7Pixel

7Pixel's software developers wanted an easier, more flexible, and more standardised way to deploy applications. 7Pixel moved from a traditional application deployment to a containerised approach, based on Kubernetes. To simplify and accelerate the management of its Kubernetes clusters, 7Pixel is using SUSE CaaS Platform – a Kubernetes solution that helps the company slash application delivery times and boost business agility.

Overview

Since 2002, 7Pixel has assisted over 13 million online users in Italy and Spain in finding the best price for whatever product they are seeking. The company runs two price-comparison websites: **www.trovaprezzi.it** and **www.drezzy.it**. To find the best deals, users can use Trovaprezzi to discover 18 million offers from a total of 3,200 affiliated e-shops, or visit Drezzy to browse 2.5 million products from hundreds of online fashion stores.

In the past, it would take us up to three months to install a new cluster, whereas now all it takes is a couple of days. The SUSE solution makes this whole process simple, while offering exceptional, always-on support in case of any issues.

ANTONIO ETTORRE
IT Manager
7Pixel

Challenge

Recently, 7Pixel underwent a major technology overhaul aimed at refreshing its entire production infrastructure, as well as adopting agile development methods.

Antonio Ettorre, IT Manager at 7Pixel, says: "Our software developers are embracing new DevOps and Agile methodologies as they move from traditional to containerised applications. As a consequence, we needed to evaluate a new framework to easily manage containers.

"We worked with HPE to renew our infrastructure with HPE Synergy, a composable architecture that we use to run 800 VMware virtual machines. Soon after this was finalised, we came across the 'hot topic' of containers, and we knew that this approach could accelerate our appplication deployments."

By adopting containers - which are even easier than virtual machines to migrate between physical systems - the company expected to enhance its agility, efficiency, and resource optimisation.

7Pixel at a glance:

7Pixel is Italy's leader in price comparison and e-commerce services. Since 2002, the company has supported 13 million users seeking the most competitive prices on a wide range of products.

■ **Industry and Location**

Online price comparison, Italy.

■ **Product and Services**

SUSE CaaS Platform

■ **Results**

+ *Enables flexible deployment of containerised applications.*
+ *Cuts cluster deployment times by 97%, from three months to just two days*
+ *Streamlines and standardises development and deployment of applications across different countries*

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Solution

Initially, 7Pixel chose to implement the Kubernetes community management platform. However, the company ran into stability and complexity challenges, and decided to look for a new platform.

HPE recommended SUSE CaaS Platform, an enterprise-ready, Kubernetes-based container management solution that allows companies to deploy, scale, and manage container-based applications and services more easily. Finding SUSE CaaS Platform to be far more stable and easier to install and manage than the upstream version, 7Pixel worked with SUSE and SUSE Business Partner NPO Sistemi to fully test the solution.

Antonio Ettorre says: "Our initial experience of deploying Kubernetes was nowhere near as satisfactory as we had hoped.

"Our first solution required an in-depth knowledge of the Kubernetes technology, making it difficult for us to react quickly to potential issues and effectively manage the system. SUSE CaaS Platform is much better-suited to our needs and allows us to take advantage of SUSE Support."

To date, 7Pixel has containerised all of its back-end administration applications, as well as its front-end 'Price Performance' application. Antonio Ettorre says: "The 'Price Performance' tab featured in our websites enables users to view all the price fluctuations for their selected product during the previous six months. With the knowledge of when an item is likely to be sold at a lower price, users can make more informed and better-timed purchases, saving money and coming back to our websites for more advice."

By enabling containers, the company expects to set up a modular application build model that will facilitate hybrid cloud adoption.

Results

As 7Pixel continues to containerise applications and manage them on Kubernetes clusters with SUSE CaaS Platform, the operations team enjoy better container orchestration and management, helping the company to reap impressive benefits. Antonio Ettorre says: "We are planning to go fully live in the next nine months, but our software developers have already provided very positive feedback. They're highlighting that development and deployment activities are not only much faster than before, but also much easier thanks to the new standardised process."

Prior to the deployment of SUSE CaaS Platform, it took 7Pixel up to three months to install a new Kubernetes cluster, whereas it now takes just a couple of days. "The SUSE solution makes this whole process simple, while offering exceptional, always-on support in case of any issues," says Antonio Ettorre. "And now we have the same standardised approaches to deploying applications in place across our Italian and Spanish operations, it is far easier for our developers to comply with internal standards."

He concludes: "The key to this successful project with SUSE was the ease of initial deployment and scalability in case of additional node installation. Coupled with the flexible, proactive attitude of the SUSE team, this helped get our Kubernetes environment up and running quickly."