GlobalDots TO

How Thinkopen created a future-ready IT infrastructure using GlobalDots' expertise
A case study

Executive summary

▶▶▶ Thinkopen S.p.a, an Italian IT consultant and service provider, has seen its infrastructure turn unmanageably complex, to an extent which undermined its service to end-users.

▶▶▶ GlobalDots followed industry best practices to create a robust foundation for Thinkopen's future IT initiatives. Customers have felt the performance improvement immediately and are delighted with the performance boost.

▶▶▶ From a state of no documentation or visibility, GlobalDots created and enforced full documentation of the information around Thinkopen's IT infrastructure assets.

▶▶▶ As updated information on IT infrastructure is now available, the team could eliminate unutilized services and features. This helped the team in saving more than 60% of its IT budget.

▶▶▶ Having implemented innovative security solutions, InfoSec compliance and customer trust have been reinstated.

▶▶▶ GlobalDots is now an essential part of ThinkOpen's technological roadmap, as well as Thinkopen's offering to end customers.

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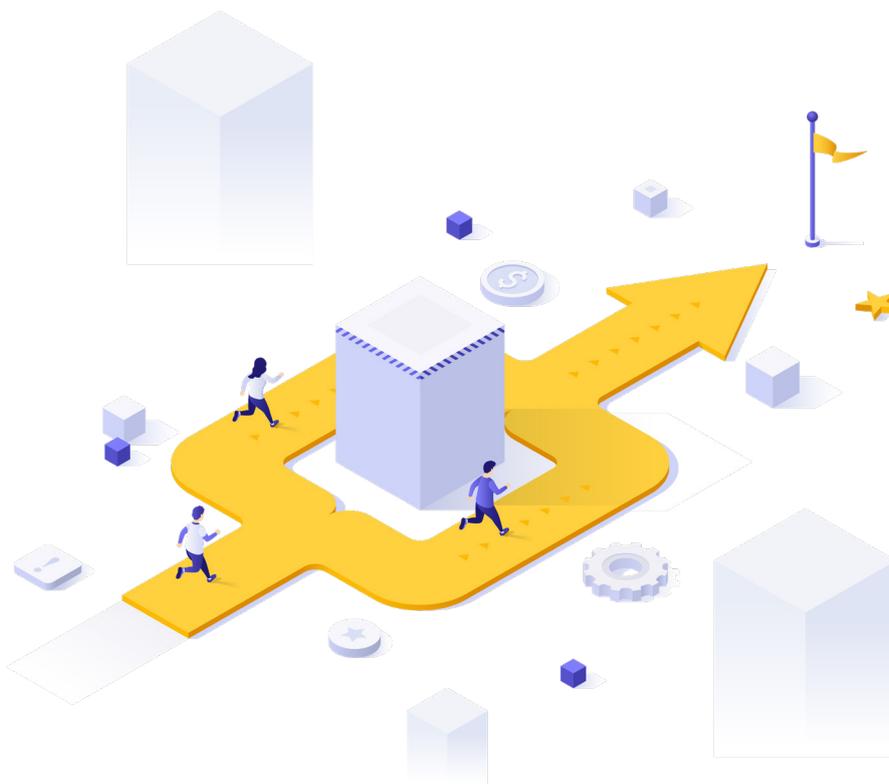
Client Overview

ThinkOpen S.p.a. is an Italian IT consulting company offering digital transformation solutions. The company has expertise in providing services related to technologies such as advanced analytics, artificial intelligence, machine learning, cyber security and cloud computing. ThinkOpen also provides services with respect to integration of e-commerce, CRM and ERP platforms.

About GlobalDots

GlobalDots resells, implements and supports dozens of web & cloud technologies from the world's leading vendors and innovative, cutting-edge unicorns.
Over the last 20 years, we've connected over 450 business customers with enterprise-grade web performance & CDN; Web security ; Cloud security; Corporate IT; and a variety of managed DevOps & Cloud services.
Our seasoned engineers test & master each solution's capabilities, pros & cons, to advise your perfect fit and enable fast, smooth adoption. Our expertise goes from precise configurations & team education to ongoing support and advanced professional services.

