CloudSphere

CASE STUDY

Large New York Private University Gains Control of Department and Individual Cloud Spending

Cost Governance Allows Prioritization of Workloads and Auto Remediation to Meet Cloud Spending Budget Targets

HIGHLIGHTS

The University's IT department was looking to implement a charge-back system to its various departments, all operating with their own IT budget in a new cloud-first environment.

After reviewing 14 RFI responses, the CloudSphere CMP solution was chosen as the only one capable of auto-remediating cost governance violations across various departments.

THE PROBLEM

A large private research university in New York with over 15,000 students across 4 campus locations was in the process of adopting a cloud-first vision and as a result, they knew they would need a cloud management platform (CMP) to help provide visibility and control costs. They selected Microsoft Azure as the primary cloud service provider, along with a smaller, but growing Amazon Web Services (AWS) presence. They were initially using cloud-native tools for cost management, using a tool from each public cloud provider, but found they didn't provide the depth and clarity the university needed to gain control of their rapidly increasing public cloud services spending. Additionally, they found the tools to be inaccurate, a management burden given that the tools only worked with a single cloud, and lacking the ability to offer meaningful cost comparisons between cloud providers.

The IT department was looking to gain the precision needed to confidently implement a charge-back system to the various departments of the University, which all operate with their own IT budget in the new cloud-first environment. In addition to cost management, they were looking for self-service provisioning capabilities for each department and individual researchers. With each department in charge of their own budget, they knew that if the provisioning services were not fast enough, the users would bypass the central IT system and book cloud resources independently.

After an extensive selection process, including RFI responses from 14 vendors and guidance form a major technology analyst firm, the university selected CloudSphere's Cloud Governance Platform to solve their billing accuracy and cost management problems. CloudSphere stood out with cost governance capabilities that have the granularity to report at the department and individual user level. The system is being used for multi-cloud cost optimization guidance, leveraging CloudSphere's best practices and the industry's largest set of benchmarked cloud data points.

One of the key decision criteria for the university was the ability of the CloudSphere solution to allow users to prioritize workloads from a budgeting perspective. Critical workloads can be marked so that if they are running over budget, there will be an alert notifying the user to investigate further. Lower priority workloads running non-critical applications, can be set up to automatically scale back or turn off if they exceed budget thresholds. The flexibility to assign these priorities on a per user basis set the solution apart from all others in the procurement process.

NEXT STEPS

The extensive procurement process also included input from important stakeholders on the information security team, who anticipate the need to strengthen cloud security governance and compliance in the coming months. The modular platform's ability to support additional security capabilities later was a capability they found very compelling.

"Without an accurate view of the costs in a multi-cloud environment, we knew we wouldn't be able to meet our goal of developing a department and user level chargeback system.

CloudSphere was selected after an extensive procurement process that included direction from a major analyst firm. The CloudSphere Cloud Governance Platform was the only one capable of auto-remediating cost governance violations across different departments."

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