

Oracle announces cloud-native deployment option for flagship BRM

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Ovum view

Summary

Oracle recently announced the release of its flagship business support systems (BSS) product, Oracle Communications Billing and Revenue Management (BRM), using microservices and Kubernetes-orchestrated containers. Although cloud-native BSS solutions are becoming a standard in the telecoms industry, CSPs need to adopt the agile principles in order to maximize the benefits of cloud-native software.

Oracle announces cloud-native deployment option for BRM

During its annual Oracle Open World event hosted last month in San Francisco, Oracle announced that it will now offer a cloud-native deployment option for its flagship BSS product, BRM. The cloud-native deployment option features Docker container packaged microservices, orchestrated using Kubernetes. The Docker containerized architecture includes more than 20 container images for capabilities including billing care and pricing design in the cloud-native environment for optimized scalability of the software.

The availability of a cloud-native deployment option for BRM comes two years after the launch of Oracle Monetization Cloud (OMC), the vendor's SaaS-delivered BSS product. Although the two products have a similar development roadmap, cloud native BRM provides CSPs with more flexibility in how the product is delivered. While OMC is only available via Oracle's public cloud, BRM can be deployed in several environments, including on-premise, as a managed service, and in Oracle or a third-party's public cloud.

Migrating IT systems to microservices architecture will be a key challenge for CSPs

Oracle's delivery of microservices for BRM is on par with larger trends in the telecoms industry. Over the last two years, several software vendors have released a cloud-native version of their BSS offering in efforts to address CSP needs for optimal scalability and architectural flexibility.

Microservices is also growing in importance for CSPs looking to upgrade legacy IT systems. Ovum's most recent ICT Enterprise Insights survey found that migrating IT systems to a microservices architecture is a very important or important business challenge for 73% of CSPs over the next 18 months.

CSPs must adopt DevOps to reap the full benefits

While cloud-native architectures offer several benefits to CSPs, such as optimized scalability and the proficiency to quickly release new services and features, the adoption of microservices also requires a cultural shift. In order to reap the full benefits of microservices, CSPs will need to adopt agile and DevOps principles. The continuous integration and continuous delivery processes which are critical to DevOps can only be achieved once organizational silos and other bottlenecks are removed, allowing for cross-organization collaboration and the embrace of other agile operating principles.

Vendors still have their work cut out for them. Despite the maturation of microservices-architected solutions, few CSPs seem eager to make the transition to DevOps or microservices. Another question

posed to CSPs in Ovum's ICT Enterprise Insights Survey – regarding IT projects considered important for 2020 – revealed that only 31% believed that migrating IT systems to microservices would be a very important IT project, while only 28% thought that moving to DevOps and agile operations would be an important IT project for 2020. These two projects received the lowest rankings among other projects covered in the survey.

Helping CSPs to embrace DevOps and other agile operating principles will be the biggest challenge vendors offering cloud-native IT will face. There are several lessons to be learned from businesses in other industries who have made the transition to DevOps, and vendors can partner with consultancies that have experience in this area to help CSPs make the necessary cultural shift.

Appendix

Further reading

"Next-generation cloud capabilities underpin Oracle Monetization Cloud 18C release" , SPT001-000037 (November 2018)

"Oracle bets big on microservices but what will the payoff be in telecoms?", IT0012-000184 (November 2016)

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