Accelerating Transformation with a Different Approach to Multi-Cloud Management

Leading full-stack cloud service provider (CSP) Expedient takes a Cloud Different™ approach to today's multi-cloud challenges to help organizations accelerate or reignite their transformation journey. The focus is on helping clients transform their IT operations through award-winning solutions and managed services that include multi-cloud, disaster recovery, security, compliance, desktop-as-a-service, co-location, and more. The portfolio is designed to ease clients' transition to the cloud, enabling them to focus on strategic business innovation while the Expedient team handles the IT operations needed to support it.

Expedient has been a service provider for more than 20 years, starting as a physical data center and network-interconnect provider supporting co-location, then moving to managed hosting. Expedient has evolved to being a complete cloud service provider leveraging technology partnerships such as VMware, Nutanix, Zerto, ColorTokens, and more.

The company now supports thousands of clients in healthcare, insurance, finance, manufacturing, and even other technology providers. Its cloud infrastructure is deployed worldwide. The company is in growth mode, with 14 data centers throughout the U.S. and a rapidly expanding footprint.

CHALLENGE: REDUCE COMPLEXITY WITH CROSS-CLOUD CONTROL

Expedient sees many of their clients looking to move numerous applications into a cloud operating model – a model that includes a mix of applications and assets they own on premises, in a hosting data center, or in a hyperscale cloud. Figuring out the optimal placement of workloads from their current environment to the right mix of cloud operating model is a complex challenge that spans industries and segments.

Surprisingly, many clients are only 30 percent of the way to that destination. They cite reasons that include not knowing how many of their applications would fit a hyperscale cloud model and not envisioning other ways to reach their objectives. To help clients, the Expedient team needed a common control plane that could unlock and provide access to client compute resources while also giving Expedient tools to improve service delivery.

Solving this complexity was critical. The Expedient team identified three main problems that needed addressing: One was making it easier for clients to provision into multiple clouds without adding complexity. The second was providing insight into costs to ensure clients were getting the best value for their dollar. The third was being able to provide governance and insight into security across clouds.

Expedient needed to support a multi-tenant infrastructure where each client had a unique mix of on-prem workloads, Expedient-hosted workloads, and public cloud workloads. Many clients were using VMware technologies for their hypervisor stack, but Expedient didn't want to be locked into a VMware-centric hybrid cloud management platform. The team at Expedient also was conscious of the cost and complexity of their tool stack. Building an Enterprise Cloud to compete with pure hyperscale providers meant being able to rapidly deploy new services, scale to meet new requirements, and minimize delivery expense.

MORPHEUS: A SOLUTION AND PARTNERSHIP TO GROW FROM

When Expedient was looking for the right hybrid cloud management platform partner, Morpheus came into the picture with a unified approach that stretched across different environments and took the complexity out of workload provisioning. It was exactly the foundation needed to support Expedient's next-generation offerings.

Beyond that, Expedient knew that its clients have needs – like backup, disaster recovery, security, and automation. Doing these in an open and modular way across different clouds is no small feat. Morpheus offered the right mix of simplicity and extensibility, providing Expedient an opportunity to start small and then expose new services to clients over time. This in turn gave Expedient the ability to "turn the knobs" and choose the right mix for different clients – showing them just what they want to see but not what they don't need.

TECHNOLOGY STACK

Private and Hosted Clouds
- VMware vSphere
- VMware vCloud Director
- Nutanix AHV

Public Clouds (BYO-Cloud)
- AWS
- Azure
- GCP
- Others

Task Automation
- Ansible

Micro-segmentation
- Color Tokens

Backup and DR
- Cohesity
- Zerto

Expedient liked that Morpheus natively integrated with the technologies they were already using and allowed them to choose the experience they wanted to deliver without a lot of brittle scripting or custom code. This loosely coupled approach with out-of-the-box integrations supports sustainable, scalable growth that readily accommodates new services.

Multi-tenancy was very important to enabling everything from basic VMaaS for single tenants to larger enterprise clients needing complex group and role structures set up to meet unique needs. Lastly, Morpheus reduced tool sprawl, aligning with Expedient's core philosophy that getting closer to one way of doing something drives simplicity and eliminates cost.

"Morpheus helps us give our clients an 'easy button'. As a service provider, we see Morpheus as the secret sauce that lets us put the pieces together for our clients, versus offering them a thousand choices. With the Morpheus cloud management platform, we have the ability to factor in options with equal ease for internal and external deployments. Clients can easily build business rules around their deployment processes, create budgets, obtain approvals, and set policy to make the right decisions more easily."

