



Case Study

SUSE CaaS Platform
SUSE Cloud Application Platform

ApiOmat

In today’s digital world, we expect to be able to do everything on our smartphones. ApiOmat makes it quicker and easier for enterprises to develop and deploy mobile applications, as well as digital services for emerging frontends like voice assistants, chatbots and AR/VR headsets. With SUSE® CaaS Platform, ApiOmat can offer scalable on-premises and cloud deployments of its platform. SUSE Cloud Application Platform, meanwhile, will help enable ApiOmat to deliver exciting new offerings based on microservices.



Overview

ApiOmat’s mission is to provide enterprise companies with the agility to deliver new digital services faster, by simplifying the development of frontend apps for any device—be it mobile, web, voice assistants, chatbots or even AR/VR headsets. Headquartered in Leipzig, Germany, the startup also has an office in Palo Alto, California, and employs 50 people across the two sites.

ApiOmat wants to provide products and services that remove the hurdles in digital transformation processes. ApiOmat, its

comprehensive platform for developers and lines of business, does just that. By enabling enterprises to go from idea to app faster, the ApiOmat platform supports digital innovation and helps companies to deliver value to customers with new features and services.

Key to ApiOmat’s offering is the flexibility to support different IT environments and the capability to integrate easily with existing business applications, legacy systems and Cloud APIs. To speed up time to value, ApiOmat decided to containerize its software and selected SUSE CaaS Platform to enable the quick and easy deployment of ApiOmat in any environment—from bare metal on-premises to public cloud.

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MARCEL ETZEL
CEO
ApiOmat

Challenge

ACCELERATING DIGITAL INNOVATION

Traditionally, application development and the deployment of digital services is complex, slow and requires a lot of different resources. In a world where consumers expect to be able to do everything immediately on their mobile devices, slow time-to-market for new features can be a significant disadvantage to a company—hampering customer satisfaction at best, and impacting revenues and financial performance at worst.



ApiOmat at a Glance:

ApiOmat is a growing startup focused on accelerating and simplifying the prototyping and development of mobile applications, while providing enterprise-grade scalability and integration features.

■ Industry and Location

Computer Services. Leipzig, Germany

■ Product and Services

SUSE CaaS Platform
SUSE Cloud Application Platform

■ Results

- + Allows seamless scaling of the ApiOmat platform, so that customers can quickly take their apps from prototype to production deployment
- + Enables ApiOmat to better serve its enterprise customers by giving them the flexibility to deploy apps in any environment, from on-premises to public cloud
- + Builds trust with potential customers thanks to the SUSE brand, which stands for enterprise-grade solutions and support

When the founders of ApiOmat got into mobile app development, they quickly identified that the process could be standardized to accelerate projects. With this in mind, they built ApiOmat—a comprehensive solution that supports rapid prototyping and that can scale up to production deployment on an enterprise scale without requiring a complete refactoring of the initial prototype.

ApiOmat handles all the backend complexity of building new digital services such as mobile apps, while ApiOmat Studio provides an easy way to build an app from scratch within hours, using a simple visual interface. A range of standard UI components can be combined to create a unique app, including colors and images to reflect the corporate design of a company.

Travis Marsh, Digital Transformation Consultant at ApiOmat, explains: “Our solution helps companies to build apps and new digital services fast, and provides lines of business with a low-code tool and developers with smart SDKs. Small teams can deliver a functional application in a short time, so they can evaluate real apps. Without ApiOmat, they might just draft a couple of wireframes, which have no functionality and cannot demonstrate the core features of an app effectively.”

REACHING ENTERPRISE CUSTOMERS

Launching new digital experiences is important for any company to stay ahead of the competition and keep customers on board. While the pressure to innovate is high, ensuring stability of products and services is also crucial for enterprises.

Many companies want full control over their data and IT infrastructure, and to run solutions within their own data centers.

To offer simple solutions that are easy to set up in different environments, ApiOmat needed a more efficient way of rolling out its solution to client data centers. To support private cloud on-premises deployments as well as public cloud implementations, ApiOmat standardized its software to run in Linux containers.

