

Cloud transformation from the ground, up

Medialine EuroTrade AG helps businesses deliver innovation from their data centres using Microsoft Azure Stack Hub on Dell Technologies.

Business Needs

IT services provider Medialine AG identified the public cloud couldn't meet the needs of all its customers looking to develop new services fast. To provide these businesses with a solution, Medialine AG launched a Microsoft Azure Stack Hub offering and worked with Dell Technologies to engineer a highly scalable infrastructure platform for multiple tenants and their workloads

Solutions at a glance

- Dell EMC Integrated System for Microsoft Azure Stack Hub
- Dell EMC PowerEdge R640 Servers
- Dell EMC Unity and Isilon Storage
- Dell EMC Networking S-Series Switches

Business Results

- Delivers proof of concept launches for cloud in 48 hours rather than 2–4 weeks.
- Enables Medialine AG to relocate all full-time IT admin staff to higher-value consultancy work.
- Supports 2–3 fold rise in demand for cloud migrations from customers.
- Helps drive 70–80% annual growth in business.

In a world of growing competition where barriers to new markets are falling, companies are turning to innovation to provide an edge. Often the public cloud is seen as key to rapidly delivering needed change, but for several reasons — not least compliance — many organisations aren't in a position to make the migration.

Medialine AG identified the cloud challenges companies faced and looked for an answer that would still enable them to innovate. The IT services provider was well-placed to do so based on more than 20 years of experience delivering consulting and data services to organisations. What's more, the company was versed enough in Microsoft to realise that Microsoft Azure Stack Hub would give customers the cloud capabilities they wanted, in an on-premises environment. Dino Bordonaro, Solution Architect Azure at Medialine AG, says, "Microsoft Azure Stack Hub has everything: it's a highly standardised platform that is very marketable to our clients."

An infrastructure platform – a key requirement

The challenge for Dino Bordonaro was finding the right infrastructure platform on which to deliver its Microsoft Azure Stack Hub services. The company wanted an infrastructure that was reliable and easy to manage. It needed to integrate tightly with the Azure Stack Hub software to ensure performance and scalability and simplicity. Plus, the infrastructure needed to support multiple kinds of workloads. Adds Bordonaro, "We wanted an infrastructure partner that was as committed as we were to discover the right platform. We wanted a vendor whose focus was on finding solutions, not just selling products."

Medialine AG looked at leading vendors whose Azure Stack Hub-certified platforms could meet its requirements. It wasn't long before they all dropped out of the frame except one. Says Bordonaro, "Dell Technologies felt like the only vendor that didn't try to simply send us a piece of hardware. The solution vendor really wanted to co-engineer a platform."

Excellence comes through partnership

After development work was completed, Bordonaro launched its Microsoft Azure Stack Centre of Excellence powered by Dell Technologies. The centre offers a range of services from proof of concept (POC) support through to fully managed Azure Stack production environments. "Customers test it out for any application scenario," says Bordonaro. "Our partnership with Dell Technologies and Microsoft means we can deliver the whole deployment and integration of Azure Stack Hub using our tremendous experience and knowledge of the solution."

Post launch, Bordonaro has been able to focus more resource on higher value tasks because managing the Azure Stack Hub infrastructure is a part-time job. In-

deed, it's allowed the company to move three former IT admin staff into consultancy work with customers. "With auto patching, for instance, we don't need people overseeing the infrastructure as much. It's great because consultancy adds value to the customer experience," comments Bordonaro.

Bordonaro and his colleagues worked with a Dell Technologies team dedicated to collaborating with companies like Medialine AG in delivering a solution that meets their needs. Bordonaro remembers, "We had some amazing people working with us from the US and Europe. Everyone was pulling together to find the best outcome for my business and the best platform to deliver our service."

As good as any possible cloud experience

To ensure customers gained the same high-performance Azure experience as in the public cloud, Medialine AG built its solution on a Dell EMC Integrated System for Azure Stack Hub, based on Dell EMC PowerEdge R640 nodes. The nodes, which can handle multiple workloads, were attached to Dell EMC Unity and Dell EMC Isilon storage to provide both all-flash speed and scale-out storage capacity. Rounding out the infrastructure were Dell Networking S-Series switches with 10-gigabit ethernet connectivity. States Bordonaro, "Everything just fitted together so well. We felt as though we had a piece of the public cloud sitting in our data centre and everything perfectly integrated with the Azure Stack Hub management portal."

Cutting weeks from migration journeys

Medialine AG is helping customers accelerate their cloud migration strategies thanks to the speed at which the IT services provider can begin POCs on its Azure Stack Hub infrastructure. It takes just 48 hours to launch one for testing an application compared to 2-4 weeks to get a cloud test environment up and running previously. The time saving is due to automation, with the IT team using code templates to launch many POCs.



Source: Dino Bordonaro

Dino Bordonaro, Solution Architect Azure, Medialine EuroTrade AG, Bad Sobernheim

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Our customers love the simplicity, speed and reliability of Dell EMC Integrated System for Azure Stack Hub.

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We are growing at around 70-80% per annum. And expect that to increase as our centre of excellence gets into full swing.«

The increased speed of delivery couldn't have come at a better time. Says Bordonaro, "Customer interest in the cloud and Azure Stack Hub has increased by a factor of 2-3 as it's seen as a solution to issues around data sovereignty, compliance and latency. By migrating completely or partially to Azure Stack Hub, customers get the real benefits of a hybrid cloud platform." What's more, customers are also using the solution as a bridge to other services. "They have their own slice of Azure in our data centre to consume services like Office 365, Web Apps and even IaaS [infrastructure-as-a-service] in Azure," he adds.

Helping drive business growth

A growing number of Medialine AG customers in areas such as finance, healthcare and government are moving to Azure Stack Hub after successfully running applications on a Microsoft Hyper-V hypervisor. Bordonaro expects the number of migrations to increase significantly over the coming months — helping his business continue to thrive. "We're growing at around 70-80% per annum," states Bordonaro. "And expect that to increase as our centre of excellence gets into full swing and businesses adopt our managed Azure Stack Hub services."

Meeting an ever-present need

With Dell EMC Integrated System for Azure Stack Hub, Medialine AG can meet the need for on-premises IT — that Bordonaro says will never go away — with a solution that delivers all the innovative power of the public cloud. "Some 20-40% of enterprise applications will have to stay on-premises, and Azure Stack Hub is there for them," states Bordonaro. "I really believe the business world is only at the beginning of its cloud journey. And honestly think we have the best cloud software and hardware to power their transformations."