

A background image showing two business people in suits shaking hands, symbolizing a partnership. The image is overlaid with a semi-transparent red filter.

relyon



Strong partnership delivers IT innovations and creates new business.

How **relyon AG** used Lenovo ThinkAgile MX for Microsoft Azure Stack HCI to boost private cloud performance and efficiency, helping to reduce costs by up to 50%, increase competitiveness, win new business, and launch new, flexible cloud hosting services.

Lenovo Infrastructure Solutions
for The Data-Centered

Lenovo

1

Background

relyon AG is a fast-growing, full-service IT provider that supports small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) across Germany in their digital transformation journeys, through consulting and innovative, cost-efficient IT solutions. Headquartered in Tübingen, Germany, the company has six offices and specializes in flexible, tailored solutions based on industry best-practices, including on-premises installations, cloud and managed services as well as hybrid cloud architectures.

2

Challenge

As a rapidly expanding company, relyon knows from experience that scalability is key to success. With a growing number of SMEs looking to move to private cloud or managed services models, relyon aimed to capture the opportunities by offering a fast and easy onboarding experience for new customers. At the same time, relyon targeted a dedicated platform for test systems—enabling prospective customers to evaluate its offering in depth before committing to an on-premises or managed solution.

Mirko Tochtermann, Chief Technology Officer (CTO) at relyon, says: “Our existing private cloud architecture was inflexible and expensive to scale, which was putting the brakes on our business growth. Our goal was to win between five and ten new customers in just one year by building a new private cloud platform. To help us price the new offering competitively, we knew we also needed to reduce our operational costs substantially.”

Key objectives for relyon were to simplify system administration and IT operations, maintain high levels of availability, and boost overall performance for customers. In addition, the company looked to minimize the complexity of its private cloud platform from a management and maintenance perspective.

Why Lenovo? Commitment and trust paired with outstanding product quality.

After evaluating offerings from several vendors, relyon selected Lenovo as a strategic partner because of the high quality of its products, its comprehensive product portfolio, and global reach.

“We looked for a strong partner we could grow with,” confirms Tochtermann. “With Lenovo, we found a partner that offered exactly what we needed to modernize our private cloud platform, as well as solutions that meet the specific requirements of customers who prefer on-premises implementations—backed by worldwide deployment expertise and responsive support.”

As a solution provider, relyon highly values the commitment of the Lenovo team. The company also benefits from the resources and services provided by the Executive Briefing Center in Stuttgart, Germany, to support its sales activities.

“Lenovo really cares about its partners and customers,” says Ralf Meckle, Chief Sales Officer (CSO) at relyon. “We had in-depth discussions with Lenovo about many different possible configurations, and together we found a solution that suits both our current and future needs. For many of our customers, our close collaboration with Lenovo is a real selling point. Including Lenovo specialists in sales conversations can make all the difference—it creates trust and adds credibility to the solution offerings we design for our customers.”

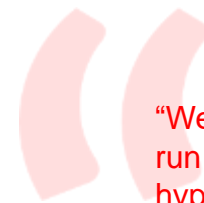




“With Lenovo, we now have a single partner that we can rely on to support customers of all sizes, from small companies to mid-market businesses to large enterprises. Having a single strategic partner streamlines communications, speeds up planning, and makes procurement processes more efficient.”

Ralf Meckle

Chief Sales Officer (CSO), relyon AG



“We know we can trust the Lenovo ThinkAgile MX platform to run reliably—Lenovo’s servers are ultra-dependable and the hyperconverged nature of the solution means that there is no single point of failure.”

Ralf Meckle

Chief Sales Officer (CSO), relyon AG

Technical expertise and in-depth documentation.

When delivering mission-critical IT services, understanding the technical details is crucial to ensuring performance and reliability. relyon has found that the product documentation and reference architectures provided by Lenovo are superior to other vendors it has worked with in the past, and enable the company to solve customer problems more effectively.

“When it comes to selecting a vendor, something that often gets overlooked is their technical documentation, manuals, and best practices,” says Tochtermann. “Lenovo’s documentation and tooling are both exceptional. High-quality, in-depth information and knowledge-sharing show that Lenovo has a real interest in its customers and partners. Lenovo provides tools and solutions that are well thought through and make sense.”



“We are glad to see that Lenovo thinks about future-proofing its solutions and continuous innovation. With the Lenovo ThinkAgile MX hyperconverged infrastructure solution, Lenovo’s vision of the future is closely aligned with our own business strategy.”

Mirko Tochtermann
Chief Technology Office (CTO), relyon AG

Engineering the private cloud for efficiency and reliability.

