



Business challenge

After experiencing six years of growth, the Blue Shield of California IT environment contained too many siloed applications and custom implementations. The IT landscape also lacked consistency and standards.

Transformation

Blue Shield of California used the IBM® PureApplication® System (now the IBM Bluemix® Local System) to create an automated provisioning platform for local cloud environments. The organization is also using the PureApplication System to host microservices and IBM WebSphere® workloads.

Business benefits

92%

decrease

in the time needed to provision a new application environment

Reduces

time to market

so that the organization can be more responsive to market changes

Increases

consistency

in application environments through the use of patterns

Blue Shield of California

Provisioning local cloud environments 92 percent faster with a hybrid cloud

Founded in 1939, Blue Shield of California is a nonprofit health plan dedicated to providing citizens of California with access to high-quality healthcare at an affordable price. Headquartered in San Francisco, the organization has approximately 6,800 employees serving 4 million members.

“We’re improving our business agility so it’s much easier to roll out new business functions in response to market changes.”

—Danny Manepally, IT Architect, Blue Shield of California

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Eliminating application siloes

Over a 6-year period, the Blue Shield of California IT environment grew steadily as a result of the Affordable Care Act and other factors. With that growth came numerous challenges. “We had a lot of siloed applications and custom implementations,” says Danny Manepally, IT architect, Blue Shield of California. “There was also a lack of consistency and standards in our environments.” Although the organization had an on premises cloud solution, it still took 2 - 3 weeks to create a new application environment. Blue Shield of California wanted to improve the usability and reliability of its member-facing applications while addressing some underlying IT issues. The business needed a platform to simplify, automate and accelerate application environment provisioning so that it could deliver applications to market more quickly.

A cloud provisioning platform

To create an automated provisioning platform for local cloud environments, Blue Shield of California used the IBM PureApplication System (now the IBM Bluemix Local System). “PureApplication gives us a convergence of compute, storage and networking in one platform,” says Manepally. “The pattern engine allows us to standardize deployments with the level of consistency that we need. That’s really what changed the game in terms of how quickly we could deploy these environments.”

The organization is also using the PureApplication System for service integration. Manepally is beginning to host microservices and IBM WebSphere® Application Server and IBM WebSphere eXtreme Scale workloads on the PureApplication System devices, thereby promoting integration and reducing software licensing costs. To make the services even more lightweight and to expose

application programming interfaces (APIs) to the organization’s business partners, Manepally plans to use IBM API Connect™ software in the future.

Accelerating cloud deployment

With the PureApplication System, Blue Shield of California can now provision a new local cloud environment in one day, 92 percent faster than the two weeks previously required. Plus, using application patterns, the organization can achieve greater consistency in its environments. “That’s a huge win for us in terms of provisioning, as well as standardizing and getting some consistency,” says Manepally.

With this accelerated provisioning, Blue Shield of California has greatly improved its time to market. “We’re improving our business agility so it’s much easier to roll out new business functions in response to market changes,” says Manepally. “And we’ll be able to continue to improve the customer experience.”

Solution components

- IBM API Connect™
- IBM® PureApplication® System (now IBM Bluemix® Local System)
- IBM WebSphere® Application Server
- IBM WebSphere eXtreme Scale

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Take the next step

To learn more about IBM API Connect software, the IBM PureApplication System, the IBM Bluemix Local System or IBM WebSphere software, please contact your IBM marketing representative or IBM Business Partner, or visit the following websites: ibm.com/software/products/en/api-connect, ibm.com/pureapplication, ibm.com/websphere

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