

Success Story

Paving the Way to New Mobility Options with an Agile IT Team

How digital business models benefit from managed DevOps services in the public cloud

Agile and DevOps are two frequently cited buzzwords which elicit high expectations. To see how these two methods work in practice, you need look no further than the collaboration between start-up mydriver (the limousine agency service venture of Sixt SE) and service providers IONOS and Centrias Colocation.

The business idea of the start-up mydriver can be explained in an elevator pitch. Short and to the point: It is a global marketplace where customers can order trips in high-quality limousines via an app and online at a transparent fixed price.

„mydriver is part of the so-called platform economy. ... With our mobile app and the web service, we perform agency services for local limousine providers, therefore maximizing their capacity.“

Andreas Goschler
Managing Director of mydriver

The young company is actually a subsidiary of the rental car market leader Sixt, but it is being managed as a start-up. Sixt SE based in Pullach near Munich is primarily an investor and has been supporting the founding team with the development of their product since 2012. The service has gradually spread across the whole of Germany, and in 2014, it started to

establish itself in locations around the globe. Since then, the mydriver service has been available to book in more than 25 countries and over 150 cities around the world.

The web interface and the mobile app both stand out due to their simplicity and transparency. Those booking the service for the first time can start by entering a route or a journey time to check the cost. If you actually want to book the journey, you need a user account. Reserving a limousine takes no time at all. In large cities, it's even possible to make bookings at relatively short notice.

The backbone of the service is the IT. Without the web interface and the app, or without the supporting database services, the business model simply would not work. This is another area where Sixt initially provided support. However, accelerated by the Europe-wide launch of the service, the IT has now been relocated from the Sixt data centers.

„mydriver is a mobility provider – we concentrate on the strategical further development of the product. ... An important aspect of this is keeping the internal IT team as streamlined and efficient as possible.“

Andreas Goschler
Managing Director of mydriver

This is a typical procedure for young companies in the digital sector. This significantly sets them apart from traditional companies, which often still want to do as much as possible in-house.

Digital companies, like the chauffeur service, do things differently.

„Our business model is based on a complex IT infrastructure. ... It needs to have a lot of reserve capacity available to serve customers satisfactorily at all times. However, it also needs to be easy to operate and have an efficient set-up.“

Andreas Goschler
Managing Director of mydriver

When it comes to IT provision, start-ups often opt for the lean principle: As little IT operation as possible to avoid wasting resources that could be better deployed in product development. The ideal solution for this is cloud computing, and “Infrastructure-as-a-Service” in particular. With this cloud model, IT capacities are utilized in the form of virtual solutions.

The actual infrastructure, i.e. the servers, development environments, and the back end, is fully situated in the cloud.

mydriver therefore decided to enlist the services of the Enterprise Cloud of IONOS. The individual IT components are operated in the data centers of the Berlin-based cloud service provider.

Using the Data Center Designer of the Enterprise Cloud, mydriver can compile its IT infrastructure in an easy-to-use graphical user interface and activate it quickly.

„It was the simple configuration of the servers and development systems that impressed us the most.“

Thomas Reis
CTO of mydriver

Providing New Versions Quickly

But just like every other company providing a digital service, mydriver’s “IT department” includes specialists who operate and maintain this infrastructure.

Despite this, mydriver’s actual IT team is very streamlined and primarily consists of developers, who devote their time to further developing the service. The keyword is DevOps: Operation and technical development from a single source.

mydriver uses IT service provider Centrias Colocation for this purpose. The DevOps specialists are experienced in operating agile development environments that result in quick and frequent new software versions (“releases”). This leads to closer interlinking of development and IT operation, which is usually described using the technical term DevOps (Developers & Operations). Centrias, in turn, relies on the cloud infrastructure of the Enterprise Cloud, which is directly related to DevOps concepts.

Alongside the front end with the mobile app and web interface, there is also a back end that operates in the background and takes care of bookings and further distribution of orders. Both parts of the service are being continually further developed and the Enterprise Cloud also provides mydriver with numerous convenience features for this purpose.

