IDC

The Benefits and Value of Platforming on Oracle Cloud Infrastructure

Enabling Independent Software Vendor Success

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Introduction

This IDC eBook provides insight into the critical technology and business considerations that were important to independent software vendors (ISVs) when selecting Oracle Cloud to platform, deploy, and scale their applications. The findings are based on eight interviews with ISVs from around the world to understand their motivations for selecting Oracle Cloud and the benefits they are realizing as a result. The bottom line is that the ISVs interviewed validated core value propositions and competitive differentiators of Oracle Cloud—particularly in relation to key ISV requirements and business objectives.

Executive Summary

Independent software vendors (ISVs) have made strategic business decisions to leverage Oracle Cloud Infrastructure (OCI) and other Oracle products and services to deploy and scale their applications in the cloud. Meanwhile, Oracle continues to enhance the technical attributes of OCI with new services, capabilities, and deployment options, while also continuing to invest in the business attributes that contribute to ISV profitability and market expansion.

The development, sale, and support of commercial software applications deployed in the cloud can be a complicated and costly proposition. ISVs noted the importance of obtaining a clear line of sight into their return on investment in cloud infrastructure and related services. Positive outcomes for ISVs are the result of both the business and technical attributes of Oracle Cloud, as well as disciplined execution of the strategic plan that guided their direction to partner with Oracle.

ISVs considered Oracle Cloud to be differentiated from its peers because of its costs, value, performance, stability, security, computational capabilities, database management functionality, and surrounding ecosystem of analytics and cloud-native products. In addition, ISVs noted that it was important that Oracle cloud applications could be seamlessly integrated into Oracle cloud deployments. ISVs also highly regarded the quality of guidance and technical support they received from Oracle, not only in designing their solutions but also in deploying and taking them to market.

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Business value drivers for ISVs in the OCI relationship are many, but at the end of the day it comes down to what has the most positive impact on ISV fundamentals: revenue and profit. Unpacking that further reveals attributes in the relationship that allow for sales acceleration, market amplification, and savings in time, resources, and money.

The ISVs interviewed for this eBook all made a strategic choice to partner with Oracle based on key technical and business requirements, and included small start-ups, midsize ISVs transitioning to a cloud model, and large, born-in-the-cloud players that are based in the United States and Europe but have multi-region, global businesses. The ISVs' applications addressed a spectrum of key functions ranging from engineering and fleet management to tax compliance and supply chain and workflow management. In addition, the ISVs were serving both horizontal and industry requirements, including financial services and manufacturing.

INTERVIEWED INDEPENDENT SOFTWARE VENDORS:

DRIVE Software Solutions
London, England

Altair
Troy, MI

WorkForce Software
Livonia, MI

iPoint Systems
Reutlingen, Germany

Strands Lab
Barcelona, Spain

Vertex
King of Prussia, PA

Körber
Bad Nauheim, Germany

RecVue
Palo Alto, CA

Technical Attributes Driving Independent Software Vendor Value

ISVs that selected Oracle as a cloud platform provider identified the following attributes as key drivers in the decision to deploy their applications on Oracle Cloud and subsequently use associated products and services:

Performance and stability

Seamless transition from pilot to production deployments

Comprehensiveness of product and service offerings

Technical benefits — e.g., compute performance, GPU utilization, database functionality, and security

Innovation in the form of the ability to rapidly enhance products and services with cutting-edge technologies

Streamlined integration with Oracle products and services for customers

Cost savings associated with using OCI

Performance and Stability

The stability and performance of a cloud environment are important technical considerations that have an impact on the business of an ISV. Many ISVs are still in the process of migrating mission-critical applications from on-premises deployments to the cloud. Stability and performance can be the difference between maintaining legacy clients or losing them; this is particularly true as ISVs are typically required to make service-level commitments to these same clients around application availability and performance.

Stable Infrastructure

Altair, a Troy, Michigan–based ISV with 3,000 employees that produces data analytics and artificial intelligence (AI) software, noted that it chose Oracle for two reasons: First, it had worked with Oracle for several years; second, the performance delivered by Oracle was especially important because "some of our applications are very computationally intensive and absolutely need that high-end compute infrastructure that is optimized for floating point mathematics," said company Chief Technology Officer Sam Mahalingam.

Price Performance

Oracle's "price-performance ratio — namely, the price at which the infrastructure is offered and the performance that you get — was the best with Oracle, especially when considering the GPU resources as well," said Mahalingam, adding, "Oracle's whole bare metal infrastructure as a service was very beneficial and one of the primary reasons why we went with Oracle's cloud."

Reliability

Simon West-Oliver, strategic partnerships director for DRIVE Software Solutions, a London-based ISV of fleet management software, remarked on how the stability of Oracle's deployment infrastructure empowers customers to "feel very confident about using our cloud product." This stability and confidence on the part of customers, according to West-Oliver, was something DRIVE "could have only gotten with Oracle, with the technical support we had in the early days, the ability to test and prove that our product would work in that environment, and then to start deploying it with clients as far away as the U.S. and Australia."

Oracle's technical support and guidance provided clients with confidence that DRIVE had a solution that had "taken away a major headache," such that "they weren't having to manage the management of the database," said West-Oliver. The stability of Oracle's solutions was enabled by the planning and preparation delivered by Oracle's technical teams to DRIVE.

Vertex Inc., a global provider of tax technology solutions to enterprise and midmarket customers in over 130 countries, has seen accelerated cloud adoption among its new and existing customers. Oracle Cloud Infrastructure represented a natural evolution of the companies' longtime partnerships, enabling Vertex to further differentiate its offerings and support a diverse set of customer requirements.

Enterprise Grade

"We knew Oracle could provide the enterprise-grade performance and security our customers need to manage tax complexity and grow their business with confidence," said Vertex Chief Revenue Officer Chris Jones, adding that "the strength of our relationship instilled a sense of trust from the onset."

