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## **The hosting channel spoke, Hexagrid listened: version 1.5 of its IaaS enablement Enterprise and Mass-Market Hosting**

by Jason Verge October 11, 2010

**Hexagrid Computing** released version 1.5 of its IaaS enablement platform. T1R last covered Hexagrid in March. At the time, the platform's interface and capabilities were impressive. It was a way to get an enterprise-grade cloud up and running instantaneously atop of commodity hardware. Having had initial successes in the healthcare vertical in particular, the platform needed to address the hosting channel's needs. The new update focuses on channel empowerment, meaning that the capabilities are now packaged for management through three levels of business relationships to power reseller channels. Deployment models for enterprise private cloud, reseller and MSP channels are now available.

Hexagrid initially addressed cloud deployment with its last iteration of the platform. Version 1.5 addresses the running of a cloud business. While the capabilities were there, getting a cloud up and running remained simpler than getting a cloud business up and running. Hexagrid, having directly spoken to the hosting channel, made modifications in order to shape the platform as more cloud business capable in addition to being cloud enterprise capable. A clear division of permissions and access, simple licensing and subscription models are all enhancements that speak specifically to the hosting channel.

### **T1R take**

The competitive landscape is crowded. In terms of enablers serving the hosting channel, most of the uptake has been with those enabling public commodity clouds – enablers that help with a piece of the puzzle for further build out by a given provider – or on the enterprise private cloud side. At the high end of the market, there are unique regional managed hosting and datacenter providers like **BlueLock** that choose something like **VMware** for private enterprise cloud enablement. Somewhere in between is where Hexagrid plays; it is enterprise-grade looking to appeal to traditional hosting providers. The biggest difficulty will be in getting these folks to initially try the platform; there's a stubbornness to be overcome in selling to the channel, and those that do even listen often mean long sales cycles for these types of enablers.

A key strength in Hexagrid is on the network layer. A lot of work has been put in on the network capabilities side that doesn't exist with many IaaS enablement platforms. Focus has been paid to network isolation and control over security policies. Many of these enhancements focus on enabling those that use Hexagrid to resell cloud; the platform's multi-tenancy is isolated at the infrastructure, business and chargeback levels. Billing and chargeback integration has been simplified, and extensive audit logs are baked in for deeper management.

Of course, in this game all it takes is one serious use case to open up the business floodgates. While hosting providers have shown interest, and there are some hosting provider deployments of Hexagrid, targeting this channel will only be truly successful once the company lands a whale. Once it has a top 20 hosting provider signed up as a flagship customer, the biggest hurdle will be removed. In the meantime, the enterprise space will continue to be directly interested in Hexagrid for more DIY private clouds. Since the capabilities are there, but truly breaking into the channel hasn't occurred, we wouldn't be surprised to see the company as potentially being an acquisition target somewhere down the line.

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