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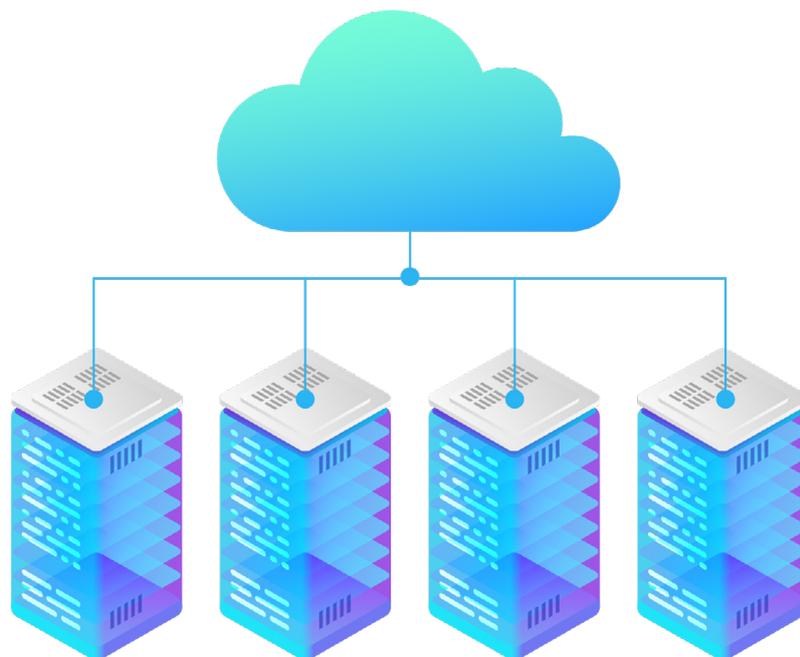
Business Need

Customers expect their technology partners to own a robust IT infrastructure which can support all their needs.

To ensure dynamic provisioning and de-provisioning of virtual machines and centralized monitoring of its resources, ThinkOpen used its private cloud extensively. This was required for quick allocation or deallocation of its infrastructure according to the requirements of different projects. However, over the last two years, the private cloud had reached an unmanageable level of complexity, as it was built over a period of time, and not updated on a regular basis. ThinkOpen isn't alone: in a recent Pulse poll, 76% of technology leaders admitted they did not fully understand their own IT architecture. Most of them stated to only be familiar with the portion they had planned themselves, or that related to their daily work.

ThinkOpen wanted to quickly address the gaps in its IT infrastructure, so that it could showcase an efficient, up-to-date one in line with its own expertise. The private cloud was just one part of an IT infrastructure that was inefficient. There was a critical need to plug several security and technology gaps. Some of these gaps were highlighted by end customers. These included enterprise security gaps that had to be complied with, while other gaps were related to efficient handling of customer backups. The inefficiency of its internal IT infrastructure had the potential to impact its business.

ThinkOpen needed a strategy that would help it create an efficient IT infrastructure, and prevent situations that would undermine its reputation. There was a need to regain the confidence of its customers, including the reorganization of the company's IT and networking area of service: the offering, business plan, hardware (networks and servers in particular) and software.
However, ThinkOpen recognized the fact that it needed to cut off from its existing IT vendor due to its inability to create an efficient, secure IT infrastructure. The existing vendor also specifically lacked expertise in new security solutions, which was a key requirement.

The Solution

To find an effective replacement for its existing IT vendor, Antonio Ostuni, ThinkOpen's CIO, researched extensively, and rigorously evaluated the capabilities of several service providers. He finally zeroed in on GlobalDots. The initial email correspondence led to an introductory meeting, which included a presentation of GlobalDot's capabilities. ThinkOpen's CIO was impressed with the team's passion, skills and experience. Unlike the past, the team from GlobalDots had an air of credibility and trust. The partnership with GlobalDots was signed and the team quickly took ownership.

The GlobalDots Work Process

Step 1: Infrastructure Analysis & Documentation

After thoroughly analysing the company's IT infrastructure, the GlobalDots team realized that a majority of the information was undocumented or inaccessible. Hence, no wonder Thinkopen had a hard time communicating its needs at first. According to a Pulse.qa poll, this is the the most common concern among technology leaders as they approach a vendor seeking a new solution.

Specifically, GlobalDots recognized a critical need to document information around projects, firewall configurations and infrastructure hardening . Also, these components' compliance needed to be documented, with respect to security standards such as ISO 27001, GDPR, SOC-2 and PCI DSS. Much of the information was undocumented, or only available in closed silos. In short, the information around the infrastructure had to be moved from a blackbox (no visibility) into a whitebox (complete visibility).

After thoroughly documenting the infrastructure around the projects, GlobalDots followed industry best practices and implemented the latest tools and technologies to ensure that information with respect to every IT infrastructure component was made available. This helped in giving the required visibility to GlobalDots' NOC. This visibility ensured that the GlobalDots team could fully visualize the infrastructure and take proactive steps for troubleshooting issues.

Step 2: Infrastructure Rip-and-Replace

Subsequently, the GlobalDots team re-planned and implemented ThinkOpen's entire IT and security architecture. This project entailed many moving parts. The team first implemented a private cloud, based on Leaseweb Germany's offering. Backup activities were undertaken using Acronis. For ensuring security, a firewall was put in place. For infrastructure and application performance management, the team used Datadog. ACSIA by 4Securitas was used as an IPS/IDS for compliance and as a security solution for stopping cyberattacks. Registrar Services by DTNT was used for the management of domains, while DNS and CDN Services by Stackpath was used for a lightning fast performance of these layers. GlobalDots used its NOC for fully managing this infrastructure. The DevOps team from GlobalDots was involved in application level management of the infrastructure and code.