- Anthony Jackman, VP, Strategy and Innovation

OUTCOMES

Expedient's clients range from having hundreds to tens of thousands virtual machines. The common denominator company age and technical debt, which makes it hard to move to a cloud operating model. Morpheus has helped Expedient make this a non-issue and provided rapid time to value – which for a service provider means rapid time to new revenue.
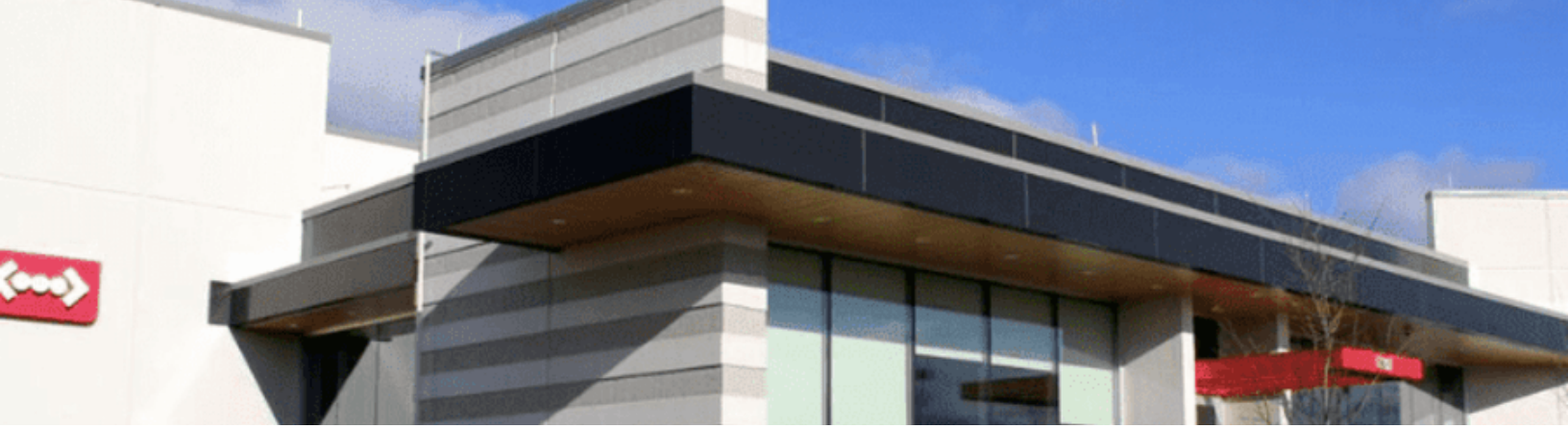
The team at Expedient appreciates that Morpheus has taken an open, agnostic path centered around the client use case and user personas – from business and IT users to Expedient's own operations staff. This is in contrast to limited tools from other vendors only designed to work best within that vendors portfolio.

Morpheus features are surfaced to clients as part of the Expedient CTRL suite which includes Automation CTRL for self-service and Cost CTRL for workload optimization. In addition, Expedient effectively uses the Morpheus platform internally to positively impact how they manage and monitor client workloads, reduce the cost of service delivery, and act as an automation hub to streamline day-to-day operations. Plans call for continuing to build additional service offerings, including Compliance CTRL. Each time the Expedient team builds out an offering that incorporates Morpheus, they take the time to understand it completely and support it appropriately – while also giving clients time to ingest and adapt to new capabilities.

PARTNERSHIP AND ADVICE TO OTHERS

The two companies' go-to-market strategy is incredibly similar. Morpheus provides the "glue" that has enabled Expedient to extend their services mix. The partnership has enabled Expedient to construct a program that enables them to scale as needed and move toward a goal of putting every client on the platform. The Expedient team feels that their model for bringing Morpheus to market is unique. They have been able to create service offerings and segment out revenue streams based on these offerings.

At the same time, Expedient has given Morpheus access to newer market segments, including mid-market clients. Morpheus has intentionally not delivered a fully managed SaaS version of their software platform, instead choosing to partner with service providers such as Expedient when clients need a more fully managed solution. This means the success of the two organizations is mutually dependent.

The Expedient team sums up their relationship with Morpheus as a "successful marriage" that works well for both companies and, more importantly, benefits clients in a way that creates a much better experience than simply dropping a new platform with too many options on clients.

"From a service provider point of view, there's a huge benefit to limiting the number of partners that you work with so that your team can become experts on the partner technology and really get the most value from it. For us, in partnering with Morpheus, we're not using five or six different technologies that we're then stitching together ourselves. It's a huge benefit." - Bryan Smith, Chief Strategy Officer

Learn more at www.morpheusdata.com

MORPHEUS