Having access to Oracle Cloud technical expertise and best practices can also be a boon for ISVs when adopting OCI. "We had a team of Oracle architects and OCI hosting experts that helped us work through concept to production, accelerating time to value for our customers by nearly 40% in some cases," said Jones.

> **The stability and performance of Oracle Cloud Infrastructure gave ISVs confidence that they could provide a seamless transition for customers that were used to the on-premises infrastructure on which their products and solutions were previously hosted.**

"Some of our code is very GPU-intensive, but **Oracle worked closely with us to benchmark our applications,** and we've publicized those benchmarks **to give customers confidence."**

SAM MAHALINGAM
CTO, Altair

Mission Critical

Similarly, Strands Labs, a 150-employee financial services ISV based in Barcelona, Spain, required enterprise-class, on-premises-quality performance in the cloud. That requirement came from its shift to a SaaS model, but more so because its banking clients view its solution as mission-critical for many of their own clients. "We have banking clients with more than 10 million customers, and OCI enabled impressive performance, which absolved us from having to migrate to other cloud platforms and therefore freed us from addressing compatibility issues," said Strands Global Head of Sales Leandro Gimeno.

The stability and performance of Oracle Cloud Infrastructure gave ISVs confidence that they could provide a seamless transition for customers that were used to the on-premises infrastructure on which their products and solutions were previously hosted. Not only was the transition to OCI seamless, but it also offered a bevy of enhancements such as reduced cost, enhanced computational power, enhanced operational agility, high availability, and low latency.

Pilot to Production

Körber, a global supply chain ISV, used Oracle in enabling the ISV to pilot, and then bring to production, processes for moving customers from other cloud providers to OCI. According to company Chief Technology Officer Sean Elliott, the challenge Körber faced was developing a process that notified customers about upcoming migrations from another cloud provider to OCI and making the process so seamless that it was a "nonevent" for the customer. Oracle provided the ISV with consulting on the processes and technical requirements for ensuring seamless migrations across cloud providers.

Transition to OCI

"Oracle did a good job of helping us rationalize what was needed within their infrastructure in order to get the right compute performance and a high transactional environment for our customers and make that somewhat of a nonevent," said Elliott, adding that when Körber was transitioning customers from another cloud provider to OCI, Oracle understood the sensitivity and put additional managed services in place to make sure it was covered.
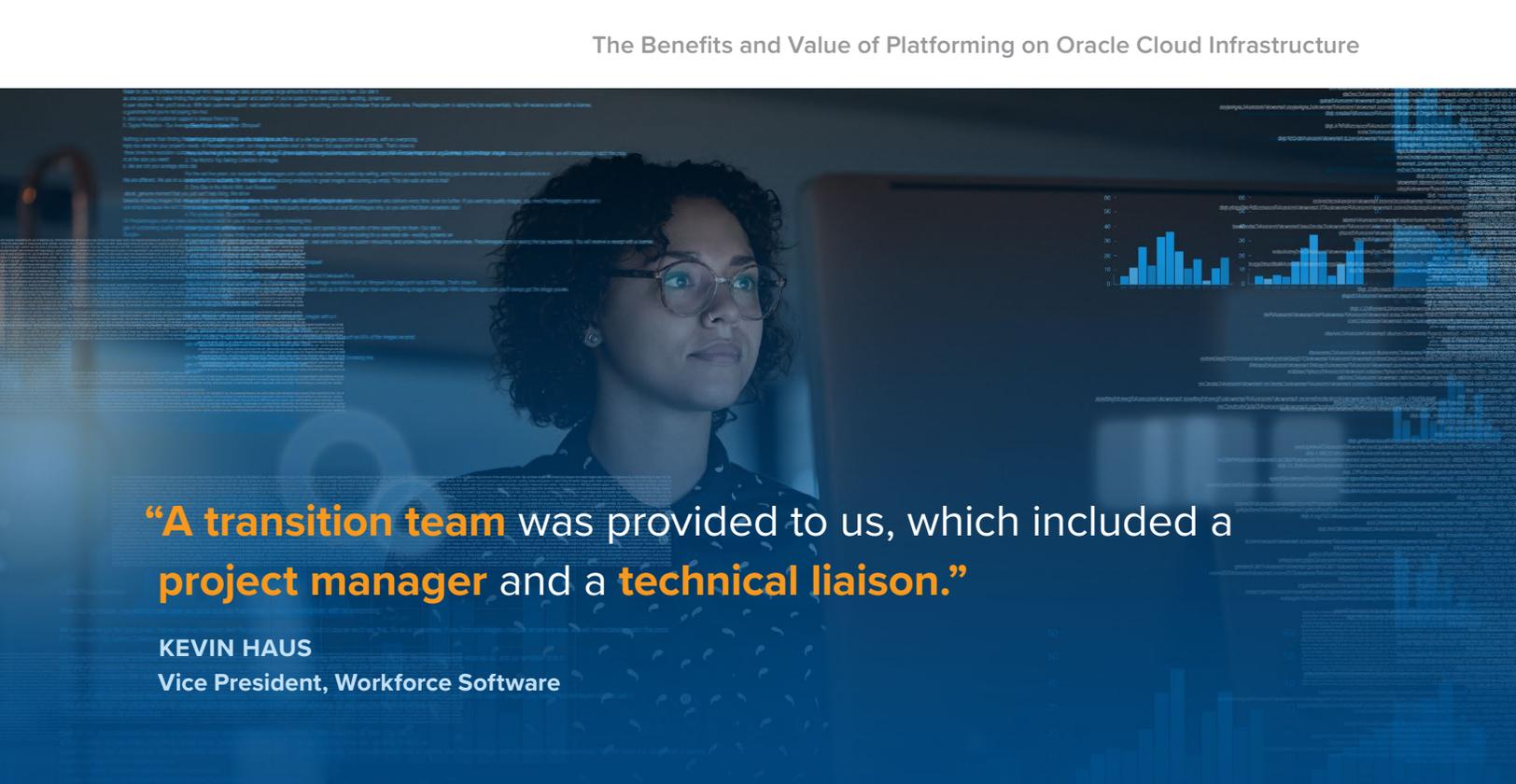
"**A transition team** was provided to us, which included a **project manager** and a **technical liaison.**"

KEVIN HAUS
Vice President, Workforce Software

Trial to Paid

RecVue, an order-to-cash ISV based in Palo Alto, California, with 87 employees, also found Oracle adept at streamlining its process of transitioning trial instances from pilot to production. "Those trial instances became our paid environment. We didn't lose any data—it was already a mainstream effort, rather than a sandbox environment that was provided for us to go test that application. That was a huge plus," said company Chief Revenue Officer Eric Steller.

