

Computacenter helps German public authorities move to the cloud



Large enterprises and public sector organizations rely on Computacenter AG (Computacenter), a leading independent technology and services provider and Red Hat Premier Business Partner, to guide them through their digital transformation journeys. Committed to innovation and exceptional service, Computacenter sought to modernize its development environment for building secure applications for German public sector clients. Red Hat® OpenShift® on IONOS provides a modern environment for developing hybrid cloud applications, based on containers, on a unified multi-cloud platform. It provides modern developer experiences and strong security by default. IONOS, as a German hyperscaler, supports public sector security requirements with data center sites in Germany and has important certificates from the German Federal Office for Information Security (BSI): BSI C5-Testat and BSI Grundschutz.

Question: Why did you move your development environment to the cloud?

Jan Schlotter, Delivery Head of Software Development at Computacenter: Our development teams at Computacenter began by building traditional Java workloads for customers around twenty years ago. We started with a small group of people and built up our onpremise ecosystem in our solution center in Munich. But the environment was becoming increasingly difficult to maintain and scale. So, we transitioned to a more cloud based, elastic style of development environment instead. Moving to the cloud provides an on-demand model, scaling resources up and down, adjusting them to development needs, and shifting them left to right as needed.

Around the same time, our public sector customers in Germany had just started utilizing national cloud hyperscalers, so our experience with IONOS helps us a lot to support them, too. However, events happening at a European level were—and still are—making them more vigilant about digital sovereignty and other security issues.

We decided to move our development environment onto the IONOS Cloud as it provides a cloud look and feel while meeting German regulatory requirements—specifically IT-Grundschutz (IT protection)—from the German Federal Office for Information Security (BSI).

Question: What led you to adopt OpenShift for your development environment?

Schlotter: We also needed to modernize software development to move our legacy JBoss environment to Quarkus and containers. With that, we decided to adopt OpenShift on top of IONOS for our development platform. OpenShift gives us security hardening, integrated tooling, and ease of maintenance.

Norbert Steiner, Solutions Manager at Computacenter: Our Consulting Practice helps customers modernize software development and build cloud-native platforms. They have been working with Red Hat and OpenShift since 2015. So, moving to containers and Kubernetes and adopting OpenShift as a development environment is aligned with what we're helping our customers to do.

Schlotter: The move to OpenShift, cloud-native technologies, and modern best practices is imperative. It helps us to be competitive and meaningful in the market. If we had remained on our legacy on premise platform, we would probably have lost a lot of competitive advantage – or even fallen behind other companies addressing the same market.

Question: How are you helping public sector customers in Germany move to OpenShift?

Schlotter: Many of our public sector customers in Germany were already using OpenShift, though not necessarily through Computacenter. Since OpenShift is a well-established platform in the public sector in Germany, it would be easy for our customers to adopt the application workloads we develop. That made our decision to move to OpenShift even more straightforward.

For some customers, we're initially doing a 'lift and shift' to move workloads onto OpenShift on IONOS. From there, we're modernizing their workloads piece by piece while continuing to develop them. We take that approach because those workloads are often too large and too complex for a complete redesign. And so, we can continue delivering value to the customer. With new projects, we can use OpenShift, cloud-native technologies, and modern best practices from the start.

Question: Tell us how your developers are finding OpenShift.

Schlotter: Our development teams' 'eyes are shining bright with happiness', to coin a German phrase. Why? Using a highly automated containerized platform like OpenShift has reduced the pressure on our developers and given them more confidence. Working on a scalable, performant platform improves development speeds and shortens time to market. The automation and scalability built into the platform makes their work quicker and easier. It has created efficiency in our development processes.

The automation built into OpenShift has also improved our time to react to customer requests so we—and they—can shine better in the political landscape. Some of the applications are very high profile, politically speaking. If there is an issue, they must respond quickly. Automation helps them resolve any problems much faster.

Question: How has adopting OpenShift enhanced security?

Schlotter: In our legacy environment, we met security requirements with custom development. OpenShift has allowed us to activate security by default. It helps us that OpenShift is enforcing several security requirements. Our platform team has activated security controls such as the CIS Benchmark for OpenShift and prevented root-privileged containers from running on OpenShift. All this helps our development teams work more securely.

This has led to a joint side project with Red Hat to automate BSI controls for containers and Kubernetes, so others can select them as an OpenShift feature. We're working upstream with Red Hat, other partners, and customers. Our open source community 'compliance as code' solution automates security standards for OpenShift—something that many organizations in our public sector customer base require.

Question: What are the next steps on your Red Hat journey?

Schlotter: Our next step is building a FinOps practice to calculate our costs at a project level and make them more transparent. We're exploring the cost management features available with OpenShift.

We're also scaling out OpenShift on IONOS, onboarding more development teams, and building their expertise on OpenShift and its tools. Plus, we're moving more projects onto the platform.

We already use our OpenShift on the IONOS environment to demonstrate use cases to our public sector customers and push those applications towards them. We're aligning our new development environment more closely with customer use cases and developing applications that seamlessly transition into customer production environments.

In the long term, we see OpenShift as a platform for running software-as-a-service (SaaS) or customer-specific managed services for our customers, such as a product for automating complex global networks, which we develop and can readily productize on OpenShift.

About Computacenter

Computacenter is a leading independent technology and services provider trusted by large corporate and public sector organizations. It is a responsible business that believes in winning together for our people and our planet. It helps its customers source, transform, and manage their technology infrastructure to deliver digital transformation, enabling people and their businesses.



About Red Hat

Red Hat is the world's leading provider of enterprise open source software solutions, using a community-powered approach to deliver reliable and high-performing Linux, hybrid cloud, container, and Kubernetes technologies. Red Hat helps customers develop cloud-native applications, integrate existing and new IT applications, and automate and manage complex environments. A [trusted adviser to the Fortune 500](#), Red Hat provides [award-winning](#) support, training, and consulting services that bring the benefits of open innovation to any industry. Red Hat is a connective hub in a global network of enterprises, partners, and communities, helping organizations grow, transform, and prepare for the digital future.

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