

SERVICE PROVIDER CASE STUDY: PULSANT

One platform to manage it all: How infrastructure provider Pulsant provisions, optimizes, and governs private and hybrid cloud services



BUSINESS AND IT PROFILE

Pulsant delivers access to colocation, connectivity and cloud services across the United Kingdom. The infrastructure provider runs 12 edge data centers, interconnected through a low-latency network fabric. Target clients are those seeking to deploy new edge applications, securely build hybrid cloud infrastructure, or improve connectivity performance.

Key features of Pulsant's next-generation edge infrastructure platform include nationwide edge-ready colocation, 5-to-10ms latency or less, and high-speed secure deployment providing 95% coverage for the population of the UK.

Pulsant overlays private cloud and other services across the network for their clients, and typically sits behind managed service providers (MSPs) as their service provider. Clients look to Pulsant to meet sovereign cloud compliancy requirements which means knowing where data is located and how it's accessible with cost assurances from Pulsant.

CHALLENGES IN THE EVOLVING CLOUD LANDSCAPE

Acquisitions over the past decade have supported Pulsant's growth. In some ways, Pulsant has seen itself as three or four hubs with several data centers in each. This translated into multiple cloud technologies in use – with different people creating different technology stacks at different times.

The type of businesses acquired by Pulsant determined where some applications were customized and where some were standardized with off-the-shelf products. As a result, Pulsant were looking for better ways to manage the different integrations and technology stacks at play across its infrastructure. Managing technical debt was also a key concern for Pulsant.



Client choices and expectations relating to cloud technology have certainly evolved in this timeframe. Traditionally, small to midsize enterprise clients chose to run their own cloud, often in their own data centers. Whilst, larger clients were using hyperscalers such as AWS and Azure. As Pulsant's focus was on providing private cloud services, a clear strategy for integrating these hyperscalers was needed.

Responding to these challenges and changes, Pulsant required a single tool that could build, provision, manage, govern, and optimize across cloud environments through an integrated, unified view.

TECHNOLOGY STACK

Hypervisor

- VMware (Broadcom)

Software OS's

- Red Hat Linux
- Microsoft

Network

- Core Cisco network
- Juniper fabric

Compute and HCI

- HPE SimpliVity and dHCI
- HPE Synergy blades

Storage

- HPE Storage

Security

- Alert Logic

CLIENT COMPONENTS:

Connect into Pulsant infrastructure and Morpheus with their tech stacks including BYO public cloud accounts.

THE MORPHEUS SOLUTION

The path to choosing Morpheus to manage next-gen private cloud

Pulsant were ready to build a digital platform that they could offer to clients so they could provision the cloud resources they needed on demand. As part of this, the Pulsant team wanted to adopt a hybrid cloud management platform that would enable clients to orchestrate provisioning into both their on-prem private cloud and their hyperscalers if they so choose – all within what's been branded as Pulsant Cloud. Pulsant were looking for a platform that would support easy integration and provisioning using a heterogeneous mix of technologies with a unified management layer on top. The end goal was to make it simpler for clients to select the right cloud for the right purpose without having to wait on manual service delivery.

The company had connected with Dell and other OEM providers in an early search for a solution, but none had an offering that “ticked all the boxes” for Pulsant. And proprietary solutions, such as those offered by VMware, ran counter to the need for greater flexibility and cost efficiencies. Pulsant did, however, find success when they discovered Morpheus through work with Hewlett Packard Enterprise (HPE). HPE's solution architects worked with Pulsant, along with team members from Morpheus, to design a unified cloud management solution that was 100% agnostic to the underlying infrastructure.

The right tools in the tool belt – for more than just private cloud

Today, Morpheus is used to provide consistent management across both virtual and physical infrastructure – across both private and public clouds. At its core, Morpheus-driven automation creates increased efficiencies in service delivery. Pulsant has transformed from being manual operations, where engineers built and configured virtual machines, to having the Morpheus platform provision workloads automatically. Efficiencies now extend across the infrastructure too, as Pulsant begins to expand their use cases to include network provisioning and day-2 automation with Morpheus operational workflows.

Moving away from VMware vCloud Director, Pulsant is also now using Morpheus to provide a multi-tenanted portal that provides manageability for clients' virtual machines and VMware clusters wherever they sit. While Pulsant does not directly offer clients access to public cloud hyperscalers – they can through Morpheus. This means that clients can easily “bring their own cloud” and provision workloads into their AWS or Azure accounts via the Morpheus management layer in Pulsant Cloud. Morpheus orchestration definitely makes things easier for Pulsant – with one portal for internal teams to provision and configure workloads on behalf of clients, as well as enabling lower-touch clients to directly manage their workloads through Pulsant Cloud.



“Morpheus provides a unified approach to hybrid cloud platform operations that drives efficiencies to our internal teams and flexible cloud options to our clients, enabling them to easily manage and access their data, applications, and infrastructure through Pulsant Cloud.”

– Mike Hoy, Infrastructure & Cloud Operations Director, Pulsant

OUTCOMES

Pulsant is benefiting from more significant cost and time savings, thanks to automation and increased efficiencies through the Morpheus cloud management platform. The service catalogue the Pulsant team put together on the Morpheus platform made it easy to order and provision the correct services, reducing the book-to-bill delays and increasing profitability. What was a time-consuming manual task has become a fully automated workflow that completes in seconds. Thanks to the Morpheus platform, the efficiency that Pulsant is now driving with their delivery team enables them to better meet their goals.

Pulsant’s primary focus is on colocation in data centres – that is, client’s’ cloud within the Pulsant private cloud. Now, Pulsant is recognizing how Morpheus capabilities give them a leg up as a conversation starter with clients looking to use the Pulsant portal to plug in everything from their own public cloud services to hardware-as-a-service.

Pulsant is continuing to retire bespoke platforms and technical debt, with an eye on moving clients to more differentiated hybrid cloud services. Recent shifts in the hypervisor market signal additional opportunities for Pulsant as their clients evaluate their licensing options with traditional vendors. The same is true in public clouds, as some clients who were early adopters of technologies like Azure are realizing that hosted private cloud may make more financial sense. All-in-all, the need for a consistent experience across a changing mix of private and public cloud suggests new business growth for Pulsant Cloud made possible by Morpheus.

ADVICE & INSIGHTS

Mike Hoy, Infrastructure & Cloud Operations Director at Pulsant shares these insights:

“When you’re looking for a new technology vendor, you don’t want to only hear that what you want is possible. You want to hear that it’s been done before – and, more importantly, hear what it’s going to take to make it happen. As you move ahead with an automated cloud management platform, first take the time to develop your own strong blueprint, and then share that with your technology partner.”

Learn more at www.morpheusdata.com

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MORPHEUS