

French IT Services Provider Improves Cloud Services



Executive Summary

- **Customer Name:** CIS Valley
- **Industry:** IT services
- **Location:** Bordeaux, France
- **Number of Employees:** 128

Challenge

- Expanding cloud infrastructure and services to support growth
- Streamlining management of cloud environment
- Boosting staff productivity to meet demand

Solution

- Implemented Cisco Intelligent Automation for Cloud to streamline management of cloud environment
- Deployed FlexPod environment with Cisco UCS servers, Cisco Nexus Switches, and NetApp storage in converged, flexible environment

Results

- Reduced server deployment and application provisioning time from one month to three days
- Enabled IT staff to handle five times as many resources with small addition to IT staff
- Enabled self-service portal, giving customers more control over deployments, while reducing wait times

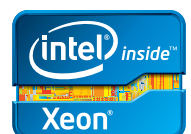
CIS Valley expanded cloud environment with FlexPod infrastructure managed by Cisco Intelligent Automation for Cloud.

Challenge

For nearly 15 years, CIS Valley has provided IT solutions for businesses across France, serving the needs of small and medium-sized businesses in a variety of industries, ranging from retail and manufacturing to finance and healthcare. The healthcare market is a particular specialty for CIS Valley, because only companies that hold agreements with the French health ministry are eligible to host health data in France. By adopting advanced technology, CIS Valley aims to bring enterprise-level services to small- and medium-sized customers.

In recent years, CIS Valley has developed strategic plans for potential growth, focusing on the growing demand for flexibility and cost-effectiveness. Through the cloud, CIS Valley can offer a variety of services for customers, focusing on integrated infrastructure as a service (IaaS), software development, software as a service (SaaS), and hosting business-critical applications including email, SAP, and Oracle applications. Working with consultants, CIS Valley specified a list of 300 criteria for choosing a cloud solution that included security, manageability, reliability, and cost.

After closely evaluating available options, CIS Valley decided to expand its data centers with the converged FlexPod infrastructure, as well as deploy Cisco® Intelligent Automation for Cloud (IAC) for the portal and orchestration software. In addition to Cisco IAC solutions, FlexPod architecture is a proven, prevalidated infrastructure that combines Cisco Unified Computing System™ (UCS®) servers and network fabric and NetApp storage into a reliable, high-performance environment. Cisco IAC complements the converged FlexPod solution with a unified approach to cloud management.



“Using FlexPod with Cisco IAC will enable us to meet customer needs and support growth to achieve our 2014 Strategic Orientation Plan goals.”

– **Rouvellat Michel**
President
CIS Valley

By doubling the number of data centers and boosting staff productivity, CIS Valley will be ready to meet the continued growing demand for its cloud-based services. “Using FlexPod with Cisco IAC will enable us to meet customer needs and support growth to achieve our 2014 Strategic Orientation Plan goals,” says Rouvellat Michel, president of CIS Valley.

Solution

CIS Valley expanded its data centers from two locations to four using the FlexPod infrastructure to host cloud services. The two new active-active data centers use Cisco UCS B230 Blade Servers as the core of the FlexPod implementation. Two Cisco Nexus® 7000 Series Switches form the core of the network with four Cisco Nexus 5000 Series Switches connecting the network to the servers and NetApp storage. Unified communication ports, which support Ethernet, Fibre Channel, and Fibre Channel over Ethernet connections, on the Cisco Nexus 5000 Series Switches bring all elements in FlexPod together for a flexible environment.

With a 90 percent virtualization rate, Cisco UCS servers deliver high performance and density that result in greater capacity compared to traditional server solutions. The current FlexPod environment, for example, has 120 servers, but if the same amount of traditional server infrastructure was used, the data center would be limited to 80 servers.

Cisco IAC delivers an efficient solution that increases manageability and flexibility within a unified architecture. Competing cloud management applications utilize multiple software components and configuration management databases that increase complexity and deliver a less secure environment. “Only Cisco IAC offered the integrated, unified approach that we were looking for in a cloud solution,” says Marc Etheve, chief operations officer at CIS Valley. “When combined with the converged FlexPod environment, we could simplify design and deployment processes for increased agility.”

Just as Cisco IAC streamlines management for the cloud through self-servicing and orchestration automation, Cisco UCS Manager simplifies management of the FlexPod infrastructure. Cisco UCS Manager supports automation and policy-based management with service templates and profiles. Both the physical and virtual environments can be managed from a single, remote interface. Once the data center is physically connected, staff can deploy new servers and adjust configurations from anywhere, which enables CIS Valley to easily and completely manage the new data centers located 300 km away.

Results

Cisco IAC has been a game-changer for CIS Valley and its customers by offering a service catalog designed to fit each need, while automating cloud service delivery. FlexPod offers a consistent system that is efficiently managed with secure multitenancy delivering each customer profile secured container, as well as cohesive scaling up and down. With Cisco IAC, new customer deployment has gone from a month down to days. Using these two solutions, CIS Valley can help its customers get started faster and better align with business requirements in a cost-effective way.

The web-based self-service portal available through Cisco IAC enables customers to access the same tools that CIS Valley uses to deploy cloud solutions. Customers can easily deploy their own virtual servers without needing to go through CIS Valley. Not only does this save time for customers, but it also reduces the workload on IT staff. “Staff previously spent much of their time filling orders and troubleshooting environments for customers, and Cisco IAC helps remove some of that workload,” says Etheve. “Staff are now free to concentrate

Product List

FlexPod Solutions

- Cisco Unified Computing System (UCS)
- Cisco UCS B230 Blade Servers
- NetApp FAS
- Cisco Nexus 7000 Switches
- Cisco Nexus 5000 Switches
- Collaborative support for Cisco, NetApp, and VMware

Cloud Management

- Cisco Intelligent Automation for Cloud
- Cisco UCS Manager

Virtualization

- VMware

Applications

- Microsoft
- SAP
- Oracle

on strategic decisions, such as evolving the architecture or creating new products for customers.”

For example, The CULTURA company, a European leader in cultural products and services with 54 storefronts, relies on CIS Valley for hosting and maintaining its retail website, www.cultura.com. The CIS Valley cloud offering allows the company to answer in terms of availability, reactivity, and amount of capacity. The FlexPod solution is completely adapted to the forecast of the traffic and orders, in particular, during end of year activities and sales.

With a streamlined infrastructure and management, CIS Valley has greatly boosted productivity among IT staff. The company currently employs a team of about 30 people to manage 1000 servers. By taking advantage of management automation and increasing self-provisioning aspects of Cisco IAC, CIS Valley plans to expand to 5000 servers implementations in three years, while only adding four members to its IT staff. “We’re seeing significant productivity increases using Cisco management tools,” says Marc Etheve. “We expect that staff can meet customer demand with only minimal staff increases, which produces savings for us and ultimately our customers.”

Next Steps

CIS Valley is planning to expand solutions and applications available on the FlexPod environment, including new security solutions. In addition, the company is working with Cisco to add new applications to the self-service portal. With this new portal in place, customers will be able to deploy servers and install applications without needing to go through CIS Valley. Not only will this further reduce the load for IT staff, but it will also provide customers with greater control over their cloud environments.

For More Information

To find out more about FlexPod, please visit: www.cisco.com/go/flexpod.

To find out more about Cisco UCS, please visit: www.cisco.com/go/ucs.

To find out more about Cisco Nexus, please visit: www.cisco.com/go/nexus.



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