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Rival Camps Try to 'Orchestrate' Container Specs

March 14, 2016 by George Leopold



The basis for an application container scheme continues to evolve as a group seeking to align competing technologies announced acceptance of a container orchestration platform developed by Google.

The [Cloud Native Computing Foundation](#) said its technical oversight panel has accepted the Kubernetes container orchestrator. Intellectual property underlying the orchestration system also has been transferred to the group. Meanwhile, the latest version of Kubernetes is scheduled for release later this month.

As the application container market heats up, industry leader Docker fired back by releasing test results late last week claiming its Swarm orchestration system runs faster and performs better at scale than Kubernetes.

Developed by Google (NASDAQ: GOOG, GOOGL) as an open source orchestrator, Kubernetes includes network storage and cluster management along with apps and services. "The acceptance of Kubernetes is a



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first step in establishing the [cloud computing group] as an organization that supports leading cloud native projects of production quality," Alexis Richardson, chair of the foundation's technical committee, noted in a statement.

Among the members of the [technical committee](#) is Jonathan Boule of CoreOS. Boule is the founder of a [container runtime](#) that competes with the Docker Engine runtime. [Google Ventures](#) is an investor on CoreOs.

Also represented on the technical panel are senior IT executives from Cisco Systems (NASDAQ: CSCO), Joyent and WeaveWorks. Benjamin Hindman, the co-creator of Apache Mesos and the founder of datacenter operating system vendor Mesosphere, also serves on the technical panel.

Google promotes Kubernetes as the result of more than a decade of experience running production workloads. The search giant's own orchestration platform runs billions of applications containers a week.

Among the cloud foundation's members is investment banker [Goldman Sachs](#) (NYSE: GS), which has played a key role in brokering container standards.

Observers could be forgiven if confused about who is currently doing what to advance container technologies. Along with the Cloud Native Computing Foundation, another group called the [Open Container Initiative](#) launched last year is developing a standard runtime and a container image spec for Linux-based containers. It is also refereeing technical disputes as the IT industry coalesces around standardized workloads running mostly in Docker containers.

The Cloud Native Computing Foundation said it is working with the Open Container Initiative to accelerate the adoption of containers and other micro-services along with cloud-based apps. Organizers said the foundation's technical panel is expected to review and accept other cloud-based technologies in the coming months. It also will establish a 1,000-node cluster to validate cloud-native apps and infrastructure running at scale.

As pressure builds to nail down container standards needed to scale the technology, Docker released scalability testing results last week for its Swarm orchestration platform. The San Francisco-based company claimed Swarm performed five times faster than Kubernetes at scale during third party testing. Specifically, Docker asserted that Kubernetes takes five times longer to spin up a new container.

In a survey of more than 500 developers and other cloud services specialists, Docker further claimed "a three-

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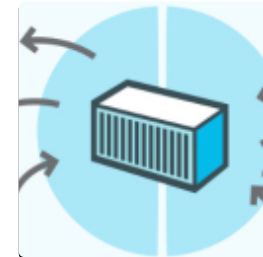
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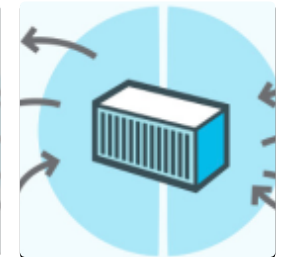
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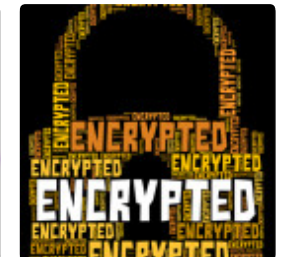
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way orchestration race between Docker Swarm, Google Kubernetes, and Amazon [NASDAQ:AMZN] EC2 Container Service." Of the three, "Swarm is the only cloud agnostic orchestrator," Docker asserted.

Docker executives acknowledge "industry heat" over container orchestration, but noted recently in releasing a "container-as-a-service" model that managing containers is "one part of a total" platform.

For its part, the Cloud Native Computing Foundation said it would seek to "harmonize emerging technologies" while promoting application development and operations based on micro-services used to deliver application containers.

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