



HFS Hot Vendor: Container Solutions

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Introduction

The HFS Hot Vendors are an exclusive group of emerging players, each with a differentiated value proposition for the HFS OneOffice or HFS OneEcosystem. HFS analysts speak with numerous exciting startups and emerging players.

We designate a select group as HFS Hot Vendors based on their offerings' distinctiveness, ecosystem robustness, client impact, financial position, and the impact in our OneOffice and/or OneEcosystem Frameworks. The HFS Hot Vendors may not (at the time of writing) have the scale and size to be featured in our Top 10 reports, but they have the vision and strategy to impact and disrupt the market.

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Container Solutions helps clients navigate the complexity of the journey toward cloud native. While it offers an intricate understanding of the new technology capabilities, its sweet spot is in focusing on culture, people, and processes.

Led by plain-speaking CEO Jamie Dobson, Container Solutions was a recent star of the June 2021 HFS OneOffice™ Digital Symposium, appearing in the Shark-Tank-style Hottest of the HFS OneOffice Hot Vendors showdown. The company attracted a good chunk of the vote from our audience of business leaders.

If you're still wondering what "cloud native" is—Container Solutions has a short, colorful (profanity alert!) video explainer on its [website](#). Dobson and the team align with HFS' thinking on the topic: Despite all the marketing noise around technological capabilities such as containerization and microservices, the journey toward cloud native operations offers the greatest value when it takes in culture, people, and processes.

Dobson says what started as an architecture—microservices on a virtual machine on the cloud—has become something encompassing continuous delivery, risk handling, and experimentation, all of which go hand-in-hand with becoming a learning organization. Cloud native is now a combination of super cool tools that let you scale demand for compute to supply.

When used properly, it allows companies to build brilliant products through experimentation and A/B testing.

With Michelle Gienow and Pini Reznik, Dobson has literally written the book on the subject: *Cloud Native Transformation: Practical Patterns for Innovation*. It is a guide to transforming organizations into cloud native enterprises, both architecturally and culturally.

Container Solutions has focused on creating step-by-step cloud native transformation, specializing in Kubernetes, microservices, Azure, AWS, and Google Cloud.

Launched in 2014, the firm has an impressive roster of customers, including Shell, Google, Atos, Arm, Adidas, Cisco, VMware, and ING. The Zurich-headquartered (though operationally geographically distributed) business has a four-stage process for cloud native transformation to guide companies to the cloud with the right solutions for their specific cloud native journey. Think Design Build Run (TDBR) helps clients think about and identify their challenges and opportunities, experiment to eliminate wrong moves and design their ideal solutions, build custom-tailored systems, and run the results on their own. Container Solutions also offers ongoing support if required.

Technologies deployed include Kubernetes, Helm, Prometheus, Knative, ArgoCD, Kustomize, and Istio.

Beyond the technology, Container Solutions marshals culture and strategy and offers customized training sessions to increase client teams' skills, assessments to evaluate readiness for cloud native production, professional services to jumpstart that readiness, and customer reliability engineering to remove the risk of trading innovation for platform reliability.

The company is profitable and cash-generative with strong foundations from which to scale. Plans include consolidating in the German and UK markets, building on inroads in the US, and setting up tech hubs in emerging economies such as Mexico City, Rio, and Johannesburg—in line with ambitions to take cloud native truly global and beyond the locations typically first on everyone's lists.

Clients are impressed by the quality of the Container Solutions' consulting and the people delivering it. They cite deep

expertise in supporting the implementation of Kubernetes, mapping out the strategic journey to becoming cloud native, and handling the challenges of regional load balancing.

"They do so much beyond containers, they really should consider changing their name," said a digital transformation leader at one of its larger global customers.

The business has ambitions to scale through acquisition and develop its CS Labs, an open-source factory opening the way to more advanced R&D. CS Academy will develop interns and internal talent, and investments in rich content are also likely to support the firm's focus on education.

Some customers suggest Container Solutions could usefully move beyond infrastructure toward the data science and flows of MLOps (the process of taking a machine-learning model into a production system).

HFS' take

HFS designated Container Solutions an HFS Hot Vendor for its people-first approach to the journey to cloud native. While the company claims to have been working with cloud native technology since before it had a name, it learned from its customers across a range of industries that success with technology is always people-dependent. It emphasizes the combination of technology, people, and process in a culture of collaboration that reduces risk while moving

at pace. It aligns well with HFS's take on the OneOffice, in which becoming cloud native is core to an integrated technology stack with natively automated processes, enabled people, and data-driven decisions.

- **Founded:** 2014
- **Key executives:** Co-founder and CEO Jamie Dobson, former senior analyst at Accenture; Pini Reznik, CRO
- **Headquarters:** Container Solutions' legal headquarters are in Zurich.
- **Funding source(s):** Private
- **Number of clients:** 100+
- **Notable clients:** Shell, Google, Atos, Arm, Adidas, Cisco, VMware, ING
- **Solution portfolio**
 - **Cloud Native Transformation Strategy:** Think Design Build Run, Cloud Native Assessment, Cloud Native Patterns
 - **Professional Services:** GKE Onboard, GCP Onboard, Digital Ocean Onboard, Istio Onboard, Prometheus, CI/CD GitOps Workflow, Technical Assessment, Going Live Support, Braintrust
 - **24/7 Cloud Native Operations:** Customer Reliability Engineering (CRE), CRE with Google Cloud, Cloud Acceleration Programme
 - Container Solutions also offers a range of education in Kubernetes, containers, GitOps, Istio, other technologies, and some marketing services.
- **Industry coverage:** SMEs to multinationals, sector agnostic
- **Partnerships:** Microsoft–Gold Partner, AWS–Select Partner, Google–Partner, SUSE–Gold Partner, VMware–Cloud Native Master Service Partner



About HFS

Insight. Inspiration. Impact.

HFS is a unique analyst organization that combines deep visionary expertise with rapid demand side analysis of the Global 2000. Its outlook for the future is admired across the global technology and business operations industries.

Its analysts are respected for their no-nonsense insights based on demand side data and engagements with industry practitioners.

HFS Research introduced the world to terms such as “RPA” (Robotic Process Automation) in 2012 and more recently, the HFS OneOffice™. The HFS mission is to provide visionary insight into the major innovations impacting business operations such as Automation, Artificial Intelligence, Blockchain, Internet of Things, Digital Business Models and Smart Analytics.

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