Zurich Insurance Germany supports multicloud strategy with Red Hat

ZURICH®

Industry

Financial services

**Headquarters**

Frankfurt, Germany

Size

5,000 employees

"We've significantly reduced time to market with Red Hat OpenShift cloud services. Using containers means we can move faster, as standards are automatically and consistently applied."

Simon Galbierz
Head of Cloud
Center of Excellence
Zurich Insurance Germany

Zurich Insurance Group in Germany (Zurich Insurance Germany) needs to be agile and innovative to stay competitive, while complying with stringent regulations. To maximize flexibility and support workload portability, the company adopted Red Hat OpenShift Service on AWS and Microsoft Azure Red Hat OpenShift to create a container-based multicloud platform. The fully managed environments help application teams work more efficiently with embedded governance and controls and standardized processes and tools, so teams can provision new services in less than 2 hours. With Red Hat OpenShift Service on AWS (ROSA) and Microsoft Azure (ARO), Zurich Insurance Germany can support greater innovation while simplifying compliance with regulatory requirements.
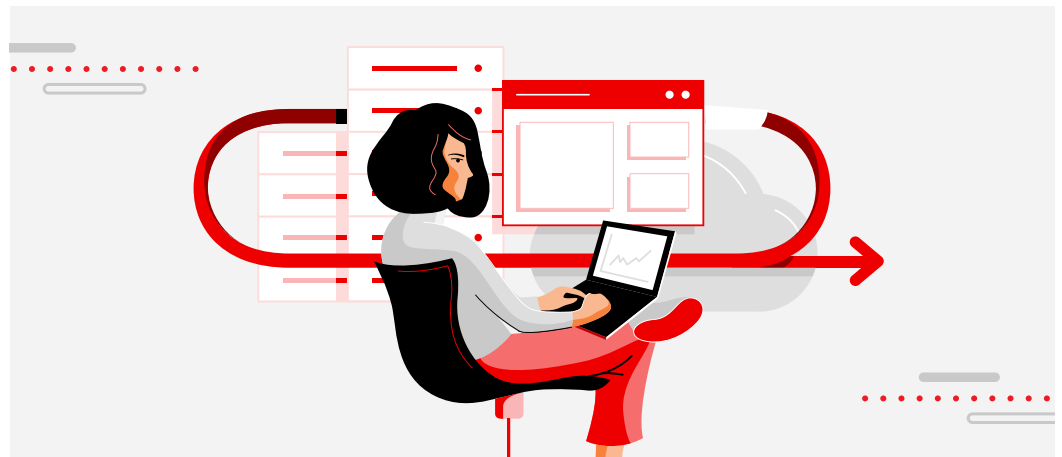
Software and services

Red Hat® OpenShift®

Red Hat OpenShift Service on AWS

Microsoft Azure Red Hat OpenShift

Benefits

▶ Streamlined development and operational efficiency

▶ Decreased time to market

▶ Simplified governance

▶ Increased operational resilience

Red Hat Innovators in the Open

About Red Hat Innovators in the Open

Innovation is the core of open source. Red Hat customers use open source technologies to change not only their own organizations, but also entire industries and markets. Red Hat Innovators in the Open proudly showcases how our customers use enterprise open source solutions to solve their toughest business challenges. Want to share your story? Learn more.

Maximizing business agility while remaining compliant

Zurich Group is one of the world's largest insurers, with more than 60,000 employees across 200 countries. The company has an industry-leading presence in Germany, where it serves 6 million customers, and sets itself apart by being first to market with forward-looking products.

The company's focus on innovation means it must be agile and able to bring new applications and services to market rapidly, while also ensuring that every solution meets strict regulatory needs. Zurich Insurance Germany's application teams are responsible for developing and managing a wide range of essential applications, from customer-facing insurance pricing calculators and workflow engines to internal training apps and backend components for rating insurance products.

Zurich Insurance Germany must ensure the portability of these applications across cloud environments to remain compliant with the Digital Operational Resilience Act (DORA) and additional regulatory requirements. This has led to Zurich Insurance Germany's multicloud, container-first strategy.

"A multicloud strategy is not only essential for compliance," said Philipp Hoegner, Head of Technical Operations Management, Zurich Insurance Germany. "It also gives us the flexibility to select the best-fit solutions for each use case across vendors."

As Zurich Insurance Germany's core focus is on insurance, not software or infrastructure, the tools and platforms supporting development must be easy to manage and backed by strong enterprise support to ensure both stability and speed at scale.

Adopting fully managed multicloud environments

To support its container-first development strategy across a multicloud environment, Zurich Insurance Germany selected Red Hat OpenShift for its robust technical capabilities and consistency across public cloud platforms.

Zurich Insurance Germany initially deployed a self-managed Red Hat OpenShift cluster on Microsoft Azure in late 2021. Following its success, the company launched Red Hat OpenShift Service on AWS in 2023—a fully managed turnkey application that allows organizations to quickly build, deploy, and scale applications in a native AWS environment. The company then started to replace its self-managed Azure environment with Microsoft Azure Red Hat OpenShift—a jointly engineered and operated Red Hat OpenShift service on Microsoft Azure.

