



Key Information Systems, Inc.

Delivers hybrid cloud services with robust IBM systems

Overview

The need

Key Information Systems, Inc., an IBM Premier Business Partner, needs a flexible, enterprise-class infrastructure to meet diverse client requirements for highly reliable and efficient hybrid cloud services.

The solution

The company has virtualized IBM® Power Systems™ servers, connected to IBM Storwize® V7000 and IBM FlashSystem® storage, along with IBM Spectrum Protect™ and IBM Cloud Manager with OpenStack software.

The benefit

With its broad range of IBM solutions, the hybrid cloud provider can deliver customized offerings for more than 40 mid-market clients, backed by 99.999 percent uptime SLAs and extreme cost efficiency.

Based in southern California, Key Information Systems, Inc. (KeyInfo) is a leading provider of enterprise-class hybrid cloud services. An IBM Premier Business Partner for more than 15 years, KeyInfo has transformed itself from a value-added reseller of on-premises technology to a cloud provider with a full suite of data center capabilities, including private and hybrid cloud offerings, connectivity services, colocation facilities and managed services.

“Clients come to us for personal service and customized offerings,” explains Lief Morin, president of KeyInfo. “They’re looking for someone who is going to know their environment, who’s going to be there for them for the next 10 years, and who’s going to tune the base infrastructure so that it’s unique to them. Our enterprise-grade technology from IBM gives them a lot of confidence in our capabilities to execute.”

KeyInfo requires high-performance, reliable, enterprise-class technology to meet its clients’ needs for running mission-critical workloads in a hybrid cloud. IBM lets the firm deliver cost-effective services with 99.999 percent uptime. “Providing enterprise cloud services on IBM infrastructure is definitely a competitive advantage,” says President Lief Morin.



Solution components

- IBM® Power Systems™ servers
 - IBM Storwize® V7000
 - IBM FlashSystem®
 - IBM Spectrum Protect™
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Providing infrastructure as a service

KeyInfo focuses on building the right cloud to meet its clients' needs. The engagements begin with conversations about clients' specific objectives for business continuity, availability and performance — not the technology stack.

“One of the things that has been very successful for us is that we can strike a good balance between different solutions,” said Clayton Weise, director of cloud services at KeyInfo. “We’re not trying to shove someone into a box. The question is: what’s the best technology for that particular client?”

KeyInfo has hybrid cloud offerings for Infrastructure-as-a-Service (IaaS), Disaster Recovery-as-a-Service (DRaaS) and Backup and Recovery-as-a-Service (BRaaS). The services are all designed to scale quickly and dynamically as business needs grow, without clients having to worry about the underlying infrastructure. And since clients are paying for the cloud architecture on a consumption basis, the world-class technology can be more cost-effective.

“Traditionally, it hasn’t made financial sense for a lot of organizations, especially in the mid-market space, to duplicate their production infrastructure [for disaster recovery], pay for the hosting and stick it in a data center somewhere for peace of mind,” said Weise. “We know that 99 percent of the time, you’re going to be using a fraction of the resources, so we can structure the financials accordingly.”

Moving beyond a built-to-fail architecture

KeyInfo knows that its sweet spot is helping clients overcome the lack of reliability and inconsistent performance that can result when trying to run critical applications in a standard, built-to-fail cloud environment. “Infrastructure-as-a-Service is only as good as the technology on which you deploy it,” says Morin. “These applications that are at the heart of the enterprise, you can’t just shove them onto a horizontally scaling architecture. The applications aren’t meant to run that way.”

“Our cloud architecture is built on enterprise-class technology from IBM. It’s not built to fail. It’s built to survive.”

—Clayton Weise, Director of cloud services,
Key Information Systems, Inc.

To deliver high availability, rapid scalability and customizable security for its hybrid-cloud services, KeyInfo depends upon a broad range of IBM servers and storage systems. Currently, the infrastructure uses a mixture of Power Systems servers, running IBM AIX®, IBM i and Linux, as well as IBM PowerVM® virtualization and IBM PowerHA® clustering technology. For automated management and tracking of its pay-per-use services, KeyInfo uses IBM Cloud Manager for OpenStack software.

“The real value for a lot of our clients is that we have a mixture of platforms and can support their mixed workloads,” explains Weise.

To optimize data storage for clients, KeyInfo uses tiered storage with IBM Storwize V7000 virtualized storage systems and IBM FlashSystem drives to provide extreme flash performance for the most critical applications. The Storwize V7000 system has both solid-state drives and standard disk drives, addressing stringent service level agreement (SLA) requirements, as well as reliable storage.

“Having a storage system that has a real concentration on uptime performance is very important for us,” says Weise. “By introducing flash storage and using IBM Easy Tier® in the Storwize V7000 system, the most frequently accessed data can be automatically moved to the high-performance drives — and the storage is still cost effective.”

The firm has also recently rolled out its Backup-as-a-Service (BaaS) offering, using IBM Spectrum Protect to help manage the day-to-day backup operations. Clients can also use a self-service portal for complete visibility into the backup environment, including usage reports and more.

Evolving with a world-class partner

Moving forward, KeyInfo plans to expand its IBM infrastructure to support new types of offerings, such as Database-as-a-Service (DaaS) and Platform-as-a-Service (PaaS), as well as new standards-based technologies, including Linux on Power Systems.

“Providing enterprise cloud services on IBM infrastructure is definitely a competitive advantage,” said Morin. “IBM has been a great partner for all these years, and the evolution of that relationship will help us provide better cloud services to our clients.”

Take the next step

Contact your IBM representative or IBM Business Partner, or visit:
ibm.com/power or ibm.com/storage

For more information about Key Information Systems, visit:
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