. In just five years, the company has moved from one data center to three geographically disparate data centers along Australia’s eastern seaboard. With many of blueAPACHE’s engineers based in Melbourne, the company relied on HPE Services—specifically HPE Installation and Deployment Services and HPE Support Plus 24—to help deploy, configure, and support its HPE Helion Cloud infrastructure in those remote data center locations.

Today blueAPACHE’s business is based on six pillars, including managed services and support, Internet and private network, hybrid and private cloud, telephony and collaboration, software and solutions, and consulting and procurement. blueAPACHE owns the underlying technology across all six of those pillars. “We are in a unique position in Australia,” admits Hutchison, “we supply everything a company needs from a technology and communications perspective on a per-user/per-month basis.” He adds, “We are one of the local forerunners of IT as a Service and have been delivering technology this way for five years.”

Hutchison also cites HPE’s role in blueAPACHE’s success, especially in terms of HPE’s technology leadership and the ongoing partnership between both companies. “We are delivering business continuity and disaster recovery solutions on HPE technology by approaching the challenge with innovation and working closely with HPE engineers.”

Differentiation in the cloud

In addition to being able to scale its infrastructure significantly, blueAPACHE has seen extensive business growth. Today the company offers a complete set of end-to-end offerings, and is truly a leader in the IT space, especially with its HPE 3PAR StoreServ Storage as a disaster recovery (DR) service solution. As a result, it’s seeing a larger percentage of annuity services as part of its revenue.

At the organization’s inception 16 years ago, 100 percent of its revenue was procurement and professional services. Before launching its private cloud in 2010, about 40 percent of its revenue came from annuity services. And today, annuity services account for over 50 percent of the company’s revenue. An added benefit of shifting from procurement and implementation to a services focus is that the company is building closer relationships with its clients.

Likewise, its clients are benefitting from greater flexibility and choice. HPE technology enables blueAPACHE to package up services into products, which is a key part of ITaaS. Hutchison explains, “Customers can pick and choose what they want, when they want it.” Marshall adds, “HPE technology has allowed us to transform our business into to an organization that is very relevant for today’s market.”

Case study
blueAPACHE

Industry
Infrastructure
as a Service,
Service Provider

Customer at a glance

HPE Helion Cloud solution

- Private cloud

Hardware

- HPE Helion CloudSystem
- HPE BladeSystem c3000 Enclosure
- HPE BladeSystem c7000 Enclosures
- HPE ProLiant BL460c Gen8 and Gen9 Server Blades
- HPE 3PAR StoreServ 7400 Storage
- HPE Virtual Connect FlexFabric 10GB/24-port Module for c-Class BladeSystem
- HPE StoreVirtual P4500 Storage Nodes
- HPE StoreVirtual P4300 Storage Nodes
- HPE StorageWorks X1600 Network Storage System

HPE services

- HPE Installation and Deployment Services
- HPE Support Plus 24

blueAPACHE has also gained significant industry recognition. Very recently, the company received Australia's CRN Fast 50 Award—an Australian IT industry award that recognizes 50 of the best resellers, systems integrators, and managed service providers in the country. blueAPACHE is one of only two companies to ever win this award six years in a row. Hutchison explains, "We have been able to grow exponentially for 16 years straight. This is partly due to the HPE infrastructure that we have in place, enabling us to deliver customer-specific PaaS, IaaS, SaaS, and of course, DRaaS."

The HPE Helion advantage

As an HPE Gold Partner, blueAPACHE has been doing business with HPE for quite some time. The company is a firm believer in the HPE Helion Cloud and converged infrastructure strategy. It is also keen on HPE's complete solution offering. "Getting everything from one vendor was very attractive to our engineering team," says Marshall. That is not to say this was an easy win for HPE. According to Marshall, Cisco and EMC were in the running and eager to secure blueAPACHE's business.

The decision to go with HPE, however, goes back to blueAPACHE's firm belief in accountability. When evaluating relationships, it knew it wanted to work with a vendor that wouldn't just help them when things were going well, but would willingly own problems and proactively look for ways to overcome challenges. "What really impressed us," says Marshall, "was the way HPE responded when things weren't going the way they were meant to." He adds, "That's what gave us confidence in selecting HPE as a partner to build our infrastructure on."

What's next for blueAPACHE?

While blueAPACHE's latest CRN Fast 50 award and "All Star" status certainly validate the company's strategic path and efforts thus far, Marshall and other leaders in the company continue to eye the future and the company's next steps regarding the cloud. "The cloud is a critical piece of the puzzle in allowing us to deliver IT as a Service to our customers," he says. "The maturity and the evolution of the cloud is presenting more opportunities for us to improve how we deliver that ITaaS model."

The company will continue to look to HPE Helion to build upon its portfolio of client services. In fact, its cloud services team is currently evaluating HPE Helion OpenStack technology and how they can utilize it moving forward. "It's certainly on the roadmap" says Marshall, "and it's something that we're very excited about."

Resources

[Forrester Wave Private Cloud Solutions, Q4 2013](#)

[blueAPACHE's industry recognition](#)

Videos

[HPE CloudSystem landing page with coffee talk video](#)

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hpe.com/helion



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