To be able to rapidly take the ApiOmat apps from prototype to production, companies also need enterprise-grade scalability features for their containerized ApiOmat solutions. To simplify container orchestration and speed up new deployments, ApiOmat sought a flexible and powerful container management platform.

Travis Marsh comments: “Because we wanted to offer customers the flexibility to run our containerized ApiOmat solution in both private and public cloud environments, we obviously needed a container management platform that could run on both kinds of infrastructure. But when we evaluated the marketplace, we found that many container management platforms are only available as public cloud services and cannot run on private clouds, too.”

ApiOmat wanted a container management platform based on Kubernetes, a powerful open-source solution. However, because Kubernetes can be tricky to install, configure, operate and maintain, ApiOmat looked for a solution that would minimize the time and effort required to set up, operate and maintain a Kubernetes environment.

FINDING THE RIGHT PARTNER

For ApiOmat, selecting its technology partner was a big decision. ApiOmat wanted a partner with the capability to provide a truly enterprise-grade solution, as well as the experience to back it up.

Travis Marsh notes: “Our main market is large enterprises in Europe, mostly based in Germany, Austria and Switzerland. But we are also expanding internationally. Our solutions appeal to companies across industries—we are working with automotive companies, companies from the financial services sector, and retail companies, among others. It is therefore very important that we are able to satisfy key enterprise requirements, for example when scaling apps from prototype to production, or by enabling customers to deploy ApiOmat in their preferred IT environment.

“Often, we can quickly demonstrate the value of our solutions, yet it still takes time to build trust and close new deals—the enterprise IT sales cycle can be quite long, especially for a startup like us. That’s why we looked for a container management platform from a proven, trusted provider, one that offered enterprise-grade solution quality, support and maintenance, to give customers the reassurance they crave.”

Solution

TEAMING UP WITH SUSE—A TRUSTED IT VENDOR

Reliable partnerships that lead to new digital solutions require trust between the companies and teams involved. ApiOmat noticed that many enterprises—especially those that run SAP—also run SUSE Linux Enterprise Server.

Travis Marsh says: “We were looking for a strong partner that is trusted by the companies we are targeting. Many companies we talk to already use SUSE software in their data centers. By working with SUSE, we knew we would benefit from the excellent reputation of SUSE products and be able to offer a streamlined deployment option that helps our customers to get

started faster and us to grow our business more quickly.”

With on-premises deployment favored by many customers, optimizing private cloud deployment was essential. By partnering with SUSE, ApiOmat can offer a much easier deployment and operations model.

LEVERAGING AN ENTERPRISE-READY CONTAINER MANAGEMENT PLATFORM

ApiOmat selected SUSE CaaS Platform as its preferred delivery option for on-premises and cloud deployments that offer enterprise-grade scalability. Travis Marsh elaborates: “With SUSE CaaS Platform as a solid foundation, we are now working on integrating our solutions with the SUSE software. We want to take advantage of SUSE CaaS Platform features such as dynamic auto-scaling to make the operation of ApiOmat applications even easier for our customers.”

ApiOmat uses the very small, resource-optimized Alpine Linux as the base image for its application containers. With SUSE CaaS Platform, ApiOmat can now take its containerized solution to the next level. SUSE CaaS Platform is based on Kubernetes, and automates the orchestration and management of applications and services. The certified Kubernetes distribution offers faster time-to-value—as a complete, packaged solution, SUSE CaaS Platform includes everything that companies need to run containers reliably and efficiently.

SUSE CaaS Platform runs on a wide range of infrastructure and cloud platforms. A key benefit of SUSE CaaS Platform over other container management solutions is its flexibility—ApiOmat customers can deploy their apps in any environment, be it on-premises bare metal, virtual machines, private cloud, or public cloud infrastructure.

A local container registry built into SUSE CaaS Platform helps to reduce bandwidth usage and accelerate deployments of containerized applications. Images stored in the local registry can be shared among all cluster nodes, increasing both performance and security. Travis Marsh elaborates: “Our enterprise customers typically like to have control over every part of the solution. A local container registry enables them to manage, review and approve specific images to reduce the risk associated with using public container registries. In industries with strict compliance requirements, this is an important advantage, if not a necessity.”