The ability to seamlessly transition trial instances to production-grade instances was important because, according to Steller, RecVue didn't have to spend the time to sunset trial instances and spin up an instance again in a production environment. As a result of Oracle's consultative help, the transition from pilot to production became a matter of "flicking a switch on the billing side," he said.

Full Support

WorkForce Software, a workforce management ISV with 600 employees, based in Livonia, Michigan, also made the case for Oracle in providing valued support in its transition from pilot to production. "A transition team was provided to us, which included a project manager and a technical liaison," said Vice President Kevin Haus, adding that Oracle also provided "technical assistance with our automation through Terraform" and enabled "direct access to networking specialists" with whom the company met daily even a year after the deployment went live.

Oracle Cloud simplified the transition from pilot to production for WorkForce Software's customers by providing managed services and consultative guidance for customers to help them understand the infrastructure required for production-grade solutions. In addition, Oracle Cloud streamlined the process of transferring data from pilot deployments to production deployments to the point where customers felt the transition to production was akin to "flicking a switch." Oracle Cloud's ability to streamline and simplify the transition from pilot to production is illustrative of technical attributes of its cloud platform that facilitate a rapid and smooth transition to a production environment.

Comprehensiveness of the Oracle Cloud Portfolio

Altair chose Oracle for many reasons over and above its longstanding business relationship with the vendor and its high-performance cloud-based computing. For example, according to Altair's Mahalingam, Oracle's "security posture for its Gen 2 cloud was fantastic" because Altair decided to "have two different control planes: one we used to administrate, provision, orchestrate, and deploy services and a different control plane for their customers or end users."

Rapid Availability

In addition, Mahalingam indicated that another key reason for its decision to choose Oracle was the rapid availability of new, state-of-the-art hardware for computationally intensive workloads. Because Altair required instant access to state-of-the-art compute infrastructure, it chose Oracle because of its speed with respect to rendering available new GPUs and hardware on Oracle Cloud Infrastructure. "That time to market and availability of state-of-the-art compute was also another reason why we went toward choosing Oracle," said Mahalingam.

Consultative Guidance

Finally, Mahalingam believes the technical support and consultative guidance provided to Altair by Oracle in the development and test phases of the deployment was key. "Oracle has been working like a partner with us," he said, adding, "as we stumbled upon issues, we immediately got a response, not just from their support team but also the solution architect and the product team."

RecVue chose Oracle because of its comprehensive cloud capabilities, both from a technology perspective and with respect to its support and breadth of products and services. Moreover, RecVue felt that customers that had chosen Oracle for enterprise applications, including ERP and Financials, could more seamlessly integrate with RecVue's own SaaS applications built on OCI.

Ease of Integration

RecVue's prioritization of the ease of integrating Oracle applications with other applications hosted on OCI constitutes a recurring theme among ISVs: They are keenly aware that Oracle's large enterprise applications are used by their customer base and are interested in selecting Oracle as a cloud provider because of its ability to optimize integrations with these same apps.

Responsiveness

Another important consideration for RecVue, as a start-up, was the quality of the support and technical help it received from Oracle. According to company VP of Marketing Amit Chaudhry, Oracle's "responsiveness" provided RecVue with a degree of "focused support" that RecVue believed it would not have received from other cloud providers.

"With the other hyperscale cloud providers, we would have been just one of the other smaller partners," said Chaudhry, adding that he felt the guidance RecVue received from Oracle enabled the company to effectively take advantage of Oracle's cloud products and services. Oracle enabled

