From manual to modern cloud

Discover how LAB³ uses the HashiCorp suite
to drive modernization, reduce provisioning
time, and cut operational overhead at scale

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LAB³

About LAB³

LAB³ is a leading platform engineering and cloud services provider operating across Australia, New Zealand, and the United States. Founded in 2017 in Melbourne, the company has grown to 250 employees and is one of only five Global AI Discover Partners for Microsoft — a distinction that reinforces its position as an AI leader in highly-regulated industries. Recognized as the 2025 Microsoft Partner of the Year in New Zealand and a hyper-specialized HashiCorp partner, LAB³ delivers IBM Terraform, IBM Vault, and IBM Consul on the HashiCorp Cloud Platform deployments that replace manual, inconsistent practices with standardized, secure, automated cloud platforms.

Sped provisioning by 70%

Reduced operational overhead via golden paths by 30-50%

Reduced VM prework from 2 weeks to just hours

Supports 40%+ mission-critical Australian Federal Government departments

1 of only 5 Global AI Discover Partners for Microsoft

Partners with 60%+ of major banks across Australia and New Zealand

When "cloud" still means tickets

Many enterprises believe they've modernized simply by moving to the cloud. But once LAB³ steps in, a different picture emerges. Provisioning usually still runs through long ticket queues. Secrets are stored and rotated manually. Networking changes also require manual intervention. What should be a minutes-long workflow stretches into weeks, a bottleneck Lachlan White, LAB³'s Chief Technology Officer, describes as "fake speed to market."

"We see a trend where there's a lot of manual, risk-averse processes driving decisions. Specifically, people holding onto control rather than letting go. That really lets people fall into a bit of a fake speed to market with cloud," explains White.

The root problem isn't the cloud itself, but the lack of shared patterns. Without consistent foundations for infrastructure as code (IaC), teams reinvent architectures on every project, creating drift and uneven security.

As AI, microservices, and event-driven systems appear, the cracks become even more apparent. Organizations want to operate at cloud speed, but their processes can't keep pace.

Challenges

Manual, ticket-driven provisioning that slows delivery

No shared IaC patterns, causing drift and duplicated work

Secrets managed manually with inconsistent or no rotation

Risk-averse processes that limit autonomy and innovation

Fragmented networking practices across hybrid and multi-cloud

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The crawl, walk, run model of transformation

Once LAB³ uncovers the operational drag holding teams back, the next step is rebuilding the path forward. Many organizations believe they've modernized because provisioning time has dropped, but the underlying manual processes often remain unchanged.

"If it took six weeks to build a server originally, and in the cloud, it takes three weeks, that's good. But we know it can take three minutes," says White.

LAB³'s crawl, walk, run model is designed to close this gap by providing enterprises with a structured way to overcome manual bottlenecks and move toward true cloud velocity. In the crawl stage, LAB³ stabilizes the basics: introducing shared patterns, defining architectural standards, and teaching teams how to use Terraform and Vault effectively.

Once standardized IaC is introduced, the results are pretty staggering: Clients typically reduce VM prework from approximately two weeks to just hours.

Reaching the walk stage marks a turning point in a client's modernization journey. LAB³ helps shift the organization from ad hoc practices to a unified, scalable operating model where standardization becomes the catalyst for real velocity.

"The walk phase is really about making it efficient rather than just doing it because we've been told it's a good practice to do," adds White. With Terraform's reusable templates and well-architected modules, the team can establish a consistent infrastructure foundation, eliminating one-off builds and reducing drift. Vault brings structure to secrets management, embedding rotation and access controls into the development workflow. And Consul begins to streamline connectivity by aligning networking practices with the broader platform strategy.

Together, these capabilities significantly reduce the client's time-to-market and speed provisioning by 70%. By the run stage, LAB³ layers in platform engineering practices, FinOps feedback loops, and more advanced Vault and Consul capabilities to strengthen connectivity, governance, and automation. Or, as White put it, the team starts looking at "what's the art of the possible?"

Consistency at scale

The HashiCorp ecosystem is a key element to this transformation, giving enterprises a consistent way to provision infrastructure, manage secrets, and connect distributed services across any environment. It replaces the patchwork of tools, one-off builds, and manual steps that previously created the illusion of cloud progress with a unified operating model that finally unlocks real modernization.