He adds: “SUSE CaaS Platform allows us to take full advantage of Kubernetes, without all the complexity involved in setting it up. For our customers, SUSE CaaS Platform simplifies and standardizes container orchestration, helping them to deploy more efficiently. This means they can focus on developing apps that deliver business value, instead of setting up infrastructure.”

BUILDING NEW OFFERINGS BASED ON MICROSERVICES

ApiOmat is continuing to work with SUSE to expand its products and services. As a next step to complement the automated generation of ApiOmat Smart SDKs, the company plans to generate entire microservices for its customers that can then easily be deployed by developers using either SUSE Cloud Application Platform or SUSE CaaS Platform.

Microservices encapsulate a small scope of features that can be developed, managed and scaled independently from other functionalities of a larger system. Building applications from microservices allows small teams to react quickly to new business

requirements and implement changes in a short amount of time, focusing on just a single microservice. Breaking down larger systems into smaller services also adds new flexibility regarding choice of programming language or framework, ensuring that companies can always choose the technologies that are best suited for a specific task. Giving developers more freedom increases staff satisfaction and encourages teams to leverage the latest technologies to build up a competitive advantage

A microservice architecture is usually implemented with agile development methodologies and DevOps teams. In an agile, multi-disciplinary development environment, DevOps teams can quickly deliver microservices and manage them through their entire lifecycle. Complete microservice-based applications can be created and enhanced very rapidly. By supporting creation of containerized, microservice-based applications, ApiOmat will help its enterprise customers accelerate application delivery and further increase business agility.

ApiOmat has decided to integrate microservices into its product portfolio and give customers easy access to microservices and simple deployment options on SUSE Cloud Application Platform. SUSE Cloud Application Platform brings the industry’s most respected cloud-native developer experience into a Kubernetes environment. Featuring a containerized implementation of the popular Cloud Foundry Platform-as-a-Service (PaaS) technology, the SUSE solution provides high-level developer abstractions for building microservices-based applications. Travis Marsh says: “We see a business opportunity in adding the generation of microservices to our products. By doing so, we give our customers

the opportunity to speed up microservice development by generating the core components and allowing them to write their business logic in the programming language of their choice. Additionally, ApiOmat will simplify microservice consumption—making it easier to integrate microservices with new frontends. SUSE Cloud Application Platform and SUSE CaaS Platform allow us to provide the underlying infrastructure for those microservices to our customers, which will help us to expand our business and offer better services.”

For ApiOmat, SUSE Cloud Application Platform is a great match as it includes the only Cloud Foundry Application Runtime designed for Kubernetes. The solution makes it easy to introduce Cloud Foundry functionality into a Kubernetes environment, and to do so in a way that is also highly resource-efficient, consuming a fraction of the memory footprint of other Cloud Foundry distributions.

Travis Marsh confirms: “We want to deliver value to enterprises and minimize the management overhead. By using a platform that facilitates DevOps processes and integrates smoothly with our solutions, we can help our customers to accelerate innovation, improve IT responsiveness, and maximize their return on investment.”

Results

BENEFITS OF PARTNERING

ApiOmat strives to make it as easy as possible for its customers to get started and scale their apps. To achieve a streamlined and simplified customer experience, ApiOmat has worked closely with SUSE. Travis Marsh adds: “Our experience with SUSE has been excellent. The SUSE team is very knowledgeable. After

a three-day on-site training course with a SUSE specialist, we managed to integrate the solutions with our own products independently without much further support. By combining our products and services with easy-to-use SUSE software, we make the deployment of apps much more straightforward for our customers.”

SUSE and ApiOmat developed a partnership that helps both companies co-innovate and bring exciting new apps to enterprise customers more rapidly. The wide adoption of SUSE solutions by customers running SAP business software helps ApiOmat to start conversations with enterprises. By highlighting that its software also runs on SUSE technologies, ApiOmat can reassure the prospective customer of the reliability and stability of its solutions for mission-critical requirements.

SIMPLIFYING DEPLOYMENT OF CUTTING-EDGE SOLUTIONS

Based on its decision to run its applications in Linux containers, ApiOmat benefits from a broad range of container orchestration features built into SUSE CaaS Platform. With the increasingly common Kubernetes open-source software at its core, SUSE CaaS Platform enables ApiOmat to avoid vendor lock-in yet still profit from an optimized, hardened solution with enterprise-ready scalability and reliability.