ISVs decided to partner with Oracle Cloud Infrastructure because of the breadth and depth of products and services available on OCI.
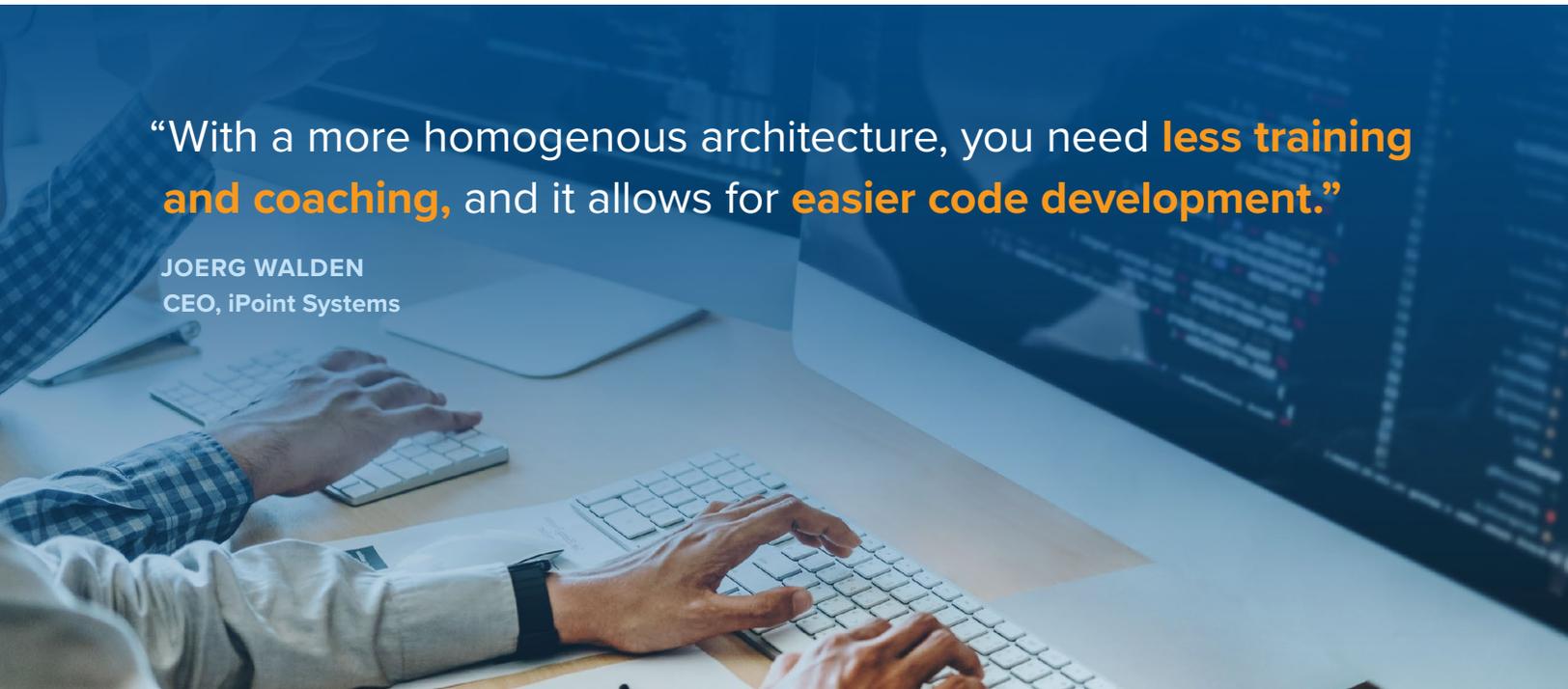
"With a more homogenous architecture, you need **less training and coaching,** and it allows for **easier code development.**"

JOERG WALDEN
CEO, iPoint Systems

a seamless transition for RecVue between trial and production-grade instances of application environments by preserving data from the trial instances. In addition, Oracle's team helped facilitate an accelerated transition between pilot and production deployments.

Portfolio Breadth

ISVs decided to partner with Oracle Cloud Infrastructure because of the breadth and depth of products and services available on OCI. Examples of the comprehensiveness of the Oracle Cloud portfolio include the availability of GPUs, high-performance computing, support for both Oracle and non-Oracle technologies, strong security capabilities, robust monitoring and performance management functionality, and the availability of a multitude of additional technologies such as AI/ML, IoT, blockchain, AR/VR, and data analytics. ISVs found the comprehensiveness of the Oracle Cloud portfolio attractive because it minimizes the need for them to leverage third-party products and services.

Oracle Cloud Infrastructure Technical Benefits

Strands worked with Oracle to develop its SaaS solution because of its partitioning tools within the Oracle Database and related Oracle Database Cloud Services. The Oracle Database partitioning tools enabled the Strands application to run faster and expedited the access of data. Given that the core features and functionality of the Strands product leveraged Oracle Database features and functionality, it made sense for the ISV to work with Oracle rather than transition to another vendor for cloud infrastructure and related services.

According to WorkForce Software's Haus, the ISV had an extremely compute-intensive product that it needed to migrate to the cloud. To do that, it required "a very fast network and very fast storage to perform well," he said, adding that the ISV created a proof of concept with Oracle to confirm that OCI could deliver on WorkForce Software's performance requirements.

Oracle's ability to demonstrate its capability to meet those performance requirements became the deciding factor for the ISV's selection of OCI as the platform to host its digital solutions. Given that WorkForce Software had created similar proofs

of concept with other cloud vendors, Oracle's demonstration of its ability to meet the performance requirements illustrated leadership with respect to database and computational performance in the cloud, according to Haus. While Oracle has a history of developing databases that can manage the processing of massive amounts of data at scale, what is notable about WorkForce Software's selection of Oracle Cloud is the conjunction of computational and database performance in the cloud.

Secure

Joerg Walden, CEO of iPoint Systems, an environmental compliance and sustainability solutions provider based in Germany, said that OCI's security capabilities were an important factor in the company's decision to select Oracle, along with the ability to handle data at scale and harness CPU power for computationally intensive use cases. Oracle's ability to deliver enterprise-grade security also differentiated it from its peers and was an *"extremely important"* consideration in iPoint's decision in selecting a technology provider, according to Walden.

Open and Available

WorkForce Software's Haus made it clear that the availability on OCI of cloud-native technologies such as containers, Kubernetes, serverless technologies, and microservices was a key factor in the decision to select OCI. According to Haus, OCI is "more open" than other providers and has "few barriers to adopting any of these types of technologies within the cloud environment." This positions Oracle favorably in comparison with other vendors for Haus, because the adoption of cloud-native technologies is the direction in which the ISV is moving.

Database Integration

Technical benefits of OCI include impressive compute performance, fast networking and storage capabilities, and enterprise-grade security capabilities and compliance standards, in addition to the platform's support for cloud-native technologies and tools such as Kubernetes, containers, microservices, and DevOps. Another important technical benefit of OCI is Oracle's ability to provide access to its well-known database capabilities, both on premises and in the cloud: Customers that have a long history of using Oracle databases and related solutions can look forward to a seamless integration with Oracle Cloud infrastructure.

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"The way I look at it is, if we were to go down this path of **investing further in innovation** and offer more AI in our stack, do we have **a partner that can match up with that,** just in terms of all of the services that they offer within the infrastructure itself at the right price?..."

SEAN ELLIOT
CTO, Körber

Innovation

When considering a cloud provider, iPoint cited "data management, blockchain, and artificial intelligence" as the most important innovation-centric technologies for its business, according to its CEO, Walden. iPoint felt that the conjunction of blockchain, artificial intelligence, and IoT empowered it to develop cutting-edge security functionality to protect customer data.