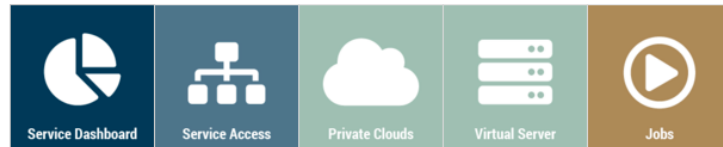
To replace its existing data center infrastructure and expand capacity, relyon deployed three Lenovo ThinkAgile MX Certified Nodes with all-flash storage and built-in Lenovo XClarity Controller management console to run the Microsoft Azure Stack HCI cluster solution.

“We opted for a three-node switchless configuration to minimize costs and complexity further,” explains Tochtermann. “This offers the high availability, redundancy, and flexibility we need. With direct connections between the nodes, we created a full mesh and do not need any additional networking equipment. With fewer components, our management requirements are lower. Having fewer parts also reduces the risk of component failures, which boosts reliability and availability.”

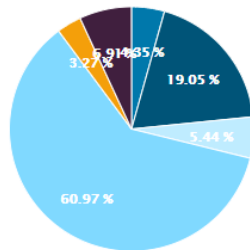
The company implemented a Lenovo ThinkSystem SR650 server with Lenovo XClarity Administrator for easy management of the cluster solution. Building on Lenovo’s extensive documentation, relyon developed a comprehensive cloud hosting service platform which includes standardized, fully automated deployment processes that leverage the entire hyperconverged solution and support dynamic resizing for customer workloads through a modern web portal.

Lenovo ThinkAgile MX for Microsoft Azure Stack HCI is a complete solution validated by Microsoft and fully covered by Lenovo Premier Support. Microsoft designed the solution to run the core services with a small, optimized operating system, thereby reducing the attack surface and hardening against cyber threats. The solution includes Microsoft Hyper-V virtualization technology, enabling users to run a wide range of workloads. Using Lenovo XClarity Integrator for Microsoft Admin Center, the whole solution is managed from a single interface to streamline system administration processes.

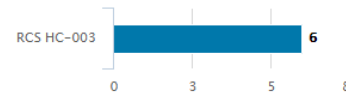
“Lenovo ThinkAgile MX for Microsoft Azure Stack HCI is the perfect solution to run our mixed workloads cost-efficiently with easy scalability,” says Tochtermann. “The solution powers our growing relyon Cloud Services portfolio including a new, fully automated, and scalable private cloud offering. Typical applications we run for our customers include Microsoft Exchange Server and Microsoft SharePoint Server for collaboration, Microsoft SQL Server for databases, and Microsoft Dynamics ERP solutions. In the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, virtual desktops have also become particularly important for many companies. Being able to roll out virtual desktops quickly and seamlessly to many employees is essential in the current business environment.”



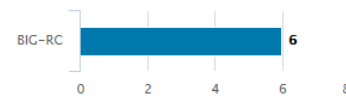
Anteil am Storagevolumen


[Zurück zu Hosting](#)

VMs per Clusternode



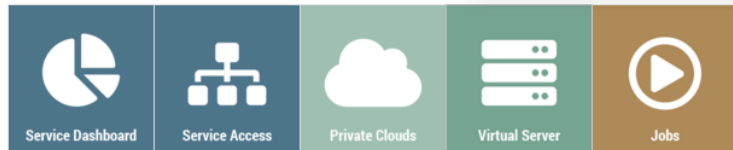
VMs per Private Cloud



Hosting Infrastruktur Status

| Hostnode Name | Status | Nächste Wartung |
|---------------|--------------------------------------|-----------------|
| RCS HC-001 | ● | |
| RCS HC-002 | ● | |
| RCS HC-003 | ● | |

Figure 1: Screenshot of relyon web portal showing an overview of storage resources.



Neuen Virtuellen Server erstellen

Letztes Update vor 0 Minuten
Anzahl VMs 6

Aktive Virtual Server

| VM Name | Status | | vCPU | vRAM | Disks | Belegt | Total | Configuration | |
|----------------|----------------------|-----------------|---------|-------|-------|----------------------------------|---------|----------------------------------|--------------------|
| BIG-RC | | | | | | | | | |
| BIG-3CX-001 | Wird ausgeführt | Remotesteuerung | 1 Core | 2 GB | 1 | <div style="width: 100%;"></div> | 127 GB | | Bearbeiten Details |
| BIG-RC-UTM-001 | Wird ausgeführt | Remotesteuerung | 1 Core | 2 GB | 1 | <div style="width: 100%;"></div> | 60 GB | | Bearbeiten Details |
| BIG-SRV01 | Wird ausgeführt | Remotesteuerung | 4 Core | 8 GB | 2 | <div style="width: 75%;"></div> | 1120 GB | ● BIG-SRV01 | Bearbeiten Details |
| BIG-SRV02 | Wird ausgeführt | Remotesteuerung | 2 Core | 4 GB | 1 | <div style="width: 50%;"></div> | 100 GB | ● BIG-SRV02 | Bearbeiten Details |
| BIG-TWS-001 | Wird ausgeführt | Remotesteuerung | 12 Core | 24 GB | 1 | <div style="width: 25%;"></div> | 350 GB | ● BIG-TWS-001 | Bearbeiten Details |
| MJU-RC-TST-001 | VM Neustart (Reboot) | | 4 Core | 8 GB | 1 | <div style="width: 75%;"></div> | 80 GB | ✖ MJU-RC-TST-001 | Bearbeiten Details |

