

RACKSPACE BUILDS OPENSTACK PRIVATE CLOUD SOLUTION WITH RED HAT



SOFTWARE AND SERVICES

- Red Hat® OpenStack® Platform
- Red Hat Enterprise Linux®
- Red Hat Ceph Storage
- Red Hat CloudForms
- Red Hat Satellite
- Red Hat Technical Account Management
- Red Hat Training and Certification

In response to cloud adoption by its customers, managed cloud provider Rackspace® partnered with Red Hat to collaborate on an open source private Cloud-as-a-Service solution. This offering was built with Red Hat OpenStack Platform, Red Hat Ceph Storage, and other Red Hat solutions and paired with its Fanatical Support® offering. Rackspace also gained expertise on Red Hat's OpenStack software and related tools. As a result, Rackspace can offer a flexible, scalable, and reliable OpenStack private Cloud-as-a-Service solution based on Red Hat OpenStack Platform.



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“Red Hat is 50% of my team, and they will continue to be. We’ve been able to really establish a level of integration and partnership between our companies that isn’t seen anywhere else in the industry.”

DAN SHEPPARD
SENIOR PRODUCT MANAGER,
RACKSPACE

BENEFITS

- Reduced costs and simplified deployment for customers with scalable, automated OpenStack private cloud platform
- Increased agility, helping customers cut provisioning time from over 45 days to less than 3 days
- Gained ability to offer innovative open source solution with enterprise stability and support
- Enhanced knowledge of OpenStack and related Red Hat technology



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“I’ve been working with Red Hat OpenStack Platform for the last 18 months and haven’t gotten a single late-night, panicked phone call. I can sleep soundly at night, knowing we have this stable product in customers’ environments.”

LARON TANGEMAN
SENIOR MANAGER OF OPERATIONS,
RACKSPACE

SUPPORTING CUSTOMERS’ ENTERPRISE OPENSTACK PRIVATE CLOUDS

Cloud adoption has gained strategic importance, but many organizations lack the knowledge, skills, and financial resources to migrate their IT environments to the cloud and manage them effectively.

Rackspace is a managed cloud provider that supports open source and emerging technologies. Its customers want to establish OpenStack private clouds that combine public cloud agility with enterprise security and stability, but OpenStack technology is complex and changes rapidly.

“Many of our customers have challenges moving from a CapEx to an OpEx model or from traditional legacy hosting and virtualization to cloud-native, cloud-first development,” said Dan Sheppard, senior product manager at Rackspace.

Rackspace offers Fanatical Support, an operations model that includes architecture guidance, 24x7x365 operations, and real-time monitoring to respond proactively to problems – often before customers even know they have an issue.

“They know that somebody is always watching their environment and making sure it’s up and running,” said Laron Tangeman, senior manager of operations at Rackspace. “We don’t see them as customers, but as partners. So we need to make sure their infrastructure is solid and address issues quickly.”

To help its customers establish OpenStack clouds on technology that can be easily deployed and supported without costly downtime, Rackspace offers an OpenStack private cloud managed service. To expand its OpenStack-as-a-Service portfolio, including offering a choice of technology with expert support, Rackspace turned to long-time partner Red Hat.

COLLABORATING WITH A TRUSTED PARTNER

Rackspace has used and supported Red Hat Enterprise Linux for more than 10 years. Rackspace is a Red Hat Certified Cloud and Service Provider, a program that offers customers and independent software vendors (ISVs) access to tested, verified solutions for enterprise cloud deployments. In 2015, Rackspace earned Red Hat North America Cloud Partner of the Year.

“Red Hat was an early investor in Rackspace after seeing that our Fanatical Support was really making a difference in bringing Red Hat Enterprise Linux to datacenters during the early days of Linux,” said Sheppard.

Rackspace has also worked with Red Hat to use and improve open source technology. Together, the companies have contributed more than 27% of the code in the OpenStack community. Rackspace has one of the largest implementations of Red Hat Satellite Server and regularly provides feedback for improvements. The company is also a leading contributor to the Ansible community.

When a mutual customer sought to replace its VMware environment with a solution that combined Red Hat OpenStack Platform with Rackspace’s OpenStack expertise, Rackspace worked with Red Hat to develop Rackspace Private Cloud powered by Red Hat (RPC-R). This supported offering also integrates several other Red Hat technologies, including:

- **Red Hat Enterprise Linux**, a robust platform for compute resources and hypervisors.
- **Red Hat Ceph Storage**, a software-defined storage platform that supports block, object, and file storage and provides tight integration with OpenStack.
- **Red Hat CloudForms**, a management tool that offers complete cloud visibility and management through a single, unified interface.

- **Red Hat Satellite**, a management tool that helps Rackspace provide Fanatical Support patches and upgrades.

With RPC-R, customers can access compute and memory resources on demand in their clouds and datacenters while Rackspace manages their application programming interfaces (APIs) and other infrastructure components. To support this solution, Rackspace's teams spent six months working with a Red Hat Technical Account Manager (TAM) and enrolled in Red Hat Training to learn about the technology and best practices for supporting customers' systems.

As a result of the successful launch of RPC-R in early 2016, Rackspace was named the 2017 Red Hat Innovation Award winner in cloud infrastructure.