Data Management and Blockchain
iPoint chose Oracle Cloud Infrastructure after a careful examination of its support for innovation-focused technologies such as artificial intelligence, blockchain, IoT, Kubernetes, Docker, and microservices. iPoint understood Oracle as highly capable of delivering functionality that empowered it to innovate on its existing product portfolio. This confidence in Oracle's support for its product portfolio enabled iPoint to innovate by means of these technologies.

IoT, AI and ML

Körber noted that it was a developer of IoT, AI, and ML technologies prior to its decision to partner with Oracle and, as such, was interested in locating a technology partner that supported these technologies as a means of empowering Körber to continue innovating with respect to its existing product portfolio.

As CTO Sean Elliot noted, "The way I look at it is, if we were to go down this path of investing further in innovation and offer more AI in our stack, do we have a partner that can match up with that, just in terms of all of the services that they offer within the infrastructure itself at the right price? Innovation in our space occurs fairly rapidly, so we dug into this and researched it more and more."

Like iPoint, Körber noted how it was looking for a cloud partner that could support deepened investment in innovation-centric technologies such as IoT, AI, and ML. Oracle gave Körber confidence that it could help bring innovation to Körber's product portfolio.

Kubernetes

Meanwhile, Altair's Mahalingam commented on the company's use of Oracle Cloud Infrastructure's Kubernetes services: "We have leveraged Kubernetes quite extensively, because our DevOps teams used the Kubernetes infrastructure that is available. Also, our existing knowledge with Kubernetes and with the Terraform scripts that we had, I think, enabled us to seamlessly leverage the Kubernetes service on Oracle and migrate that over. So I think in my opinion, that was an easy, frictionless spot."

Mahalingam remarked on Altair's ability to migrate Kubernetes functionality from the Oracle Cloud to its own portfolio of products and services. As such, Altair illustrates the production-ready quality of Oracle's cloud-native portfolio and its ability to immediately bring value to existing products. The use of Kubernetes and DevOps enhances automation and catalyzes the infusion of innovation into digital solutions by giving them a cloud-native, modern architecture.

ISVs carefully considered Oracle's capabilities with respect to innovative technologies such as AI/ML, IoT, blockchain, AR/VR, Kubernetes, containers, and microservices. The consensus was that the availability of such functionality gave ISVs confidence that they could augment their existing innovation-focused digital solutions and develop new ones by leveraging Oracle's portfolio of innovation-centric technologies. As in the case of GPUs and computing hardware more generally, ISVs trusted Oracle to upgrade to new software and hardware distributions related to innovation technologies as needed.

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Business Attributes Driving Independent Software Vendor Engagement

ISVs that selected OCI identified the following business attributes as key drivers in maintaining and growing their businesses on OCI:

Sales acceleration

Market amplification

Time to market

Pricing and licensing

Global reach

Oracle Cloud Marketplace

Sales Acceleration

Sales engagement in the field with both Oracle and OCI sales personnel is an important driver for ISVs in opening wider market opportunity and penetration. It also works to maintain an ongoing cadence for mutual benefit, where the ISV and Oracle conduct account planning to determine the best strategy for success.

Oracle Field Sales Support

According to Rik Schrader, SVP of sales for Körber, Oracle field sales teams have contributed to his company's success. One metric of that success is an increase of 30% in Körber's cloud deployments on OCI, which has exceeded its goals.

"Matching up our field sales team with Oracle's field sales team has enabled us to drive deeper into the market and get exposed to clients that we wouldn't have been exposed to," said Schrader. "It's a good opportunity to be in the same room with customers transparently talking about how we can accelerate their business together."

Joint Selling

Developing a steady cadence of joint selling with a large company like Oracle requires both parties to work on building a workable, trusted relationship. Additionally, account mapping, planning, and rules of engagement set the stage for ISV activity and behavior, especially in the co-sell motion.

"We are built on OCI and integrate with Oracle apps, which provides us with **phenomenal access to their customers, their sales teams, and all the go-to-market resources.**"

AMIT CHAUDHRY
VP of Marketing, RecVue

Account Planning

Altair conducts account planning with Oracle, looking at the intersection of customers to identify priority accounts to go after jointly. This also becomes an opportunity for Altair to identify and leverage Oracle's C-level relationships in accounts, allowing the ISV to move higher up the decision-making chain, which can lead to more strategic engagements with customers.

Pipeline Impact

The goal of ISVs' gaining exposure to Oracle field sales teams is, of course, to generate a bigger pipeline of opportunities, which is a quantifiable outcome. WorkForce Software directly attributes its opportunity growth to the Oracle and OCI sales relationships.

"We've grown our pipeline with Oracle by over $10 million in a short period of time by working with them to close deals and benefit from their influence with customers," said WorkForce Software's Haus. "Oracle can amplify everything that we do to the next degree, and we've seen the impact of that."

Enablement Sessions

WorkForce Software, like other ISVs, is putting time and energy into making sure its strategic engagement with Oracle hits all the right notes to lead to sales acceleration. This has included not only reviewing accounts, but also conducting enablement sessions for the Oracle field sales team so they understand the joint value of the ISV solution.

"We currently have 400 companies in which our teams are having initial or late-stage conversations," said Haus, adding that even with the pandemic, WorkForce Software kicked off very positive activities in 2020, with high expectations for acceleration this year.

ISV sales acceleration is elevated through Oracle and OCI field sales engagement, which allows for greater opportunities, especially within Oracle accounts, but ISVs are also bringing prospects to the table. Field sales engagement works best when both parties are willing to do account planning proactively to design the best path forward.

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Market Amplification

Marketing has become a key pillar in ISV efforts to elevate their market visibility. Achieving this requires amplification of the ISV brand in the market, which can be done by leveraging Oracle's market presence via co-marketing and tailored messaging—benefiting directly from Oracle's and OCI's brand value.