[Zurück zu Hosting](#)

Figure 2: Screenshot of relyon web portal showing an overview of VM resources.

3

Results

With the Lenovo ThinkAgile MX platform, relyon standardized its processes and reduced internal IT costs for its private cloud platform by up to 30%. The three-node cluster offers impressive performance, reaching over 1.9 million IOPS and running over 250 virtual machines with a total of 2 TB of memory in parallel—without even maxing out all available resources. The efficiency of the switchless deployment option is highlighted by data transfer speeds of up to 15.5 GB/s and ultra-low latency around 0.16 ms during performance benchmarks.

Building on the capabilities of the Lenovo ThinkAgile MX platform, relyon is launching a new, flexible, and custom-developed cloud hosting service with transparent billing and full integration into its business systems. “The Lenovo solution enabled us to go to market with a comprehensive cloud service platform,” says Tochtermann. “Our SME customers get fully transparent and flexible billing, with the certainty that all data is hosted securely in Germany—a compliance requirement for many. Our customers’ system administrators keep full control by using a modern, user-friendly web console to launch, resize, or reboot their workloads independently, 24/7, without the need to open a ticket or wait for our IT team. Thanks to Lenovo ThinkAgile MX, we can provide a truly dynamic private cloud solution that enables customer IT teams to focus on adding value, while we take care of the basic infrastructure.”

“The ability to offer flexible pricing is a powerful way to win over cost-conscious mid-market customers for cloud and on-premises solutions,” says Meckle. “In the past, we had to deal with different vendors, different product lifecycles, different licensing options for all the components and features. This all added up, making operations and management complex. With the Lenovo ThinkAgile MX platform and the switchless deployment, we have dramatically reduced the number of components in our data center.”

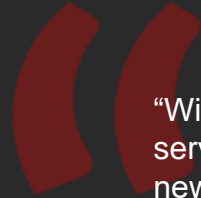
Meckle continues: “We have already gained four new customers in just half a year by demonstrating the capabilities and savings with our in-house reference implementation. For one customer, we moved from 20 rack units to just two—a reduction of 90%. This contributed to 50% lower costs for the customer’s data center infrastructure, while boosting performance and energy efficiency to whole new levels.”

relyon has also simplified support with a single contact for the entire private cloud platform. This makes life easier and more efficient for IT teams. Today, relyon’s highly qualified IT staff spend less time on routine administration and basic tasks, and can instead focus on strategic activities, taking a more proactive role in transforming the business.

“Our customers, relyon, and Lenovo—we all win by moving to Lenovo ThinkAgile MX,” concludes Tochtermann. “The very powerful and cost-efficient Lenovo solution provides plenty of room for growth: our 250 virtual machines just use 20% of the available CPU performance during peak periods.”



- ✓ Cuts data center infrastructure costs by up to 50%
- ✓ Delivers sustainable business growth with competitive pricing and reliability
- ✓ Reduces internal IT costs by up to 30%
- ✓ Enables launch of a flexible and transparent cloud service platform
- ✓ Simplifies IT administration, freeing teams to focus on value-added activities



“With Lenovo solutions, we are delivering highly flexible and cost-effective private cloud services based on Microsoft Azure Stack HCI—accelerating business expansion by winning new customers rapidly, effectively growing our share of Germany’s valuable SME market.”

Mirko Tochtermann

Chief Technology Officer (CTO), relyon AG

What will you do with Lenovo software-defined infrastructure solutions?

The Data-Centered deliver in-demand private cloud services with Lenovo smarter infrastructure solutions, powered by Microsoft.

[Explore Lenovo Software-Defined Infrastructure Solutions](#)



Lenovo and the Lenovo logo are trademarks or registered trademarks of Lenovo.

Azure, Dynamics, Hyper-V, Microsoft, Microsoft Dynamics, SharePoint, SQL Server, and the Microsoft Corporate Logo are registered trademarks of Microsoft Corporation.

Other company, product and service names may be trademarks or service marks of others.

© Lenovo 2021. All rights reserved.