IMPROVING PRIVATE CLOUD DEPLOYMENT AND SUPPORT

SIMPLIFIED CLOUD INFRASTRUCTURE

With RPC-R, Rackspace customers no longer need to focus on setting up their infrastructure and components. This standardized cloud environment, with unified management through Red Hat CloudForms, lets Rackspace customers easily use the technology and scale to accommodate new applications and the needs of different teams. In addition, Red Hat Ceph Storage lets Rackspace add storage nodes to improve performance and capacity without disrupting end-user operations. As a result, Rackspace can more effectively manage and support its customers' private cloud environments.

"Red Hat has created a lot of tools, such as Red Hat OpenStack Platform director, that help simplify OpenStack for customers," said Sheppard. "We're able to accelerate their digital transformation and remove a lot of the challenges of deploying and adopting the technology."

GREATER AGILITY AND FASTER DEPLOYMENT

RPC-R offers Rackspace and its customers greater agility to provision, deploy, and update systems and components faster. With early access to releases, Rackspace can test integrations before new versions of Red Hat OpenStack Platform are launched. In this distributed continuous integration (DCI) approach, test cases are run for Red Hat software on Rackspace hardware against the latest OpenStack code. Rackspace can validate key customer use cases before the code has even been packaged, resolve any issues with Red Hat, and go to market faster.

"Innovation is delivering something that maybe the customer wasn't expecting," said Tangeman. "With new features added in each release and a stable foundation, we can solve an issue or give them a feature that they didn't even know they needed."

An open, API-based infrastructure helps Rackspace customers automate to become more efficient. One customer used a private cloud and self-service capabilities built with Red Hat solutions and other tools to cut provisioning time for new software from over 45 days to less than 3 days.

"They can now bring four versions of their software to market every year, not just one. They're able to be more responsive to internal teams and reduce their costs significantly," said Bryan Thompson, general manager of OpenStack private cloud at Rackspace.

OPEN SOURCE INNOVATION WITH ENTERPRISE STABILITY AND SECURITY

With Red Hat solutions, Rackspace can use innovative open source technology to help its customers expand and improve their deployments without sacrificing critical stability and security. Red Hat Ceph Storage provides cloud infrastructure storage without a single point of failure and supports

ABOUT RACKSPACE

Rackspace, the #1 managed cloud company, helps businesses tap the power of cloud computing without the complexity and cost of managing it all on their own. Rackspace engineers deliver specialized expertise, easy-to-use tools, and Fanatical Support for leading technologies including AWS, Google, Microsoft, OpenStack and VMware. The company serves customers in 150 countries, including more than half of the FORTUNE 100. Rackspace was named a leader in the 2017 Gartner Magic Quadrant for Public Cloud Infrastructure Managed Service Providers, Worldwide, and has been honored by Fortune, Forbes, and others as one of the best companies to work for.

ABOUT RED HAT

Red Hat is the world's leading provider of open source software solutions, using a community-powered approach to provide reliable and high-performing cloud, Linux, middleware, storage, and virtualization technologies. Red Hat also offers award-winning support, training, and consulting services. As a connective hub in a global network of enterprises, partners, and open source communities, Red Hat helps create relevant, innovative technologies that liberate resources for growth and prepare customers for the future of IT.

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live migration of instances between compute nodes without performance disruptions. In addition, an OpenStack community of more than 1,000 members actively working on more than 60 projects offers new features without vendor or solution lock-in.

"In open source, a piece of code may be looked at by tens, hundreds, thousands of people from all kinds of backgrounds to make it meet more needs," said Tangeman.

In addition, Red Hat offers the reliability and extended supported life cycle—three years compared to 12 months for community versions—to reassure enterprise users.

"Open source offers the best contributions to your project, but enterprises need more. That's what getting a distribution from Red Hat is about. It's about taking the uncertainty and the change and offering a standardized form with a reliable life cycle," said Sheppard.

Using trusted Red Hat solutions has improved support experiences for both Rackspace and its customers. "Working with Red Hat OpenStack Platform for the last 18 months, I haven't gotten a single late-night, panicked phone call. I can sleep soundly knowing we have this stable product in customers' environments," said Tangeman.

EXPERT SUPPORT AND TRAINING

Expert guidance from its Red Hat TAM helped Rackspace gain the knowledge to effectively deploy and manage RPC-R, improving the user and support experience for its customers. "In the first six months, we ended up meeting with our Red Hat TAM three to four times a week. They were always on the phone, helping us build out a full feature set and answering questions," said Tangeman.

Rackspace employees have earned more than 180 Red Hat certifications, including almost 100 Red Hat Certified Engineer (RHCE®) in Red Hat OpenStack certifications. These certifications offer proof to customers and partners of expertise in Red Hat solutions and related technology.

"We have access to online training and test labs to refine our knowledge of Red Hat OpenStack Platform, with a safe environment to experiment in," said Tangeman. "We're grateful to have Red Hat as a valuable partner."

SEEKING NEW OPPORTUNITIES FOR COLLABORATION

Rackspace plans to continue to collaborate with Red Hat to improve Red Hat OpenStack Platform and its private cloud solution, as well as create new, innovative offerings.

"We're constantly seeking the next innovative technology that's changing the market landscape, where we can bring our Fanatical Support and expertise to lead better adoption," said Sheppard. "Red Hat is 50% of my team, and they will continue to be. We've established a level of integration and partnership that is rarely seen in the industry. It's about how we're working together to add the next set of features and learn from each other."