Brand Credibility

For an ISV like WorkForce Software, the amplification of its messaging and brand in association with Oracle and OCI has been a big win. Equally important for WorkForce Software is having access to marketing experts, to learn from their experience about what does and doesn't work in meeting specific marketing outcomes.

Co-Marketing Assets

"Oracle is helping amplify everything we do: our brand, our messaging, our positioning in the market," said WorkForce Software's Haus, adding that the Oracle marketing team has been flexible in trying different approaches, from traditional demand-generation campaigns and webinars to joint ebooks, fireside chats, and customer spotlights. "They've done a lot to help drive awareness of our partnership and our brand—it's been phenomenal," he said.

Access to Digital Resources

For ISVs that are continuing to evolve their businesses from on-premises to cloud models, the move from traditional to digital marketing, and in understanding the go-to-market motions for cloud software, has been a journey. Having access to resources that understand that transition can make a meaningful impact on ISV success.

For ISVs, marketing is the launch pad for winning deals, and valued joint marketing ventures with a visible, respected brand like Oracle and OCI can increase ISVs' visibility. In fact, ISVs are elevating their own brand in association with Oracle and OCI in markets and with prospects that may have otherwise been obscured.

For ISVs, marketing is the launch pad for winning deals, and valued joint marketing ventures with a visible, respected brand like Oracle and OCI can increase ISVs' visibility.

"The benefit of working with Oracle is that the **buying process has an IT validation phase,** and their team of experts address all those needs for us and **reduce our time to market.**"

LEANDRO GIMENO
Global Head of Sales, Strands Labs

Time to Market

Another crucial driver for ISVs is the speed with which they can get a product to market, get that product sold more quickly to customers, and get customers up and running with that product. All scenarios represent quicker time to revenue and can be achieved through closer engagement with Oracle and OCI, which also provides ISVs with more time to work closely with customers and extend their value and revenue further.

Shortening the Sales Cycle

Besides helping ISVs build stronger messaging about the benefits of cloud, Oracle also brings to the table an understanding of go-to-market motions for SaaS and the importance for ISVs of working closely with their mutual clients. A direct result of the OCI team's help in shortening the sales cycle is that ISVs are freed up to bring higher value to customer engagements and can extend further into organizations.

"Our engagement with prospects to closing a contract has been shortened, and we're spending more time ensuring clients get the benefit of our solution," said DRIVE's West-Oliver. "They're using more of our product; therefore, we're selling a larger footprint of the solution into our client base."

Reduced Implementation Time

West-Oliver believes DRIVE has reduced its implementation time by 60%, which may mean reduced revenue on the implementation but also means increased revenue from consulting. This is especially important for an ISV like DRIVE that is transferring long-term legacy clients to the cloud. "The benefit of cloud and working with OCI is our ability to engage with a client so they get the best out of the solution in a shorter period of time," said West-Oliver.

Go-Live Faster

Körber also experienced a reduction in the time it took for its solution to go live, which was an improvement over a previous cloud provider. "We were having a lot of problems shrinking the time to go-live with another cloud provider. The benefit of working with OCI was that our time of implementation, from start of project to go-live, was cut by 50%," said Körber's Schrader, adding that it took as many as 45 days to engineer a cloud environment with the company's previous provider.

Focus on Value-Add Sooner

The Oracle team working with Körber was able to help engineer environments and get them in front of clients within five business days. Bringing that down from a previous average of four weeks helped reduce costs for Körber's customers, and also gave the ISV the ability to refocus staff on value-add activities, including how to reengineer processes. "We're seeing 35% improvements in labor expenses, and we're in front of the customer talking about improving their business," said Schrader.

Having access to Oracle Cloud technical expertise and best practices can be a boon for ISVs when going from concept to production. Vertex shaved significant time off its go-to-market motion with the help of Oracle. "We had a team of Oracle architects and OCI hosting experts that helped us work through concept to production, which helped speed up our time to market by 40%," said Vertex's Jones.

Streamline Processes

For iPoint, OCI streamlined the process of setting up new customers, creating a development environment and provisioning a production environment and related operational tasks. CEO Walden estimated that contracting with Oracle accelerated time to market by 50%, thereby reducing the time required to set up a new customer from 30 days to less than two weeks. "This helped us speed up our growth without hiring rear IT employees as a result of outsourcing the operational management of the cloud infrastructure to Oracle and the implementation of increased automation because of the adoption of DevOps processes."

SaaS Solution Acceleration

By deploying its SaaS application on OCI, Strands was able to go live within three months, or roughly 50% faster than via an on-premises deployment. This increase in speed has translated into a corresponding acceleration of revenue recognition that has benefited the business by providing revenue sooner. Moreover, the ability to sell SaaS applications increased because customers were absolved of the need to perform a laborious ROI analysis that typically included funding "millions of dollars in infrastructure," according to Strands' Gimeno. "The game changer here is that when you sell on-premises, you need to get a bigger IT validation on the infrastructure. With SaaS, you just need to comply with security regulations. For us, it was the simplest way to go SaaS very fast," he said.

Performance Improvement

WorkForce Software's Haus noted that the company achieved a 30% performance improvement on OCI as measured by end-user transactional performance. "Intensive cost computation over lots of records is improved by 30%," he said, adding that this was because of synergies between the computational power and data infrastructure on OCI.

This performance improvement translates into greater productivity for end users and an improved user experience that leads to enhanced customer satisfaction. WorkForce Software's performance improvements have also translated into reduced costs associated with hosting a cloud-based application, given the accelerated processing time for running queries and the corresponding decrease in the time required to host computationally intensive calculations.

"Oracle was the **most competitive on price,** but they weren't just sharp on price—they were **sharp on the enablement and engagement provided** as well. For us it was a no-brainer."

SIMON WEST-OLIVER
Strategic Partnerships Director, Drive Software Solutions

ISVs, like other businesses, have a keen focus on margin and profitability. Quicker time to market, which can be maximized by working closely with Oracle and OCI, is one way for ISVs to realize profit, not only more quickly but also over the lifetime of the customer. In fact, ISVs' being freed up to focus more on understanding customer requirements leads to improved product functionality and customer value.