Step 3: Establishing Ongoing Communication

After a few initial hiccups, the partnership between the GlobalDots team and ThinkOpen flourished. To ensure real-time and transparent communication, video calls were initiated. Taking one project at one time, the overall progress on revamping the entire infrastructure from security and performance aspects was monitored on a regular basis. This was a shared responsibility, and both teams made sure that continued progress was made.

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### ⟫ Benefit 1: A reliable, transparent infrastructure

Today, the ThinkOpen team is fully confident in its IT infrastructure. Thanks to the continued and detailed efforts of the GlobalDots team, most of the information around IT infrastructure assets, which was unavailable, was documented. Industry best practices were followed for ensuring that a robust foundation for undertaking future IT initiatives was created.

⟫ Benefit 2: A reliable, transparent infrastructure

With complete visibility and a new fortified and secure IT infrastructure, customer trust has been reinforced. Some customers have felt the performance improvement immediately and are delighted with the performance boost.

⟫ Benefit 3: 60% cost savings

As updated information on IT infrastructure is now available, the team could eliminate unutilized services and features. This helped the team in saving more than 60% of its IT budget.

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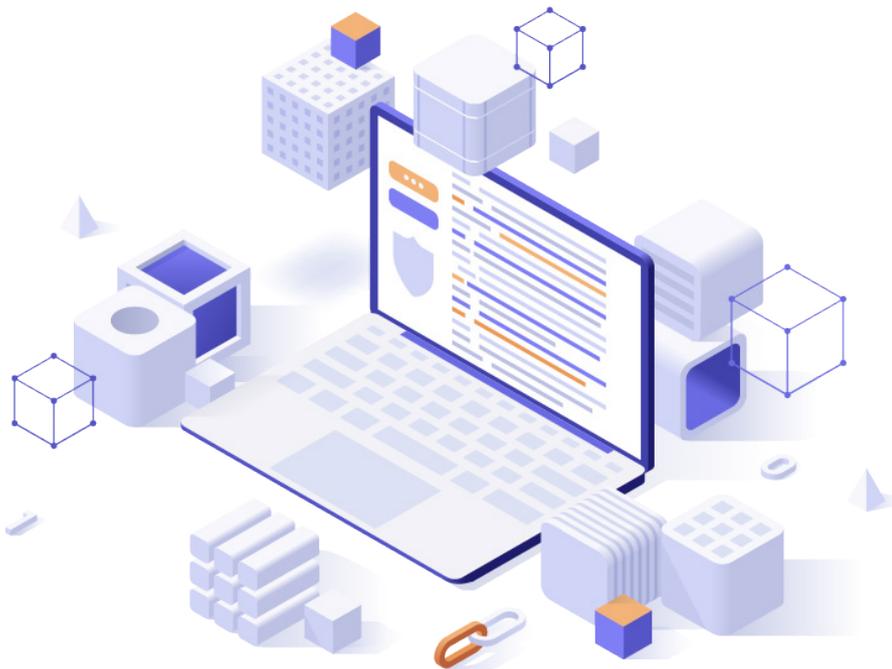
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Looking Forward

The journey towards an efficient IT infrastructure is an ongoing process, with the GlobalDots team making progressive changes for enhancing the performance. In the future, more solutions will follow as part of the security and web performance fine tuning initiatives undertaken together by the GlobalDots and ThinkOpen teams. GlobalDots is also an essential part of ThinkOpen's offering to its end customers. In line with end-customer needs, GlobalDots will implement solutions similar to those mentioned above, which ThinkOpen sought for its own IT infrastructure.

"ThinkOpen has always shown great interest to try out emerging technologies which can provide our end customers greater value. We are fortunate to have the support and expertise from a reputed and talented technology partner, which has helped us to choose the right tools to improve our own knowledge base. This partnership with GlobalDots has helped us to scale up our innovative capabilities, and in significantly improving our service provided to our clients," says Antonio Ostuni, CIO at ThinkOpen.

Conclusion

For the success of any technology implementation, the role of a skilled technology partner is critical. ThinkOpen found this capability in GlobalDots, which addressed the key gaps in its IT infrastructure and is now helping ThinkOpen explore new opportunities. This example shows that innovation, when implemented and documented properly, can considerably streamline and grow the business.

GlobalDots is happy to take on any future challenges and turn them into success. To apply for our consultation and end-to-end IT infrastructure services, feel free to contact us.

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