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Rackspace Bringing Hybrid Cloud to CERN

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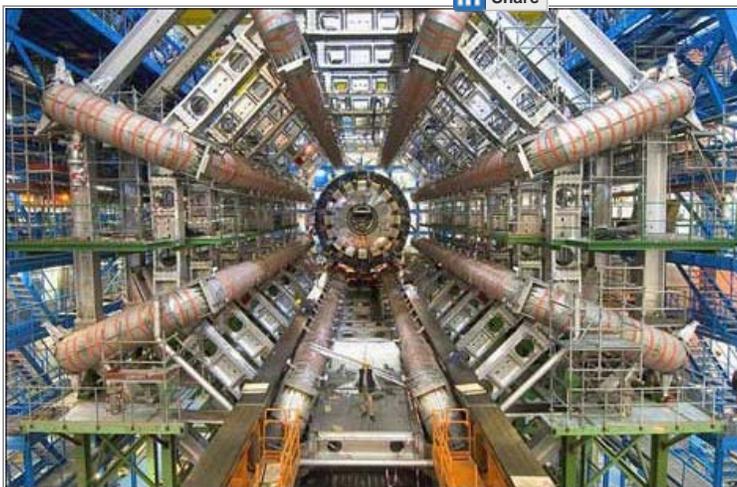
A look at the ATLAS particle detector experiment at the Large Hadron Collider (LHC), the huge particle accelerator at CERN near Geneva, Switzerland. (Photo: Image Editor via Flickr)

Rackspace Hosting has been pushing the hybrid computing message, and **CERN** is kicking the tires. CERN, the European Organization for Nuclear Research, will be relying on Rackspace's Open Hybrid Cloud to help it discover the origins of the universe.

Rackspace has entered into a contributor agreement with CERN openlab, the companies said today. During the year long collaboration, Rackspace will deliver a hybrid cloud solution featuring both private and public clouds powered by OpenStack.

CERN has the largest research environment in the world, producing more than 25 petabytes of data annually. It is leveraging OpenStack software to manage the resources across its two data centers that power the Large Hadron Collider (LHC) and, literally, help unlock the mysteries of the universe. As the LHC

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smashes atoms together to discover what makes the universe work, Rackspace is smashing public and private cloud together to discover what makes cloud providers work.

Could Span 15,000 Servers

For this project, they are eventually expecting to reach 15,000 hypervisors on 50,000 virtual machines, a not insignificant chunk of infrastructure. At the onset, the preliminary Rackspace private cloud is only going to be 20 physical nodes in CERN's data center in Switzerland. By proving that the effectiveness of OpenStack, Rackspace has a chance to sell CERN on its federated hybrid cloud capabilities – and through CERN, the world at large.

"There are two things we want to highlight: that we're very excited to work with a visionary institution like CERN, and how important this is to our overall hybrid story," said Darrin Hanson, Vice President Rackspace Private Cloud. "In our research partnership with CERN openlab, both companies have a very tight alignment on being able to federate the cloud platform. It will be a very robust platform that acts as simple system."

CERN is perhaps most known for the awe-inspiring Large Hadron Collider (LHC). CERN already uses the Rackspace public cloud. However, Rackspace has entered into contributor agreement with CERN openlab where private cloud is coming into play. Rackspace will work with CERN openlab to federate CERN's current managed services into Rackspace's open public and private cloud environments.

"For purposes of the project, we're defining federation as single governance," said Hanson. "We'll be setting up a Rackspace private cloud inside, and we'll test workloads, and be able to move seamlessly from the Rackspace private cloud. CERN is interested in being able to move workloads more easily."

A Future Bursting With Clouds

This can conceivably be called a test run before something much bigger and greater, with CERN fully testing the federated capabilities before diving in deeper. There's already a very healthy relationship here. "Our conversation has been around flexible bursting and scaling and capacity planning," said Hanson. "CERN has been a public cloud customer in the past. What we hope to do with this relationship is open them up to the idea of Rackspace private cloud on their premise and our premise."

The expanded relationship consists of certain key elements such as:

- **Federated Cloud Services based on OpenStack Cloud Technologies** – Rackspace will work with CERN openlab to federate CERN's current managed services into Rackspace's open public and private cloud environments.

- **Personnel Support** – Rackspace will fund one full-time member of the CERN personnel team, who will help create cloud federation technologies.

"This is a landmark moment for Rackspace, as we feel this is an opportunity to take our already mutually beneficial relationship with CERN to new heights," said Jim Curry, SVP and general manager of Rackspace Private Cloud. "Through ongoing collaboration with CERN openlab, we will broaden the global reach of our hybrid cloud solutions, while simultaneously helping to set the pace of innovation within the field of particle physics."

The new agreement is expected to accelerate the pace of innovation within the field of particle physics while broadening the global reach of Rackspace Hybrid cloud solutions. It will be one of the largest hybrid clouds to date involving a massive amount of research with multiple clouds and data centers.

This is a marquee customer. At first, CERN will utilize Rackspace for testing and development of applications, with the future to be determined. The story extends beyond the marquee customer – CERN's thumbs up will prove the technology for countless businesses contemplating using Rackspace hybrid.

"This is for large, even small customers wanting to take advantage of speed but have security performance issues," said Hanson. "The private cloud story is an important part

of our message. We can support it in a Rackspace data center or anywhere in the world."

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About Jason Verge

Jason Verge is an Editor/Industry Analyst on the Data Center Knowledge team with a strong background in the data center and Web hosting industries. In the past he's covered all things Internet Infrastructure, including cloud (IaaS, PaaS and SaaS), mass market hosting, managed hosting, enterprise IT spending trends and M&A. He writes about a range of topics at DCK, with an emphasis on cloud hosting.

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