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Pricing and Licensing

Pricing was high on the list of business criteria for ISVs in evaluating OCI, because pricing ultimately helps drive margin and profitability. Simply put, OCI consumption pricing made a difference to the ISV bottom line. ISV profit is also impacted by the consistency and predictably of pricing across multiple services and datacenter locations and cost versus performance.

"Pricing was one of our top evaluation criteria, and when you look at the whole package, OCI was better than what others offered," said Körber's Schrader, adding that performance versus value was a big consideration. "Supply chain technology is a very high transactional set of solutions, and that infrastructure load, as well as the price associated with that, was exceptional with OCI compared to others."

Pricing Consistency

Equally important is pricing consistency regardless of region. Inconsistent pricing can eat into profitability, requiring ISVs to spend time and resources figuring out different pricing when engaging clients globally. Consistency of pricing leads to predictability of cost for ISVs, which is not a small outcome.

"OCI pricing was super-competitive, but more than that, it gave us the ability to predict our cost, which is a huge benefit when we're building out a specific region," said WorkForce Software's Haus. "With other providers, every region is different, making it very hard to have cost predictability from region to region, from month to month, from service to service."

Haus believes that from pricing consistency alone, WorkForce Software saved 15% in costs by reducing the amount of time and effort needed to manage pricing. "I can't even put a price tag on how important it is. I would've moved to OCI at a 10% cost premium because of the flexibility and performance we get," he said.

Competitive Pricing

For its part, Altair conducted a pricing benchmark across cloud providers, and Oracle came out with the lowest charges. This is an important factor, especially in the case of Altair, which is trying not to grow its datacenter because of the expense and complexity associated with that.

Many of Altair's customers take advantage of clouds via a bring-your-own-license model. "Our licensing scheme provides great flexibility to our customers because we let them run our application wherever they want, including on their own tenancy. Thanks to the validation and benchmarking that Altair and Oracle have conducted together, customers can have confidence that if they run solutions on OCI under licenses that they already purchased from us, they're going to get good results," said Altair SVP of Strategic Relationships Piush Patel.

Pricing Predictability

Although pricing is just one piece of the puzzle for ISV margin and profitability, it plays a big role in determining a vendor partner. OCI stood out for ISVs on this front, not only because of competitive consumption pricing but equally because of pricing consistency and predictably, allowing ISVs to rely on stability of profitability regardless of region.

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Global Reach

Many ISVs, if not global, have global aspirations, and cloud provides the platform on which they can achieve that goal. However, ISV expansion plans can be hampered by the physical location of a cloud provider's datacenters, which can impact growth, if not customer satisfaction.
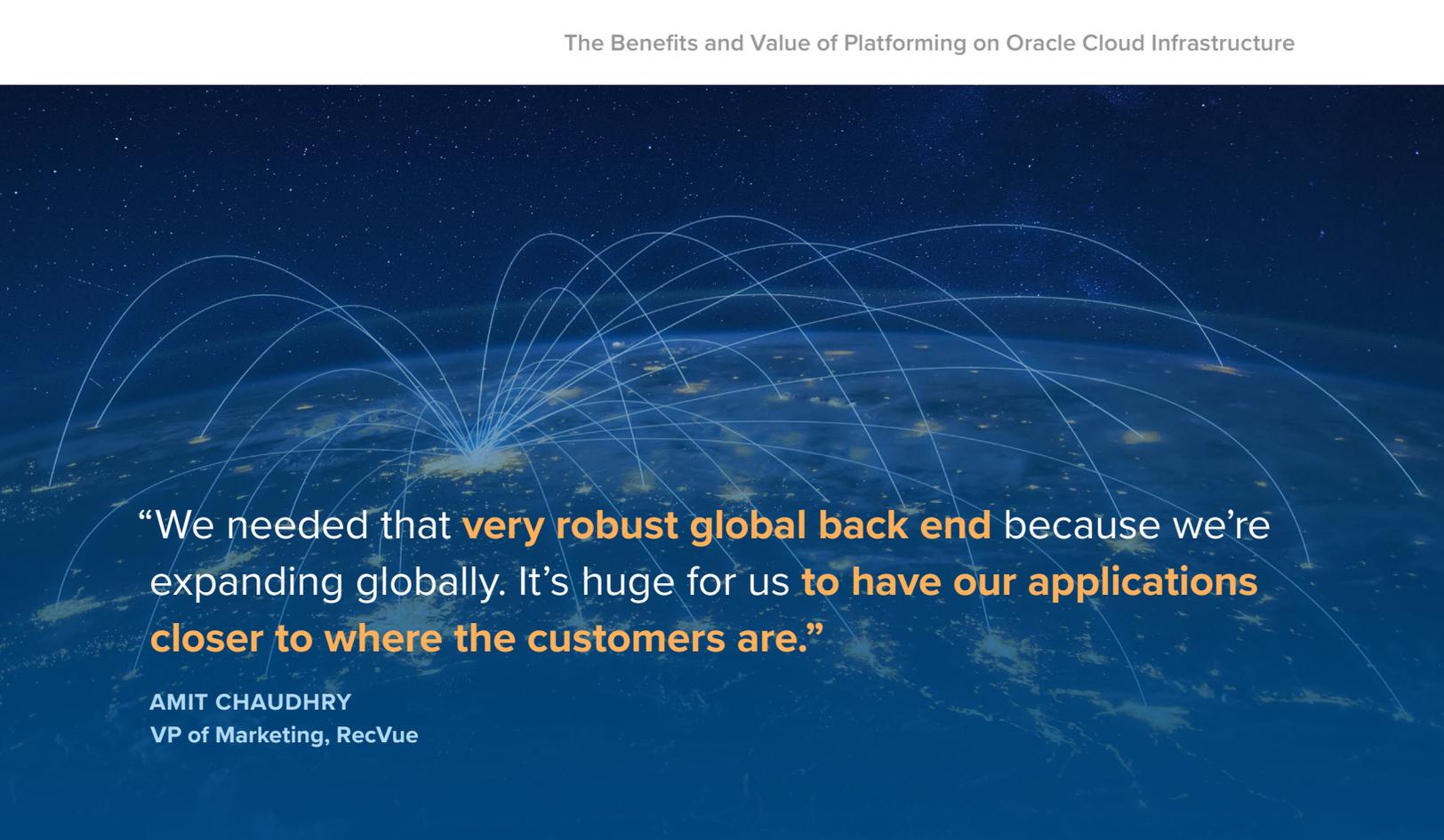
"We needed that **very robust global back end** because we're expanding globally. It's huge for us **to have our applications closer to where the customers are.**"

