



# Breaking down barriers to collaboration

Modernization depends on government and industry joining forces in new and powerful ways



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**I T CAN BE** challenging for a single company to bring forth a solution to today's increasingly complex technology challenges. That's why Dell, Pivotal and VMware joined forces to provide a fully integrated, pretested solution to a pressing problem the Air Force was facing.

Officials were looking for a true combined solution – not a collection of individual parts – to modernize how they managed the refueling of air assets for the service's operations in the Middle East. In many respects, they were developing a supply chain for getting a fuel tanker to the right aircraft at the right time. They also wanted to relieve their team of a manual process in which the slightest error could not only be quite expensive, but could have ripple effects across multiple activities.

We helped the Air Force create a series of interconnected applications and seamlessly incorporate agility and automation into the existing environment. As a result, the Air Force is saving millions of dollars, and it is continuing to use that approach to drive down costs and increase operational agility across the board.

## A platform with built-in flexibility

By working together to tackle the problem, government and industry created a solution that accelerates and simplifies processes, dramatically reduces costs and streamlines the management of the solution.

A key component of the Air Force's success is its adoption of hyperconverged infrastructure. HCI brings together the compute, storage and networking elements into one platform that's easy to stand up, deploy and operate. This particular solution

allows the Air Force and its Kessel Run Experimentation Lab to deliver a secure DevOps environment that can then be deployed via multiple purpose-built systems within the platform.

It is a perfect use case for HCI. Being able to visualize the airspace or battlefield requires big-data analytics and potentially high-performance computing. Instead of having separate solutions for each area, HCI has all those capabilities, and each one has its own purpose-built system.

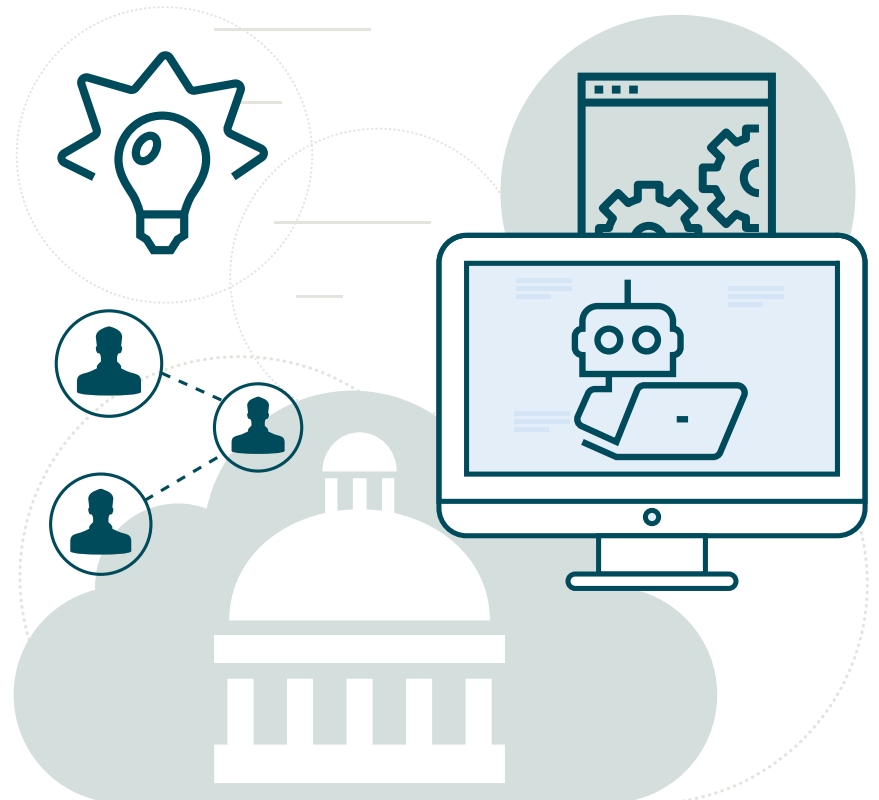
In addition, the Air Force was able to integrate networking and security platforms

into the development cycles and segment the various activities. That approach will allow a combination of cloud solutions to come into play based on the Air Force's future needs.

## Recognizing similarities and possibilities

Industry will continue to take collaborative approaches because the challenges are daunting and few companies can provide all the pieces that an agency or particular program might need.

Furthermore, the tanker refueling





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application might be unique, but it was not a unique situation for organizations to encounter. At VMware, we're excited about how agencies throughout and beyond the Defense Department – at the federal, state and local levels – can benefit from the Air Force's approach.

Other agencies have already taken notice and are asking themselves how they can adopt the same tools and techniques. The

Air Force's success has made people start to consider things they didn't think were possible. Maybe those manual, archaic processes that some employees have said could never be modernized or automated actually could be transformed.

Breaking down internal silos will be essential. The Air Force had to dismantle silos inside the air operations centers that went beyond IT to include the planning

process itself. Such silos are adding unnecessary complexity and hindering agencies' ability to transform. By contrast, combining those forces to streamline and modernize operations will allow the government and industry to keep pace with current and future demands. ■

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