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Parallels Automation – Trusted by Top Service Providers Worldwide

Many companies that want to provide cloud services are seeking to evolve beyond their traditional business models for fixed-line voice, mobile, broadband or web hosting services. Often these businesses are built on legacy or home-grown delivery systems that are not able to meet the basic needs of a cloud service delivery platform, or may require extensive and continuous development work to adapt legacy systems to the task.

At a minimum, service providers need to be able to integrate their core services with third-party services, and consolidate billing across all service types. Onboarding new services should not impede time to market. They should be able to create customized service bundles easily, and to deliver a unified customer experience. And to scale their business, they need to be able to support multiple sales channels.

Parallels Automation is the only platform to automate and simplify cloud service delivery for the largest telcos, hosters and IT distributors. It accelerates creation and delivery of differentiated service bundles through multiple sales channels, and streamlines service provider operations. It also supports resellers and customers with dynamic, role-based control panels for self-managing accounts, users and services. Parallels Automation is backed by an ecosystem of over 250 ISVs and Parallels 14 years of industry experience.

Hundreds of leading service providers worldwide have selected and deployed Parallels Automation to sell and provision cloud services. Parallels Automation gives them a flexible delivery platform, the ability to provision unique service offerings, multi-channel sales enablement, a simplified customer experience, and an open standard for cloud services. Providers can also leverage Parallels deployment expertise and go-to-market know-how to achieve success and grow their businesses.

This paper looks at how Parallels Automation supports each of these capabilities, and discusses why different types of service providers select Parallels Automation for cloud service delivery.

Critical Success Factors for Cloud Service Delivery

Having helped many service providers to enter the cloud services delivery market, Parallels has identified five specific factors which are critical to growing and managing a successful cloud services business. These include a flexible delivery platform, the ability to provision unique service offerings, multi-channel sales enablement, a simplified customer experience, and an open standard for cloud services. Parallels Automation addresses each of these critical success factors in the following ways:

**FLEXIBLE DELIVERY PLATFORM WITH SMART SERVICE INTEGRATION**

Parallels Automation is a future-proof platform for delivering cloud services. Its open architecture and rich APIs provide flexibility for integrating existing business and operational support systems into the platform’s automated provisioning and workflows. It supports delivery of both hosted and/or syndicated services which can be onboarded anytime, managed side-by-side and delivered in any combination through easy-to-configure service plans. Services available today span a full range of scenarios including collaboration and communication, web presence, IaaS, and SaaS business applications. They include the most in-demand and well-known brands.
The Parallels Automation platform combines a business support system with an operations support system to enable all aspects of service provisioning, billing, business orchestration and analytics. A common service bus provides a means to easily onboard new services that support the open APS cloud standard. By using the common APS standard and service bus, separate applications and services can be integrated. This ability enables infinite scenarios for custom service bundles, tactical upsell and cross-sell capabilities, as well as sophisticated self-service account and user management for business customers.

**RAPID CREATION AND PROVISIONING OF UNIQUE SERVICE OFFERS**

With Parallels Automation, service providers have the capability to combine and sell any resources and services – regardless of whether they are hosted or syndicated – to build and automatically provision unique service plans and bundles that include Web, SaaS, IaaS, PaaS or core network services. Product managers get the tools they need to easily provision services, create bundles and deploy offers without the need for any development resources. There is support for multiple metering and billing scenarios including unified invoicing for multi-user subscription plans.

**MULTI-TIER RESELLER SALES ENABLEMENT FOR ONLINE AND OFFLINE SALES**

Parallels Automation gives service providers a customizable online application storefront – also known as an app store or a marketplace. While this is an important part of a service provider’s online presence, it is not the primary means by which successful providers sell services to business customers. In fact, Frost & Sullivan research shows that only around ten percent of services are purchased by business customers via an online marketplace. Providers that want rapid growth need to be able to scale their businesses through multi-channel routes to market.

With Parallels Automation, providers gain the ability to sell through multiple tiers of service resellers who directly take orders and initiate provisioning of selected services from a centralized portfolio. Resellers get white-label capabilities and manage their own stores, services and customers through a unified self-service control panel. Providers also create highly customized experiences for their own inbound and outbound telesales and field sales teams that let them onboard new customers, provision services, and manage billing and payment options in a manner most productive to the way each group works.

**SIMPLIFIED AND DIFFERENTIATED USER EXPERIENCE**

The user experience is critical. A bad one will frustrate customers and lead to churn. A mediocre experience may be tolerated, but if it doesn’t improve and better options emerge elsewhere, customers will eventually leave. An exceptional experience is a differentiator, and helps a provider stand above their competitors and attract new business through exposure and referrals.

