

IT Service Provider Expands Cloud Business with Cisco CMSP Certification

Partner Case Study



Executive Summary

Customer Name: Cbeyond Inc.
Industry: IT Services
Location: Atlanta, GA
Number of Employees: 1300

BUSINESS CHALLENGE

- Expand Cisco Powered Infrastructure as a Service (IaaS) business
- Demonstrate technology platform credibility
- Differentiate cloud services from commodity offerings

PARTNER SOLUTION

- Cisco Cloud and Managed Services Program (CMSP)
- Cisco Powered Services: Infrastructure as a Service, Managed MPLS VPN Services, Managed Metro Ethernet Services, Managed Internet Services, and Managed Internet Protocol Trunking Services

BUSINESS RESULTS

- Increased revenues through Cisco reseller channel
- Streamlined sales to small and mid-sized business (SMB) market through pre-certified, scalable solutions
- Earned 2013 Cloud Computing Excellence Award for TotalCloud Data Center (TCDC) solution

Cbeyond earned technology validation that sparked business growth with Cisco cloud infrastructure and CMSP certification.

Business Challenge

Convincing SMBs that a fully-managed, enterprise-grade cloud infrastructure is within their economic reach is not an easy task. Yet enterprise-grade cloud infrastructure services are the core of Cisco® Partner Cbeyond's cloud services business. Cbeyond's success is rooted in providing outstanding customer services targeted specifically at smaller companies, supported by a new Cisco Powered™ Infrastructure-as-a-Service, and an innovative go-to-market strategy called the Cisco Cloud and Managed Services Program (CMSP).

The greatest challenges that the company faced along the way were business growth and technical validation of its cloud infrastructure. Prior to implementing the Cisco Powered platform, Cbeyond was using a cloud that it procured through a business acquisition. With no vendor programs validating enterprise-grade technology, Cbeyond needed to reposition itself in the cloud market to communicate the true extent of its capabilities. Their solution was moving to a Cisco Powered cloud platform and taking advantage of CMSP.

Partner Solution

To participate in CMSP, Cisco partners must meet Cisco requirements for developing, delivering, managing, and supporting cloud and managed service solutions based on Cisco technologies. Partners must also demonstrate that they have the IT Infrastructure Library (ITIL) Foundation processes, practices, and tools needed to support Cisco technologies at all lifecycle phases. Cbeyond met all of these requirements, attaining the Master Level CMSP certification. Master is the highest level CMSP certification available worldwide.

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Paul Gies

Vice President of Business Development,
Cbeyond

Meeting CMSP and Cisco Powered requirements provided the external validation of Cbeyond offerings that was critical to business growth. “Anyone can sell a product, but CMSP gives customers the confidence that we can provide a complete solution to meet their IT needs and business goals as well,” says Paul Gies, vice president of business development for Cbeyond.

In addition to technical validation, CMSP provided significant financial advantages. As a CMSP participant, Cbeyond solutions are also sold by other Cisco partners. That means Cisco and Cbeyond operate in a profitable partnership, rather than a competitive environment. That partnership also gives Cbeyond the power to use Cisco logos and branding, further validating their technology offering and adding market credibility.

And with the added validation and credibility generated by CMSP and Cisco Powered, Cbeyond was free to focus on the comprehensive customer support and service that was critical to its target market. Like many small and mid-sized businesses, Cbeyond prospects often have sophisticated IT needs but lack internal IT resources. In fact, approximately 80 percent of Cbeyond customers do not have an IT department. These customers are unsure of exactly what type of cloud infrastructure they need. Many also believe that cloud is an enterprise tool that requires an extensive budget.

Cbeyond helps these prospects and customers gain the advantages of an enterprise-grade cloud infrastructure by providing comprehensive, end-to-end services. Cbeyond helps them identify their needs, and then provides product guidance, installation support, and ongoing maintenance—all at an affordable price. Throughout the education process, the Cisco certification helps validate that Cbeyond is providing a real solution and not just a too-good-to-be-true sales pitch.

Customer Success

One example of a successful Cbeyond customer is a full-service eye care company with offices in multiple locations. The eye care company wanted its customers to have a similar experience in every office, regardless of location. After a stint with a commodity cloud provider, the company realized that the provider was understaffed and undertrained. The company was not getting the service benefits that it had expected from this provider, but was still paying the monthly service costs.

Based on the credibility provided by CMSP and Cisco Powered, Cbeyond was able to engage the customer with a review of its on-premise and cloud solutions. After detailing the comprehensive, enterprise-grade Cbeyond cloud offering, the eye care company replaced its existing cloud service with the Cbeyond platform for both its on-premise and existing cloud services.

Cbeyond provided a comprehensive cloud infrastructure based on its Cisco infrastructure and networking solutions. A Multiprotocol Label Switching (MPLS) network connects the individual eye care company office locations to each other and back to the Cbeyond cloud. “Our cloud infrastructure and Cisco Powered Service solution let us provide a quality of service with a single support contact that you can’t get from pure-play cloud providers,” says Gies. “Cisco plays a role in both of those pieces, and we’re fully committed and certified in both areas.”

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Business Results

Completing the CMSP and Cisco Powered certification process provided advantages beyond the validation that Cbeyond sought to fuel business growth. Gies says, “The audits that we passed as part of the certification process helped reinforce that the approach we had taken for our architecture and our solution was sound. It gave us a high comfort level that we were moving in the right direction with our cloud services.”

That knowledge empowered Cbeyond to invest the resources to develop certified applications that simplify the hosting decision for customers. These certified applications are developed for applications that are commonly used by SMBs, such as Intuit QuickBooks and Sage Act!. For these applications, Cbeyond pre-configures the cloud and network resources required to provide the desired application performance for a specific number of users. That makes it easy to sell customers the appropriate resources, and gives those customers confidence that they are purchasing only what they need. Customers can select from a catalogue of popular business productivity applications that are sized and certified to work in the Cbeyond cloud.

Once customers have invested in a particular level of cloud service, they can easily expand that service as their needs grow and they become more comfortable with the cloud infrastructure. “It’s a land-and-expand model,” says Gies.

In 2013, Cloud Computing Magazine recognized the success of the Cbeyond cloud based on Cisco technologies by presenting Cbeyond with the Cloud Computing Excellence Award for its innovative TotalCloud Data Center (TCDC) service. The Cloud Computing Excellence Award recognizes companies that have most effectively leveraged cloud computing in their efforts to bring new, differentiated offerings to market.

Less than two years after moving to its Cisco cloud infrastructure and joining CMSP, Cbeyond has sold cloud hosting products to hundreds of customers. Says Gies, “The Cisco infrastructure and CMSP are now integral to our corporate identity: bringing enterprise-grade technologies to small and mid-sized businesses at prices they can afford.”

For More Information

To find out more about CMSP, visit: www.cisco.com/go/cmosp.

To find out more about Cisco Powered, visit: www.cisco.com/go/ciscopowered.

