Devoteam and Red Hat partner to manage datacenter automation

Introduction

Technology consulting services company Devoteam is committed to offering more value for its customers, providing specialization across multiple disciplines. A Red Hat Premier Business Partner, Devoteam is the implementation partner of choice for many organizations looking to transform their digital environments. Devoteam's partnership with Red Hat simplifies the introduction of Red Hat products into its clients' infrastructures. A solid partnership between Red hat and Devoteam provides a sound foundation for a successful client relationship.

Question: Can you share a working example of how customers benefit from your partnership with Red Hat?

Farhad Hamedvaran, Principal Consultant, Devoteam: Yes, a global multinational chemical company was embarking on a project to move its hundreds of servers to a new datacenter in a timely manner. It realized that it needed to modernize how it managed deployment and changes in configuration, in particular, for applications such as SAP and Oracle running on SUSE. It was looking for a new approach: a robust and reliable automation tool to help execute an uninterrupted transition and manage changes to its deployment and configuration processes. The new datacenter comprised hundreds of servers of different types, some configured for Oracle and some for SAP, for example. They all had to be set up from scratch.

Peter Koerner, Business Development Manager of Open Hybrid Cloud SAP Solutions, Red Hat: The client wanted a central tool that would work across the business, allowing people from all departments to work together and use the same language and tools. The client looked to Devoteam to provide a Red Hat solution for removing multiple manual, repetitive, and inconsistently executed workloads. Their teams had previously run experiments with Red Hat® Ansible® Automation Platform in a sandbox environment and saw its potential, so we worked with Devoteam to develop a full proof of concept.

Question: What specific requirements did this project have for Red Hat and Devoteam?

Koerner: Like many other businesses, the client had used SAP for decades but in a very isolated environment. However, SAP executions are changing as businesses shift to hyperscalers and modernize their overall landscapes.

The main need was an automation tool that works with SAP running on SUSE servers, in this case on Microsoft Azure. This case is special because we used Ansible Automation Platform for SAP automation for a customer historically running SUSE before switching to Red Hat Enterprise Linux® as the next step. It's probably a pattern we will see more and more.

Hamedvaran: The other consideration was speed. The solution needed to be in place and operational just two months after our initial discovery call. That was a concrete requirement that Red Hat helped us to meet.

Question: Were any of the client's processes automated at this point?

Hamedvaran: Yes, but they weren't standardized. There were some scripts here, some tools there, but they weren't universal or cloud-agnostic, and there was a risk of security vulnerabilities.

Koerner: Each team also had their own solutions, so there was little synergy or continuity, and they wouldn't be supported in the new datacenter. They needed a solution that would effectively bridge those gaps and give strategic flexibility for the future. That's one reason many organizations select Ansible Automation Platform.

Question: What was the key factor in developing the proof of concept (PoC) in such a short period?

Hamedvaran: Moving from the client's initial contact with Red Hat to starting work on the PoC took just three weeks; I've never experienced anything like that. Devoteam then liaised with our technical contact at Red Hat so he could assist with some of the technical details. He's our local Ansible Automation Platform expert, so we kept him closely in the loop.

Koerner: A lot of hyperscalers are encouraging SAP customers to make this type of transition urgently these days. The strong business and technical relationship that Red Hat has with partners like Devoteam is an important part of meeting these requirements.

Question: What have been the initial results now that the solution is in production?

Hamedvaran: The client now works in a much more standardized way to manage and configure its servers. Each team now works with the same repository using the same tools, and they can do it safely and automatically. Multiple tasks have been scheduled; staff now don't need to do anything other than check the results.

Koerner: The client now has a lot more operational flexibility and if the client moves part of the landscape to a different hyperscaler or datacenter, they can take advantage of the existing investment into Ansible Automation Platform. Again, they don't have to start from scratch.

Hamedvaran: The only thing their people need to be aware of is how many servers there are and whether they have the number they need. If any new servers come into the datacenter, configuration is handled by Red Hat Ansible Automation Platform. That's all there is to it.

Question: How has Ansible Automation Platform changed the way teams collaborate within the client's organization?

Hamedvaran: With this new environment, all the people from across the various teams have a single point of trust—the repository. All the data and all the playbooks are now in one repository where all people have access. They can work altogether—see all the playbooks from other teams, build on these, and speak the same language. It was important for the client to know what the other teams did and that they no longer worked isolated from others. This increases productivity and the value they can extract from expanding automation in many more areas that they have not previously considered.

Question: What are the client's plans for the future?

Hamedvaran: We're now working with Red Hat to evaluate new use cases and new areas for the client. We have the tool and the environment where everyone can work together, and we're now looking at which areas and which use cases can be included in the new environment, so that other people can also benefit from the new environment and the new approach.

Dr. Michael Marz, Principal Consultant, Red Hat Partner Manager, Devoteam: We already had one discovery workshop ready to elaborate on some further opportunities for them to automate. The next workshop is scheduled with the SAP team to discuss further opportunities, specifically in the SAP area rather than the recent work which just involved the SAP team and which was mainly focused

on the infrastructure that SAP runs on. We would like to encourage them also to consider automation to set up straight SAP rather than SUSE for SAP. And, of course, we are keen to find other possibilities as well.

About Devoteam

Headquartered in France and with offices across Europe, Africa, the Middle East, and Mexico, Devoteam believes that combining technology with strong human values can drive change for the better. Devoteam teams up with best-in-field partners, creating a nurtured environment of cross-functional collaboration to offer the best service to customers.

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