With Parallels Automation, service providers simplify purchase and consumption of cloud services. Giving customers access to services through a single set of credentials, unifying management of all services and users through a single customer control panel, and providing one invoice across all services and users, providers will reduce customer churn and differentiate their offerings. By promoting self-management of accounts and services via customer control panels, providers will improve operational efficiency through a reduction of common support tasks that customers perform themselves.
OPEN STANDARD FOR CLOUD SERVICES SUPPORTED BY A ROBUST SERVICE ECOSYSTEM

Parallels Automation supports APS, the industry’s most popular free and open standard for cloud service delivery. APS creates a simple and fast way for service providers to offer new services. ISVs “package” their solutions according to the standard’s specifications that cover provisioning, management and integration of cloud-based services and applications. Once an ISV packages their application in APS, it is easily plugged into the infrastructure of any hosting or telecommunications provider that has adopted the standard “socket” platform for APS applications – Parallels Automation. Service providers quickly deploy packaged applications and easily integrate them “out-of-the-box” into their offers.

With hundreds of ISVs already packaging over 500 cloud applications, and hundreds of service providers delivering them via Parallels Automation to millions of SMBs, a robust ecosystem of partners has evolved to support APS, making it the de facto standard for cloud service delivery. There are even systems integrators who specialize in APS-enabling applications and services for ISVs, and in assisting service providers to APS package internal business processes and services for onboarding to the platform and management via the Parallels Automation interface.

APS is the “secret sauce” for delivering superior customer experiences. Applications that are packaged for APS and deployed on Parallels Automation are able to work together. Service providers can leverage this ability to deliver tighter integration between applications, as well as to implement new suggestive upsell and cross-sell scenarios, in-app purchases and more. No longer will end users view their cloud services as isolated islands, but as superior, integrated experiences that are worth telling others about.

Deployment Expertise and Go-to-Market Know-How

Because Parallels Automation is the only cloud service delivery platform that meets the five critical success factors for end-to-end cloud service delivery, it has been the choice of hundreds of major service providers worldwide.

To ensure their success, partners deploying Parallels Automation have worked with Parallels Customer Success Team for a variety of services related to architecture, deployment, integration, customization, support, and managed services. Our experience with hundreds of unique instances informs our recommendations based on a service provider’s priorities, and offers an informed perspective on time to market for initial deployment and addition of new services. Parallels can even help cloud service providers to select the right services to launch and to construct relevant bundles for their target customers.

Since many types of users within a service provider’s organization need to interact with their Parallels Automation platform, appropriate training should not be overlooked when planning for success.

Parallels Cloud University addresses this requirement with a broad range of training options related not only to administration and developer roles, but also for customer service, finance, product management and sales roles.

Even after they have deployed Parallels Automation and gone to market with their initial offerings, service providers continue to leverage Parallels industry expertise to fine tune their own business practices through Cloud Acceleration Services – a suite of services specifically designed to help providers profitably and rapidly launch new cloud services.
These include:

- **Cloud Business Strategy** services to help service providers develop their channel strategy, business case, and cloud service portfolio

- **Cloud Business Optimization** services to provide ongoing, proactive marketing support to help continually evaluate and re-tune a cloud business

- **Cloud Go-to-Market** services to accelerate go-to-market and launch plans by helping providers define packaging details, the service experience, and bundling options

- **Channel Planning** services to analyze and prioritize existing sales channels including the development of a multi-phase channel plan that encompasses the sales process, onboarding process, collateral and training requirements, and resources required to execute

- **Go-to-Market Execution Support** services to provide marketing resources to execute a provider’s cloud plan for a period of anywhere from 12 to 52 weeks. It includes product management, product marketing, and program management resources, development of marketing deliverables, and development and execution of the go-to-market plan

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**Why Service Providers Select Parallels Automation**

Every service provider is unique, and the fact that Parallels Automation is able to meet their various needs is a testament to the platform’s versatility and power. Despite individual service provider differences, there are certain benefits common to specific types of providers that are cited as being critical to their decision to adopt Parallels automation.

**WEB HOSTERS AND INFRASTRUCTURE PROVIDERS**

“Parallels Automation helped to mitigate our business challenges while generating a strategic opportunity for us to enable our own domain and shared hosting resellers with a broader set of products and a complete turnkey platform for cloud services.”

- Michael McGoogan, Chief Executive Officer, UberGlobal

Web hosts adopt Parallels Automation to expand service offerings, scale capacity, and replace legacy systems that are inhibiting growth. New cloud service offerings are key to increasing revenue, reducing customer churn, and delivering an exceptional customer experience.

By using our proven platform, web hosting providers enrich their portfolios with new SaaS, IaaS, and PaaS offers without heavy development efforts to get to market quickly. This enables providers to shift focus from platform development and integration to product management and customer acquisition.

Our open architecture enables integration with virtually any external business or operations system. Providers can deliver any combination of services – hosted and syndicated – seamlessly and automatically, all managed through a single pane of glass.
TELECOM COMPANIES AND COMMUNICATION SERVICE PROVIDERS

“We were looking for a partner and a platform that could be launched in a number of countries very quickly; provide an accompanying ecosystem of service providers and applications to ensure local market differentiation; and support rapid expansion.”

