Osiatis enters new market by creating two of France's largest cloud implementations

"Before we had HP CloudSystem Matrix, it could take from three hours to three days to deploy a new virtual server. Now a virtual machine is up and running in half an hour."

—Anas Safla, cloud consultant, Osiatis

HP customer case study
HP CloudSystem Matrix and HP IT Performance Suite were key in helping an ambitious IT service provider to deliver cloud services

Industry
Information Technology

Objective
Extend the service portfolio to meet customer demands and become more competitive

Approach
Offered new cloud services and researched the market for a suitable software supplier

IT improvements
- IT staff spend 30 per cent less time on routine implementation leaving them free for value added business tasks
- Deployment times that could take up to three days now take 40 minutes, increasing customer agility
- Processes are automated so tasks can be orchestrated to focus on business needs

Business benefits
- Osiatis has made a successful launch into the cloud market to support increased revenue growth
- It has created two of the largest cloud implementations in France, enhancing its reputation in the cloud community
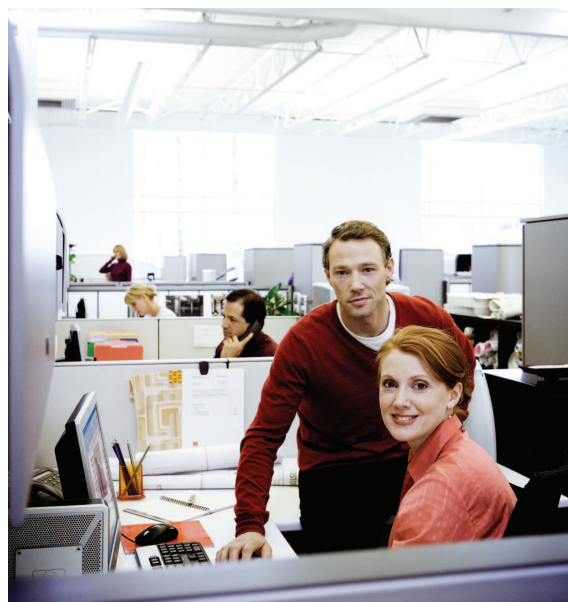
Constantly evolving technology makes IT one of the fastest moving sectors in the business world. The need to keep abreast of latest trends is one of the main challenges faced by IT service providers.

This industry-wide problem was affecting Paris-based Osiatis who needed to remain competitive by offering new services to its customers.

With 3,000 employees and 53 offices across Europe, Osiatis is principally an outsourcing company, but it also offers consulting, application services and application engineering.

Osiatis wanted to extend its 15 per cent year-on-year financial growth by implementing a solution that not only answered the needs of customers, but also its own internal needs. It needed something that was faster, easier for end users to operate and that could be accessed by everyone in the company. Cloud services were the quickest way to meet everyone's needs for more agility and flexibility.

"We see our customers using IT in new ways," explains Anas Safla, cloud consultant for Osiatis. "Users want to exploit the mobility and flexibility of smartphones and tablets. They want convergence between their data and these mobile devices."

More flexibility, better access to data

"In the last few years, the needs of our customers have changed and we try to make our service catalogue fit these needs. That is why we decided to offer cloud services. Customers want to have more flexibility to access their data and we are answering these needs by offering them Infrastructure as a Service (IaaS), Software as a Service (SaaS) and Desktop as a Service (DaaS)."

Having decided to launch cloud services, Osiatis faced a major challenge. Its board stipulated that cloud services should be implemented in a tight four-month timeframe. It also needed to find a standard offering that could still be flexible enough to meet the needs of many different companies.

"We had other key business issues to address," adds Anas Safla. "Firstly we had to have localisation of the data. For legal reasons, all the companies in France must have their data localised. We then had to reassure our customers that the data they're putting in our hands is secure and that they can access it from everywhere."

To meet these needs, Osiatis needed a supplier who could not only provide the right technology and services but who also had the reputation to give customers confidence that their cloud data would be safe. They decided that HP CloudSystem, leveraging HP Software Professional Services to support HP Software enhancements, were the right choices.

"The HP Software Professional Services team was with us from the beginning of the project to help us design the architecture and to implement all the software," adds Anas Safla. "We had a very tight collaboration with HP Software Professional Services for development walkthroughs and running end-to-end tests. We chose HP Software tools because they are all complementary, one to another, and they have all the features we need for cloud services. The software also helped us because it is easy to understand, easy to use and we were given good training by HP Software Education Services."

The Osiatis architecture is based on HP BladeSystem Matrix which is used at two different sites for high availability.

"We implement HP Software like HP Network Automation to automate and modify network needs when we deploy new services," says Anas Safla. "We also use HP Storage Essentials to provide and provision new storage for customers. We use HP Server Automation to manage our packages and OS deployment and we use HP Operations Orchestration to bring all the pieces together and have a very efficient infrastructure combining both software and hardware parts. We are also using HP Service Manager as a portal. We completely redesigned the interface to fit our needs and to be easily understood by the users so they can easily provision virtual machines."

The hardware is 19 HP ProLiant BL465c servers with Windows® Server 2008 R2 SP1 with Hyper-V; eight HP ProLiant DL360 servers with Windows Server 2008 R2 for the management (Management VMs, CMS, SQL Server) and two HP ProLiant DL360 servers with Red Hat Enterprise Linux 5.5 for HP Server Automation. The Storage Area Network is composed of two HP Enterprise Virtual Array 6400.

Speedy rollout

Osiatis is shifting its internal IT department from a business cost centre to a business enabler. It builds IaaS, to meet its own internal needs as well as those of its customers. It implements SaaS, to answer the needs of customers using service management software and collaboration management software, and it offers DaaS, to provide provision location through the cloud for deployments such as Virtual Desktop Infrastructure.

"This is a good solution for our customers because of the speed of rollout and the ease of management. They spend less time on training; they spend less time waiting for the infrastructure when they want to develop a new application or they want to launch a new project. This leaves more time for developing their businesses," says Anas Safla.

"Before Osiatis had the cloud solution, it could take from up to three days to deploy a new virtual server because the IT staff worked in silos with individual network, software and middleware/database teams who did not communicate well. Now the three silos have been combined into one, so developers only need to log on to the portal, fill in a form which takes from three to five minutes and half an hour later their virtual machine is up and running already configured with all the software it needs."

Less routine work

"The HP solutions also make our team more confident because they were trained on the software by HP Software Education Services and it is easy to understand. It has allowed us to accomplish something very special because increased automation means our Level 2 and Level 3 teams in IT now have less installation work to do. The teams spend 30 per cent less time on basic tasks, so are free to focus on value added tasks and answering more complex and specific requests, to meet not only our business needs but also those of our customers.

"The biggest benefit of the cloud is the performance. Through the customer portal, which we created ourselves, end-users can easily manage their infrastructure and adapt it to their needs. They can spend more time developing the applications and less time on managing the infrastructure because the reports they can get from the portal makes this task easier. With the reporting and the billing systems we have in place we can see different views of our resource in terms of storage, CPU time, memory and so on. We know exactly what percentage of the resources are being used and for what purposes."

Access to improved data through the billing system has also encouraged end-users to be more responsible in their use of resources.

Previously, they would create new virtual machines and not de-commission them when they were not longer required. With the billing system they are now quicker to de-commission unused systems.

Working with HP has enabled Osiatis to widen its customer offering and to make a success of its new venture into the cloud and the experience it has gained promises even more business for the future.

"The cloud experience we have acquired with HP has allowed us to create two of the largest cloud implementations in France. It has brought us new cloud service business and we now have more visibility in the cloud community," concludes Anas Safla.

For more information

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