Furthermore, companies already using SUSE CaaS Platform for other container-based workloads can very easily deploy ApiOmat to their existing cluster and deploy ApiOmat apps without any additional infrastructure configuration or setup tasks.

Travis Marsh emphasizes: “SUSE CaaS Platform makes it easy to use Kubernetes to run containers reliably at scale. We

integrate with SUSE CaaS Platform, so customers who already have SUSE CaaS Platform in their data center can get ApiOmat apps up and running in less than five minutes. There are no prolonged procurement processes for new infrastructure, which can otherwise easily take weeks or even months, and customers can get productive right away. It offers customers a very cost-efficient way to explore solutions that could potentially transform their business.

“The ApiOmat platform can run on any Docker-compatible container orchestration system, but SUSE CaaS Platform is our preferred option. Customers know and trust the SUSE brand, which is certainly a big help when we’re working to secure new deals.”

OFFERING ENTERPRISE-GRADE FEATURES AND INTEGRATION

Building on SUSE CaaS Platform foundation for flexible container orchestration, ApiOmat plans to integrate the complete SUSE Cloud Application Platform with its products. SUSE Cloud Application Platform integrates a powerful developer experience into a Kubernetes environment. Leveraging this private PaaS solution, developers can reduce the operational overhead and very easily deploy microservices offered by ApiOmat, and automate the complete application lifecycle management.

The deep and unique integration of cutting-edge technologies such as PaaS, containers and microservices in SUSE Cloud Application Platform and SUSE CaaS Platform makes operating microservices very efficient. Reducing the resources required to develop and deploy new apps, as well as the cost and risk for enterprises,

makes it easier for decision-makers to authorize the development of small projects and minimum viable products to test out new ideas, helping to bring improved customer services to market faster. With SUSE Cloud Application Platform, enterprises can give their teams the flexibility to work with the appropriate tools for each business challenge, while setting corporate standards that streamline operations across all apps and microservices.

Travis Marsh confirms: “Our objective at ApiOmat is to empower developers so that they can deploy business logic faster using SUSE CaaS Platform and SUSE Cloud Application Platform. With our new approach to delivering microservices as part of the ApiOmat platform, developers can focus on the code that counts because ApiOmat automatically generates all the basic scaffolding. This helps enterprises achieve quick wins with small budgets.”

Running the ApiOmat Digital Backend Service Platform on SUSE CaaS Platform offers existing SUSE customers additional benefits. Enterprises can standardize administration of all SUSE servers, whether they are running SAP applications, container orchestration or containers themselves, with a single tool: SUSE Manager. This infrastructure management solution can integrate other Linux servers too, and expand maintenance, patching and compliance monitoring to containers.

Connecting a local container registry with SUSE Manager increases security and supports strict compliance demands. Automated monitoring, tracking, auditing and reporting of containerized applications and non-containerized virtual machines or physical servers helps highly regulated enterprises in sectors like financial services to ensure compliance with internal security policies and external regulations.

Marcel Etzel, CEO of ApiOmat, concludes: “SUSE is a very good fit for our ApiOmat platform. Clear guidance, personal service and efficient teamwork convinced us that SUSE is the perfect partner for us. The collaboration has been exceptional, and joining forces with SUSE opens up many new business opportunities for us.

“We are looking forward to expanding our products and continuing to work with SUSE, which will help us to deliver better value and save our customers time and money. Our new microservice offering marks the beginning of a new chapter for us. We believe that the close integration with SUSE Cloud Application Platform will enable us to fully exploit the advantages of microservices, where small applications automatically and flexibly scale up and down with the demand—minimizing resource usage and operating costs, while maximizing reliability and stability—so that we can deliver truly enterprise-class digital services to our customers.”

“SUSE CaaS Platform allows us to take full advantage of Kubernetes, without all the complexity involved in setting it up. SUSE CaaS Platform simplifies and standardizes container orchestration, helping customers to deploy more efficiently, so they can focus on developing apps that deliver business value.”

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