- Tim Marsden, Head of SaaS at Telefonica Digital

Telecom companies and communication service providers have both common and unique solution delivery needs, and adopting Parallels Automation can enable them to:

- Enter the cloud services business with a portfolio of high-margin, in-demand SaaS, IaaS, and PaaS offers – such as Microsoft cloud solutions – that they can attach to anchor communications services (broadband, wireless, etc.) to reduce churn, increase revenue and attract new customers.
- Integrate critical business and operations support systems, maximize investments in legacy service delivery platforms or enable new upgrade paths. With Parallels Automation, providers can consolidate service management onto a single, future-proof platform through a dynamic control panel to improve operational efficiency.
- Scale their market through wholesale and reseller channels, and possibly subsidiaries, supported by branded and white-label storefronts, easy partner onboarding, and central management of their own differentiated cloud services catalog.
- Develop new service offerings for mobile device management and security to address the proliferation of smartphones and tablets.
- Deliver a better customer experience and lower support costs by enabling customers to self-manage all purchased services through a unified and dynamic user interface, with one login, settled by one invoice.

MANAGED SERVICE PROVIDERS

“Working with Parallels we were able to quickly implement a solution that delivers provisioning and management of the Office 365 platform, allowing us to focus on creating the high-quality experience our customers demand.”

- Scott Paul, Senior Director, AppRiver

Managed Service Providers (MSPs) build their businesses on Parallels Automation because Parallels makes it easy to onboard and completely automate delivery of in-demand SaaS, IaaS, and PaaS applications and services via syndication.

Syndication provides a low barrier to entry for MSPs to offer popular services like Microsoft Office 365. MSPs can bundle any combination of SaaS, IaaS and shared hosting services to build their own managed catalog of offerings to meet the evolving needs of each of their customer segments.

MSPs offer selected services from their catalog through multiple sales channels including wholesalers, resellers, affiliates, telesales and in-person sales teams. An MSP can enable each reseller to manage their own branded or white-label storefronts and order taking, with self-service reseller panels and service provisioning centrally managed by Parallels Automation.

Using Parallels Automation, MSPs can automate provisioning of complete, managed IT stacks and related consultative services for even their most sophisticated customers.
DISTRIBUTORS AND VALUE ADDED RESELLERS

“Our people, processes and platform have become clear differentiators for Ingram Micro and the Ingram Micro Cloud Marketplace. This strategic alliance with Parallels will enable us to execute against our vision of a global cloud services marketplace and further empower channel partners and IT professionals with the IT industry’s most in-demand and comprehensive portfolio of turnkey cloud services.”

- Nimesh Dave, executive vice president of Global Cloud Computing, Ingram Micro

Distributors and value added resellers have discovered how Parallels Automation helps them leverage their trusted advisor relationships with their traditional customers to deliver cloud-based services and consulting, and address industry trends and changing business models.

With a portfolio of over 500 “pluggable” applications for web presence, SaaS, IaaS, and messaging and collaboration, Parallels Automation gives distributors accelerated time to market by easily bundling any combination of services, quickly building brokerages for cloud service delivery, and onboarding integrated new service offerings with minimal effort.

To address the need to scale and to support complex channel organizations with multiple resellers, Parallels Automation helps distributors manage their own catalog of hosted and syndicated services. They self-curate and offer selections of these services through multi-tier sales channels including wholesalers, resellers, affiliates, and telesales teams. Distributors can easily onboard new partners and allow each reseller to manage their own branded or white-label storefronts with self-service reseller panels and service provisioning centrally managed by Parallels Automation.

Self-service control panels enable resellers and business customers to manage their own accounts, applications and users, resulting in fewer support tickets and lower support costs.

Ingram Micro, the world’s largest wholesale technology distributor, recently selected Parallels Automation as its core cloud services delivery platform for its new global Cloud Marketplace. By using Parallels Automation platform, Ingram Micro’s Cloud Marketplace will be able to deploy a more comprehensive range of private, public and hybrid cloud services along with a broad range of additional professional services and support capabilities. Thousands of Ingram’s partners are expected to resell cloud services via their Parallels Automation platform.
Conclusion

Parallels Automation is a trusted platform for end-to-end cloud service delivery. With hundreds of deployments worldwide, it powers many of the world’s best known service providers.

Because it addresses each of the five critical success factors for cloud service delivery, service providers have confidence that Parallels Automation will meet their needs for years to come, even as their markets and customers change.

Cloud service providers face many challenges, including integrating third-party and core services, creating customized services bundles, providing a unified customer experience, and delivering it all through multiple sales channels. Parallels Automation helps services providers overcome these and other challenges and grow their cloud services business according to their specific needs. With Parallels Automation, you get the most comprehensive platform for cloud service delivery supported by the largest ecosystem and Parallels deep industry knowledge.

Find success stories from world-class cloud service providers who have selected Parallels Automation at www.parallels.com/automation