Crédit Agricole Group Infrastructure Platform (CA-GIP) scales automation with Red Hat

Crédit Agricole Group Infrastructure Platform (CA-GIP) provides IT infrastructure services and production support for the group’s insurance, corporate banking, and investment banking businesses. To scale automation across tens of thousands of servers, CA-GIP replaced its community automation solution with Red Hat Ansible Automation Platform. In just one year, the group has achieved return on investment (ROI), including automating operations across 20,000 Linux servers in the equivalent of one employee’s work hours. CA-GIP now has a stable, supported foundation for an automation-centric approach to development and integration to solve current and future business challenges.

“"The project was complex, and any mistakes would have been costly. If we were going to invest in a new approach, we needed to ensure our teams were given the right knowledge and skills to support it. Red Hat Consulting was a great partner in our learning.”

Pierre-François Liozon
Unix Team Head, Crédit Agricole Group Infrastructure Platform (CA-GIP)
Improving operational efficiency with an automation-centric approach

Founded in 1894, Crédit Agricole Group is the largest cooperative financial institution and tenth largest bank in the world. The bank established the Infrastructure Platform team (CA-GIP) in 2019 to manage its IT infrastructure and technology and services operations for its insurance, corporate banking, and investment banking services.

As demand for digital financial services rapidly increased, CA-GIP sought to improve the group’s operational efficiency to keep pace. The group decided to replace its community Ansible solution with cost-effective technology that could integrate a variety of systems for current and future business needs. Additionally, CA-GIP sought to support reuse of established scripts as commands or application programming interfaces (APIs) to save time on repetitive automation management tasks and reduce risk of human error.

“We realized we needed enterprise technology that could support a cultural shift to an automation-centric approach for our DevOps teams,” said Pierre-François Liozon, Unix Team Head, Crédit Agricole Group Infrastructure Platform (CA-GIP). “In addition to lower costs and better reusability, we also needed a vendor-agnostic solution that avoided regression of around 150 proprietary scripts.”

Adopting stable, supported enterprise automation technology from Red Hat

Based on its successful past adoption of Red Hat platform technology, CA-GIP decided to adopt Red Hat Ansible Automation Platform to manage infrastructure provisioning, configuration, and patching.

Red Hat Ansible Automation Platform is an agentless solution for managing complex deployments and repetitive tasks across enterprise environments of any scale. Ansible’s simple YAML language, in the form of Ansible Playbooks, lets teams across an organization share, vet, and manage automation content. In the first phase of CA-GIP’s deployment, Ansible Automation Platform was used to automate processes across more than 20,000 Linux servers.

Although it had already applied automation to support a variety of business needs, CA-GIP engaged Red Hat Consulting to work with the group’s senior engineering staff and help its teams quickly build related skills.

“The collaboration between our teams was a key success factor,” said Liozon. “The project was complex, and any mistakes would have been costly. If we were going to invest in a new approach, we needed to ensure our teams were given the right knowledge and skills to support it. Red Hat Consulting was a great partner in our learning.”

Investing in operational efficiency across teams

- Achieved return on investment (ROI) in just one year
- Significantly reduced automation effort and resources, achieving automated operations for 20,000 Linux servers in the equivalent of one employee’s work hours
- Simplified adoption of new automation capabilities with Red Hat OpenShift operators, modular software for packaging, deploying, and managing Kubernetes-native applications
Improved infrastructure security with supported enterprise technology and a central automation approach across DevOps teams

Improved talent management with less need for proprietary specialists

**Planning a path to an improved IT experience**

After its initial success with its enhanced, automation-centric DevOps approach, CA-GIP plans to expand its Red Hat Ansible Automation Platform to a total of 45,000 Linux and Microsoft Windows servers.

"Red Hat offered us a path to our future goal of providing a seamless experience to all of CA-GIP’s DevOps teams through a single technical solution," said Liozon.

**About Crédit Agricole Group**

Founded in 1894 to enable French farmers to obtain long-term, flexible, and reasonably priced credit, Crédit Agricole Group is now the world’s largest cooperative financial institution, France’s second-largest bank, and the tenth-largest bank in the world. Crédit Agricole Group Infrastructure Platform handles IT infrastructure and production activities for the bank’s insurance, corporate and investment banking, and technology and services operations. In total, CA-GIP has over 4,000 staff, including 1,600 based at 17 locations in France.

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