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SKECHERS
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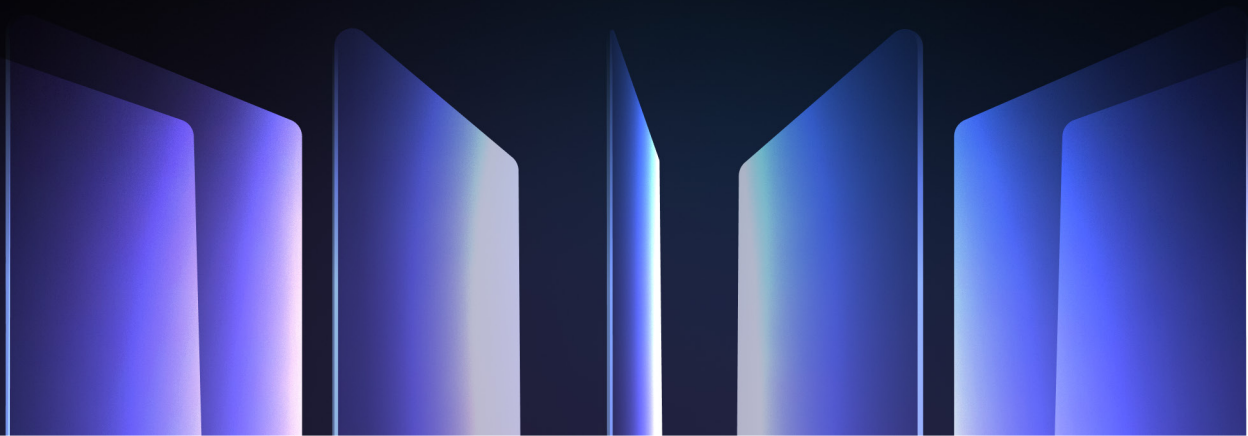
Best foot forward

A multibillion-dollar global retailer strengthens its industry foothold through self-service and automation with HCP Terraform.

Third largest athletic footwear brand in the world

Reduced provisioning workflow from one week to two hours

100% security compliance for high and critical vulnerabilities

Available in 180 countries

Implemented consistent deployment strategies and reduced risk

Stepped toward a FinOps culture, starting with cost visibility

Migrate to innovate

At Skechers USA, Inc., footwear is about more than function — it is a powerful combination of technological innovation and personal identity. The Comfort Technology Company®'s collection of lifestyle and performance footwear, apparel, and accessories are available in 180 countries and territories, both online and in-store. Forward-thinking, innovative, and always on trend, Skechers has become the brand of choice for millions of customers worldwide looking to express themselves in style and comfort at home and work.

Skechers' commitment to innovation is equally pervasive throughout its IT organization. To stay a step ahead of the competition and offer an even better customer experience, the cloud platform team wanted to modernize its infrastructure by moving away from its in-house data centers. But with workloads spread across Amazon Web Services (AWS), Google Cloud, Oracle Cloud, and other cloud service providers, the company's cloud journey was complicated. It needed a more self-service, automated approach to reach its goals.

"We've been on a migration path to the cloud for a number of years. We have a significant amount of workloads already running in the cloud, but one of the biggest challenges from a business and technological perspective was, how do we accelerate that?" asks Ramon Borunda, Senior Cloud Platform Engineer at Skechers.

Process in the way of progress

As drivers of the company's cloud transformation, the Skechers' cloud platform team was doing their best to help their stakeholders reassess and rearchitect their infrastructure. But, several significant roadblocks held them back.

For starters, resource requests submitted via simple ServiceNow forms with open-ended questions left room for interpretation, requiring a good deal of back-and-forth between parties to clarify needs and confirm approvals. The result was lengthy lead times, bumping this issue to the top of their priority list.

Their goal was to ensure that when an end user submitted a request through ServiceNow, the entire process unfolded seamlessly. While certain gated processes required reviews, the ultimate vision was a fully automated self-service model where a request would trigger back-end actions and eliminate manual steps.

In addition to solving these resource request bottlenecks, the cloud platform team needed to proactively implement security from the start of the cloud provisioning process. At the time, platform engineers had the liberty to build and deploy resources as they saw fit, leading to inconsistencies — even between resources of the same type — and an increased likelihood of human error. The resulting security risk of misconfigured cloud resources was substantial.

Finally, the team wanted to address a long-term goal to integrate FinOps into their processes to bring more predictability to expenses and budgeting.

Challenges

👥   Understanding stakeholders' resource requirements upfront and garnering approvals

🗎   Standardizing and automating resource deployment across the enterprise

☁   Forecasting cloud costs and budgeting on a global scale

🔒   Changing from a reactive to a proactive security posture

⁂   Giving customers a less stilted experience by moving toward less disjointed systems

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> The fact that our developers and the rest of the IT staff can get things done more quickly makes a big difference in the speed with which we can give our customers new features."

