Launching shared cloud management services for enterprise apps and virtualization across a state-wide university campus system

MORPHEUS

This higher education customer is a multi-campus public university system in the southeast Unitied States which provides shared administrative and IT services for 17 different public universities in the state. This shared service model is leading the way in higher education and has been used as a best practice example in other geographies. The network of institutions includes the oldest public university in the nation, represents nearly $2B in Research and Sponsored Program grants, and services over 240,000 students each year.

When it comes to IT, each campus has its own semi-autonomous department, CIO, and CTO. Depending on the size of the university, IT team size can range from 20 to hundreds of people. Sitting as an umbrella organization across the greater IT system, a small, centralized IT group focuses on supporting enterprise versus academic applications. It offers consolidated shared services such as database and remote systems administration, ERP system hosting, VM provisioning, disaster recovery, and cloud management.

CHALLENGE: CONSISTENT SERVICE DELIVERY AND COST MANAGEMENT ACROSS HYBRID CLOUDS

In recent years, they faced some IT issues that effected individual institutions as well as the system. Many of the campus IT departments were facing space reductions, budget restrictions, or expensive hardware refresh cycles.

In response, the individual university departments had engaged with public cloud providers such as Amazon, Microsoft, or Google to offset physical on-campus hardware limittions while maintaining services.

This, however, presented a new set of unanticipated issues when it came to cloud management and planning, not to mention costs that proved to be greater than that of on-premises systems.

The University shared services team launched a new cloud project to provide a single-pane-of-glass solution to address many of the issues that individual campuses had encountered with public clouds. To prepare for evaluating prospective solutions, they drafted a list of criteria for what would provide the best overall experience across both on-premises and public clouds.

SOLUTION: A CENTRALIZED ON-CAMPUS APPROACH TO CLOUD COMPUTING
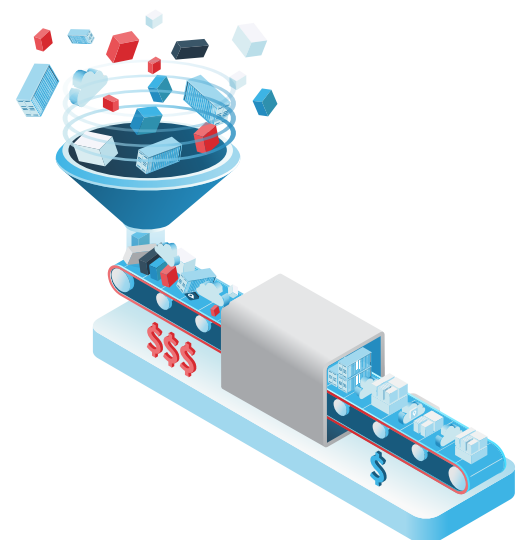
TECHNOLOGY STACK

Pivate and Public Clouds
- VMware vSphere
- Amazon
- Azure
- Google

Automation
- Ansible Tower

Disaster Recovery
- Zerto

Other Infrastructure
- VMware NSX-T
- NetApp

The IT team for the university system worked with a local systems integrator to define criteria for an evaluation and to recommend potential solutions. The solution would need to support:

- **Multi-tenant operations:** allowing each of the 17 seperate universities to individually control their private cloud resources alongside their public cloud offerings in a secure environment.

- **Multi-cloud self service:** where end-users could choose from a portal to deploy private cloud services or public-cloud resources without having expertise in each cloud.

- **Integration with existing tools:** enable the university resources to leverage expertise and investment without major re-work or customization services.

After an extensive bake-off and proof of concept deployment they chose Morpheus because it not only checked all the boxes on the criteria list but also beat the competition in terms of faster deployment and integration with existing virtualization and disaster recovery products.

After two months of initial training and onboarding, the system was production-ready and integrated with 40% of the university infrastructure. The migration and consolidation of the remaining infrastructure was managed in conjunction with the IT teams at each associated univerity. Today, eight of the largest university tenants are fully utilizing the system and others are in various stages of migration.

"Given the range of technical capabilities and requirements across the University System, the ability to deploy to different models of management was a paramount goal. Morpheus enabled our users to more easily deploy virtual compute resources and virtual application stacks and self-manage other infrastructure resources at their discretion." - Cloud Systems Architect, University System

RESULTS AND NEXT STEPS

The University System shared services team reports very positive experiences with testing and deploying the Morpheus platform plus noted speedy response from the Morpheus support team when questions arose. Codeless cloud integration allowed the centralized team to see the breadth of infrastructure on day one. The project architect commented that "*decentralized versus centralized resources is a common IT tug of war. The mere fact that our centralized cloud management services are being adopted is, in itself, a positive result.*"

A top goal of the shared services team is to enable any of campus customers to spin up a cost-effective IT solution on demand ranging from cross-campus disaster recovery to pure infrastructure-as-a-service in the cloud of their choosing. Other initiatives include increasing automation and further investing in the amount of self-service and integration offered to campus customers.

Learn more at www.morpheusdata.com

MORPHEUS