Home Depot’s Challenge
In 2014, the IT team at Home Depot looked around and realized that they were spending an average of 1-2 weeks to provision VMs for their end users and had a growing shadow IT problem. They decided to evaluate cloud management platforms (including CloudBolt, VMWare’s vRA, Cliqr, CSC Matrix, and a couple of others) to see if one of these CMPs could help them address their challenges. After an exhaustive evaluation, they chose CloudBolt and told us that they were impressed by its simplicity, extensibility, elegance, and its low overhead to install, upgrade, and maintain. We’ve been working with them to transform their IT operations for the better since then.

CloudBolt’s Solution

Automating VM Deployment
Before adopting CloudBolt, the IT org received requests from end users (~400 developers) to build new VMs in VMware, and the IT team did this with a manual step by step process (which was both time consuming and error prone). The first step in their IT transformation was to automate these builds using CloudBolt and greatly reduce the time to provision, from 1-2 weeks to < 20 minutes. Within this company, end users’ esteem for the IT organization started to grow, and the need for shadow IT diminished.

Self-Service
After the IT team had used CloudBolt to fulfill requests for a few months, they decided they did not need to play the middle man anymore. They felt that the CloudBolt user interface made the process simple enough and had the guard rails they needed (quota system, expiration dates, per-environment & group customized order forms, predefined sets of options so the users cannot free-form enter inappropriate values) for the ~400 developers to use CloudBolt directly. The developers instantly loved being able to order what they wanted when they wanted it. They also started de-provisioning these VMs proactively and of their own volition, since they knew they could always create new
CloudBolt Case Study

How CloudBolt Helps

✦ Provisioning time decreased from 2 weeks to < 20 minutes
✦ Self-service provisioning
✦ Decreased VM Sprawl
✦ Ease of public cloud adoption

Public Cloud Adoption

Fast forward to 2016 and Home Depot is expanding from VMware into the public cloud (focusing on Azure and Google Cloud) and CloudBolt is catalyzing that transition. Since the developers already know how to use CloudBolt and enjoy doing so, the IT group can simply enable a few more environmental choices for those users and they can rapidly spin up and down workloads there. No extra training was needed to make the transition, and no extra process was added.

In terms of its effect on shadow IT, the cloud architect at Home Depot said: “[CloudBolt] helped us bring some of that shadow IT out. When we introduced this, we couldn’t put our finger on how big that need was. Previously, they were running VMs on local laptops, repurposing DC machines, and spinning public cloud VMs. Immediately those shadow IT things went away, and those people started using the service we offered. Instead of being dictatorial, we ask what they need and make sure it’s managed and they can focus on delivering value.”

The Future

Today, this company is managing about 10,000 VMs with CloudBolt and excited to be rolling more and more environments with the product (including automating the build-out of store servers).