Ramon Borunda
Senior Cloud Platform Engineer
Skechers

Modernization from the inside out

Borunda believed he had the solution. "I've been an avid user of Terraform Community Edition for many years, so the idea of using the software as a service (SaaS) offering made a lot of sense for us. We adopted HashiCorp Terraform because it allows us to continue to write our code but no longer worry about the administrative tasks around it," he says.

HCP Terraform provides Skechers with mechanisms to modernize its infrastructure administration and management from the inside out. Resource-specific ServiceNow forms with highly targeted, close-ended questions now supply the cloud platform team with all necessary details upfront. An automated workflow streamlines reviews and approvals, speeding up provisioning while keeping all parties up to date.

"This particular flow has been a huge success with our end users. They appreciate the fact that they're kept in the loop rather than being in 'an in-progress limbo' with no real traction behind their tickets," notes Borunda.

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Inconsistent deployment practices are a thing of the past, as are the risks they pose. "By leveraging HCP Terraform and its private registry, we have modules that we can reuse, giving us consistency in how we build things that we didn't have before," says Borunda. "Having the ability to create reusable modules makes a tremendous difference for my team, our end users, and ultimately our customers."

HCP Terraform's run tasks also allow the team to integrate third-party tools into the run lifecycle that provide cost projections, cybersecurity analysis, and guardrails — successfully filling FinOps and security gaps.

A shoe that fits

HashiCorp Terraform has propelled Skechers' cloud journey — and business — forward. According to Gabriel Sandoval, Cloud Platform Sr. Manager at Skechers, "Our partnership with HashiCorp has been a strong one. Moving to HCP Terraform helped us alleviate multiple pain points. Without it, we wouldn't be where we are today."

The integration of ServiceNow and HCP Terraform has reduced the provisioning workflow time from days or weeks to hours, improving their time to market (TTM) and customer experience. "Our end users are really happy because now all they have to do is open a ticket and once they receive their approvals, it will take about four minutes for the resources to get created," Borunda says. "It makes a big difference in the speed with which we can give our customers new features."

Borunda also credits AWS with contributing to Skechers' transformation. "We have found a true partner in AWS. They offer a lot of services and guidance for us to properly adopt their services, and we really appreciate their help."

All these improvements have made a measurable difference in how their customers can interact with their brand. "When customers are in the store to get a pair of shoes, the time is a lot faster at checkout. They can also use different kiosks or iPads instead of just using the actual registers, which allows them to bond personally with an associate inside the store," says Sandoval.

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Skechers' success with HCP Terraform left the team eager to explore how other HashiCorp technology may fit into its modernization plans. The company is currently considering implementing HashiCorp Vault for identity-brokering and secrets management, as well as Sentinel — the policy as code framework within HCP Terraform and other HashiCorp solutions. "When it comes to our cloud journey, we want to continue our migration but also find a way to fully automate things, and we hope to continue our partnership with HashiCorp," says Borunda.

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Gabriel Sandoval
Cloud Platform Sr. Manager
Skechers

Outcomes

Improved time to market (TTM) and end user experience

Reduced provisioning workflow time from days or weeks to hours

Implemented consistent deployment practices and reduced risk

100% security compliance for high- and critical-risk security vulnerabilities

Took steps toward becoming a FinOps culture, starting with cost visibility

Shifted left from a reactive to a proactive security posture

Enhanced customer experience in-store and in-app due to standardized processes for resource provisioning

Solution

Skechers streamlines infrastructure provisioning, standardizes deployment practices, shifts left on FinOps and security, and speeds up application delivery by embracing self-service and automation with HCP Terraform and ServiceNow.

Skechers Partners

Gabriel Sandoval

*Cloud Platform
Sr. Manager*

Gabriel Sandoval, a native of Southern California, has roots in diverse communities, including Culver City, South Bay, East Los Angeles, South Central, and Watts. His journey in the technology sector began immediately after high school graduation, showcasing his early passion for the field. As a former Venice Gondolier, Gabriel has cultivated a powerful growth mindset that has driven innovation. Fostering our school's motto, "Rowing not drifting," his forward-thinking approach has significantly shaped the future of Cloud technology and expanded its capabilities. Through his work, Gabriel continues to push the boundaries of what's possible in the ever-evolving tech world.

Skechers Partners

Ramon Borunda

*Senior Cloud
Platform Engineer*

Ramon Borunda, MBA, is a senior SRE/DevOps/Cloud engineer with 25+ years of experience, specializing in IaC. He excels in AWS, GCP, and Terraform for automating and optimizing infrastructure. Ramon has led cloud migrations and implemented best practices across various organizations. He also teaches at California Institute of Applied Technology.

About HashiCorp

HashiCorp is The Infrastructure Cloud™ Company, helping organizations automate multi-cloud and hybrid environments with Infrastructure Lifecycle Management (ILM) and Security Lifecycle Management (SLM). HashiCorp offers The Infrastructure Cloud on the HashiCorp Cloud Platform (HCP) for managed cloud services, as well as self-hosted enterprise offerings and community source-available products. The company is headquartered in San Francisco, California.

For more information visit hashicorp.com