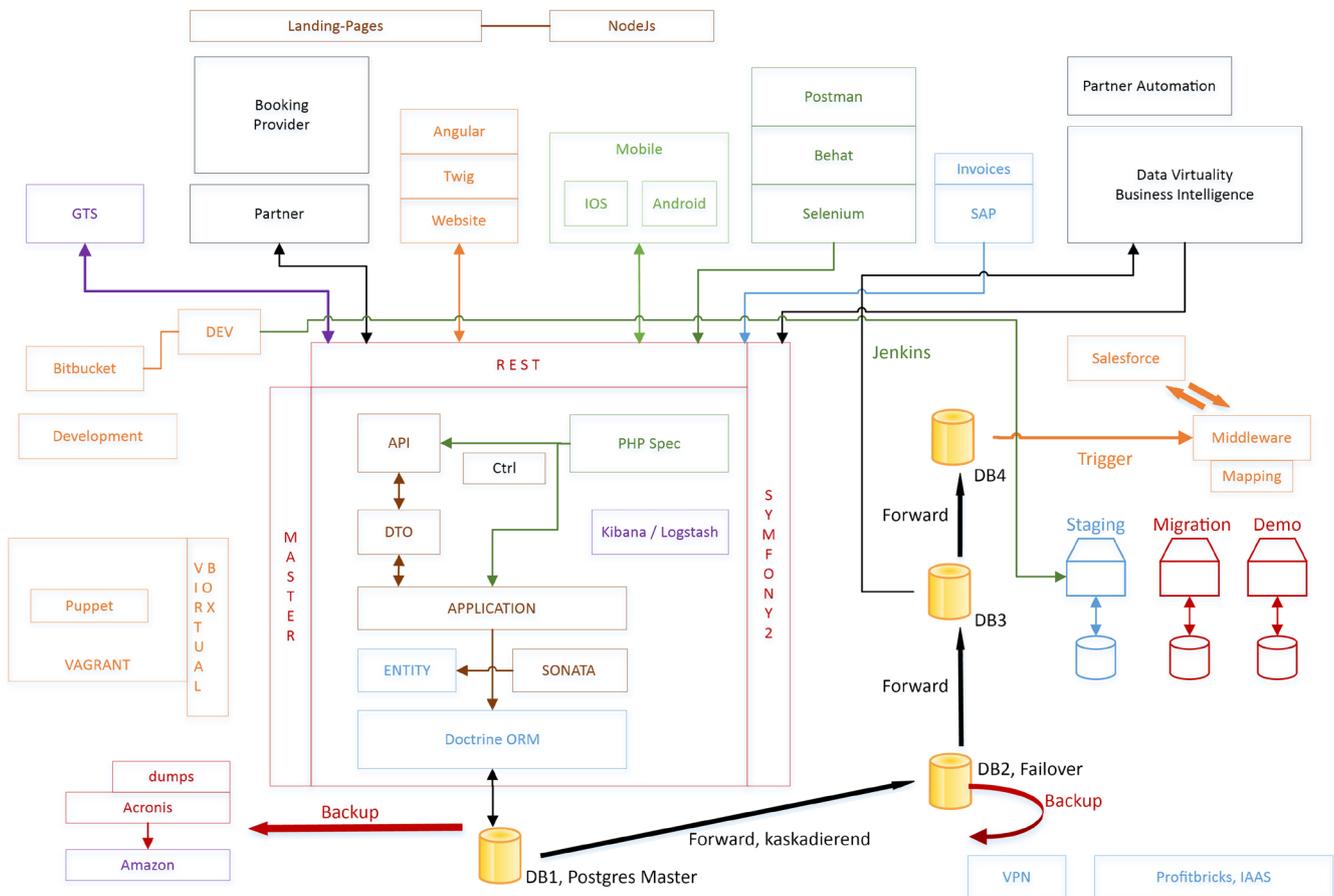
„For example, our developers regularly require test systems that can quickly be completely reset at the touch of a button.“

Thomas Reis
CTO of mydriver

However, systems like these require careful preparation. There are also many other tasks, for instance when the new tested front end and back end versions are made available for users.

This is where continuous delivery and continuous integration come into play. This entails frequently released software versions being directly integrated into the production systems. In contrast to conventional practice, this no longer involves a large update with lots of new functions. Instead, smaller updates are released regularly, sometimes even being rolled out on a daily basis.

New releases move from the development systems to the productive systems like in a pipeline, often with different version statuses at different stations at the same time. There are software tools like Jenkins to



A complete overview of the mydriver 3.0 technology stack

extensively automate these processes. This tool controls the integration of components into an application program and replaces time-consuming manual work. This means only a small team is needed to constantly keep the software up to date.

German Data Centers for Maximum Security

The idea behind this is understanding infrastructure as code. Those requiring an additional server, another development environment for another mobile operating system, or a reconfigured test system don't need to set up a server or install software packages. Instead, they develop a script to perform the relevant tasks on the infrastructure platform of the Enterprise Cloud.

"But DevOps is more than just scripting for the deployment pipeline," emphasized Thomas Reis. "It is very important for us to have a sophisticated

backup strategy, which prevents data losses and ensures that a large archive of data files and earlier versions is available at all times."

Centrias Colocation also takes on the additional IT operation tasks, allowing mydriver to work without any hitches.

Data protection is also guaranteed. The data centers of the Enterprise Cloud of IONOS are exclusively based in Germany and are therefore subject to German data protection law.

"This regulation is particularly important for our business customers, who make up 80 percent of our customer base. ... They place particular importance on the security of their data and therefore prefer it to be saved in German data centers."

Thomas Reis
CTO of mydriver

This shows that digital B2B business models on software platforms in the public cloud are well received here in Germany. However, the most important requirement for companies, apart from operational efficiency and reliable operation, is data protection

and a trustworthy service provider. In this respect, German infrastructure providers have a competitive edge and stand out from the crowd for critical business customers.



Can we help you write your own success story?

We've already helped countless other businesses in various industries do just that. Learn how the cloud can help you reach your business goals. If you're interested in unlocking your firm's potential and ensuring that your business remains future-proof, get in touch with us. Our Cloud Consultants are happy to offer expert advice and will demonstrate how shifting your IT to the IONOS Enterprise Cloud will best equip you to meet the challenges of a digital future.

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