Terraform brings order to infrastructure delivery, turning inconsistent, hand-built environments into standardized, reusable modules that scale across teams and clouds.

Vault strengthens this foundation by removing the risks of manual secrets management. Instead of scattered, unrotated credentials, Vault provides automated rotation, centralized control, and least-privilege access — capabilities that become essential as AI and other sensitive workloads expand. For example, LAB[3] clients in heavily regulated industries have reduced risk and realized a significant shift in practice by moving to dynamic secrets for databases with short-lived, pre-request credentials.

Consul adds the final layer of consistency, transforming networking from a manual, ticket-driven effort into a predictable, automated service mesh. Service discovery, connectivity, and Consul-Terraform-Sync align distributed systems with the broader platform strategy. LAB[3] recently implemented Consul-Terraform-Sync for a large government agency, and the firewall rule automation led to a drastic reduction in overhead.

Together, these products create what White described as a truly unified engineering experience: "When we're leveraging the HashiCorp products to enable this transformation, we get a truly unified workflow. We're able to give the developers and the engineers a single unified tool set and experience to extract the value of all the abstraction we're putting into the platform."

This consolidated approach means teams work the same way, whether they're deploying to on-premises systems, Azure, or multiple public clouds, eliminating friction and giving organizations the confidence to scale their modern workloads.

Outcomes

Sped provisioning time by ~70% with Terraform blueprints

Achieved consistent and predictable networking with Consul unifying service connectivity

Automated secrets management with Vault-driven rotation and access controls

Accelerated delivery with preapproved templates and embedded guardrails

Cut credential exposure windows to minutes or hours instead of months or years

Reduced operational overhead by 30–50% as golden paths replaced manual processes

In action: Bringing order to a banking giant

White also shares a real-life example of what their approach looks like in action. At one of Australia's largest banks, cloud adoption had outpaced consistency. Hundreds of teams were using their own patterns and templates, creating a fragmented ecosystem that became unmanageable the moment AI workloads arrived. Operational overhead grew, and the bank lacked a safe, standardized path to experiment at the speed the business expected.

LAB³ addressed the problem by rebuilding the foundations. It introduced Terraform to unify provisioning and enforce RBAC-driven governance, replacing ad hoc workflows with shared, scalable patterns.

"We weren't provisioning any of the infrastructure through IaC, so the first step was getting those basics in place and putting everything into Terraform with proper RBAC."

Security had to mature alongside speed. With AI frameworks introducing new risks, LAB³ deployed Vault to centralize secrets and automate rotation. "We wanted to make sure we weren't exposing things we didn't want to," White notes, underscoring why Vault became essential to the bank's confidence in experimentation.

With consistent IaC, automated secrets, and a curated AI environment, the bank gained a secure, cloud-ready platform that now underpins its AI initiatives and is expanding across its broader workload portfolio.

Building what's next

As emerging technologies accelerate, from AI and agentic systems to microservices, event-driven workloads, and even quantum computing, the challenge is no longer about whether organizations can adopt new tools, but whether their platforms can support them safely and at scale.

White sees this shift clearly: "AI dramatically increases the speed of change and the surface area of access across modern platforms. As agents, pipelines, and services are introduced at pace, non-human identity becomes the dominant security challenge. Vault enables workload-based authentication and short-lived credentials, giving teams the freedom to adopt new tools quickly without relying on long-lived shared secrets."

Looking ahead, LAB³ plans to bring more intelligence into the platform itself, using AI to automate Terraform workflows, predict configuration drift, strengthen security signals, and guide developers directly in their environments. And HashiCorp remains central to that vision.

Lab³ Partner

Lachlan White
Chief Technology Officer
LAB³

Lachlan White is a seasoned technologist driving accelerated, outcome-focused change for large, regulated enterprises across Australia, New Zealand, and the US. As CTO at LAB³, he leads technology strategy, pre-sales, and R&D translating emerging cloud, AI, and platform engineering capabilities into repeatable, production-grade accelerators that turn strategy into execution.

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