AMIT CHAUDHRY
VP of Marketing, RecVue

Hosted In-Region

RecVue views Oracle's 28 regions globally as adding to the value it can sell to customers that require their solutions to be hosted in-region. "We needed that very robust global back end because we're expanding globally. It's huge for us to have our applications closer to where the customers are," said RecVue's Chaudhry.

Having access to global pricing that is consistent across regions, along with consistent performance, has high value for ISVs; not having that can be problematic when trying to understand global expansion costs and the impact on customer satisfaction. "We can use OCI in all regions and use the same global price, and with 86 offices in 25 countries, this is very important to us," said Altair's Patel.

Footprint

Even the smallest ISVs understand the value of a cloud model in getting access to prospects anywhere in the world. In fact, a big driver for ISVs generally in partnering with a vendor is to be supported in their global aspirations. The ISVs were very clear that their choice of OCI provided global reach through its array of physical datacenters worldwide.

Oracle Cloud Marketplace

Marketplaces are becoming important digital hubs for vendors, customers, and ISV partners. At the very least, marketplaces are one piece of the puzzle in a complete go-to-market strategy for ISVs. To that end, Oracle Cloud Marketplace is a platform used by ISVs to market their applications to end customers and have the applications available for customer trial, purchase, and download.

Solution Showcase

Not all ISV applications are suited to be purchased via Oracle Cloud Marketplace, particularly complex solutions that have in-depth implementation requirements. However, in those cases, Oracle Cloud Marketplace still acts as an extension of ISV awareness activities. "Our solution is more an ERP-level implementation, so customers aren't buying it on a click and spinning up an instance," said RecVue's Chaudhry. "But Oracle Cloud Marketplace is a place for us to get noticed, where the depth of our capabilities can become clear to potential customers."

SME Trial

In another case, Oracle Cloud Marketplace has proven very useful for DRIVE in meeting the specific needs of SME customers with the ISV's SME-focused solution. In the process, it also sped up its sales cycle. "Clients in that market traditionally spend a long time choosing a solution, but now we're able to give them access to the product quickly for them to run trials, which reduces our sales cycle dramatically," said DRIVE's West-Oliver.

Global Sales Engine

In fact, West-Oliver believes that DRIVE has realized a 30% cost saving in not having to build out direct sales operations in specific regions, relying instead on Oracle Cloud Marketplace's global reach. "Oracle Cloud Marketplace helps with the globalization of our solution, which is multilingual, multi-currency, multi-company, and multi-entity. Without vast investment, the only way we can take this product to market is through Oracle Cloud Marketplace," he said.

Oracle Cloud Marketplace plays a key role for ISVs in gaining exposure for their applications with Oracle end customers that use the platform. In addition, and depending on the complexity of the application, ISVs are benefiting from Oracle Cloud Marketplace's trial capabilities to increase transactions.

Essential Guidance

It is important for ISVs that are considering a cloud provider to take the time to evaluate the players based on key attributes that are important to their technical requirements and business outcomes. The market move to cloud is a fait accompli, and finding the right platform is crucial to success. The following are key attributes to consider in the selection process.

Performance and stability:
The provider's platform meets the requirements of your solution and your customers, regardless of region.

Time to market:
There are no impediments and there are actual enablers provided by the provider to get your solution to market.

Pilot to production:
There is an ability to seamlessly convert trial environments to paid production environments.

Comprehensive offerings:
The required cloud-native technologies and level of security are available to ease customer objections.

Sales acceleration:
Provider field sales engagement is available and encouraged.

Market amplification:
The provider's marketing expertise and brand are made available in enhancing your own messaging.

Pricing and licensing:
It's flexible, consistent, and global.

Marketplace:
It is available for exposure externally for your solution, and for trials and purchase.

About the Analysts

Paul Edwards
Director, Software Channels Research, IDC

Paul is focused exclusively on providing research-backed guidance to leading software and cloud vendors on partner strategy. In his role, Paul extensively studies vendor and partner dynamics as they relate to and impact go-to-market strategy with partners. This includes analysis of business models and practices in the development, implementation, and management of effective partner strategies across the ecosystem.

More about Paul Edwards

Arnal Dayaratna
Research Director, Software Development, IDC

Dr. Arnal Dayaratna is Research Director, Software Development at IDC. Dr. Dayaratna focuses on software developer demographics, modalities of software development, trends in programming languages and other application development tools, and the intersection of these development environments and the many emerging technologies that are enabling and driving digital transformation. Dr. Dayaratna's research examines how the changing nature of software development relates to broader trends in the technology landscape.

More about Arnal Dayaratna

Message from the Sponsor

Why ISVs Are Choosing Oracle Cloud

Oracle Cloud Infrastructure (OCI) has been designed from the ground up for enterprise business applications and mission-critical workloads and serves as the foundation for a comprehensive portfolio of infrastructure and platform cloud services, as well as for Oracle's #1 Enterprise SaaS portfolio. ISVs globally are also leveraging Oracle Cloud Infrastructure to take advantage of the powerful compute and networking performance, unified data manage capabilities and other innovative services to deliver superior value to their customers.

Learn more about leveraging Oracle Cloud Infrastructure

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