Using Red Hat OpenShift cloud services eliminates the need for each team to maintain its own infrastructure, so Zurich Insurance Germany's application teams can focus on developing and operating their solutions.

"With Red Hat OpenShift, we get the same interface and configuration regardless of whether the hyperscaler is AWS or Azure," said Timo Bernard, Cloud Engineer, Zurich Insurance Germany. "A centralized setup with Azure Red Hat OpenShift and Red Hat OpenShift Service on AWS is more efficient than individual teams managing their own clusters. We also get a feature-rich environment and full support, and because it's open source, the innovations contribute back to the community."

Zurich Insurance Germany has a distributed team structure for its IT operations. The company's internal IT teams, including a central hub in Barcelona, collaborate with Red Hat experts to deploy and manage its Red Hat OpenShift environment. Red Hat Site Reliability Engineers handle all platform maintenance, updates, and security patches, so Zurich Insurance Germany's environment remains up to date.

Increasing efficiency while simplifying compliance

Streamlined development and operational efficiency

By adopting Red Hat OpenShift across both AWS and Azure, Zurich Insurance Germany has increased efficiency for its applications teams. Standardized processes and a centralized platform allow teams to focus on building and delivering applications, without requiring in-depth knowledge of the underlying networking or firewalls.

Logging and metrics are built into the platform for rapid visibility of application performance, and tools such as Red Hat OpenShift GitOps—a key component of Red Hat OpenShift—support consistency and streamlined processes for deployments.

"We've defined and documented a 'golden path' for developers to follow, if they choose to, which provides them with standardized, repeatable processes that make development faster and more efficient," said Simon Galbierz, Head of Cloud Center of Excellence, Zurich Insurance Germany.

This setup supports Zurich's DevOps approach and helps it to maintain industry best practices, such as standards from the Cloud Native Computing Foundation (CNCF).

Decreased time to market

With automation and managed services in place, Zurich Insurance Germany has reduced the time required to provision infrastructure and deploy new applications. For example, it can now provision new services much faster, with preconfigured environments and cloud integration.

"We've significantly reduced time to market with Azure Red Hat OpenShift and Red Hat OpenShift Service on AWS with the ability to provision new services in less than 2 hours rather than 2 days," said Galbierz. "Using containers means we can move faster, as standards are automatically and consistently applied."

This agility is vital in the highly regulated and fast-evolving insurance market where being first to market with new offerings can be a key differentiator.

Simplified governance

Zurich also benefits from the governance and security features built into Red Hat OpenShift. With multitenancy, Zurich Insurance Germany can isolate environments within the same cluster to strengthen security while eliminating the need for costly, separate clusters for every application. Moreover, this structure allows for platform-wide improvements. For example, Zurich Insurance Germany now automatically shuts down non-production environments overnight to reduce runtime costs and energy consumption.

Red Hat OpenShift cloud services also help Zurich meet stringent regulatory requirements, such as DORA.

"With security controls and governance embedded in the platform, our application teams don't have to worry about these things and can focus on innovation," said Hoegner. "At the same time, with Red Hat OpenShift we avoid vendor lock-in, so we have the long-term flexibility to adapt our strategy as business needs evolve."

Advancing innovation with unified cloud operations

Zurich Insurance Germany is now continuing to expand and refine its approach to increase consistency, agility, and innovation. It's currently migrating more workloads to Azure Red Hat OpenShift and Red Hat OpenShift Service on AWS to simplify operations with a fully managed model.

Zurich Insurance Germany's approach also makes it easier to bring innovation to application teams. "We're looking at how we can deliver application deployments like blue-green or canary releases across our environment, which will potentially minimize disruption and reduce risk," said Bernard.

With Red Hat OpenShift Service on AWS and Microsoft Azure Red Hat OpenShift, Zurich Insurance Germany is not only accelerating innovation and increasing operational efficiency but also building a future-ready, cloud-native foundation that simplifies compliance and supports the company's long-term business goals.

About Zurich Insurance Germany

Zurich Insurance Group is a leading multi-line insurer serving people and businesses in more than 200 countries and territories and has more than 65,000 employees and over 75 million customers. Zurich Insurance Group Germany offers a broad range of non-life insurance to individuals and businesses, founded on the global stability and expertise of its parent company.

About Red Hat

Red Hat is the world's leading provider of enterprise open source software solutions, using a community-powered approach to deliver reliable and high-performing Linux, hybrid cloud, container, and Kubernetes technologies. Red Hat helps customers develop cloud-native applications, integrate existing and new IT applications, and automate and manage complex environments. A trusted adviser to the Fortune 500, Red Hat provides award-winning support, training, and consulting services that bring the benefits of open innovation to any industry. Red Hat is a connective hub in a global network of enterprises, partners, and communities, helping organizations grow, transform, and prepare for the digital future.

f   facebook.com/redhatinc
𝕏   @RedHat
in linkedin.com/company/red-hat

redhat.com

North America	Europe, Middle East, and Africa	Asia Pacific	Latin America
1 888 REDHAT1 www.redhat.com	00800 7334 2835 europe@redhat.com	+65 6490 4200 apac@redhat.com	+54 11 4329 7300 info-latam@redhat.com