SKILL SHare.

Skillshare Gains Flexibility and Custom Workflows by

Switching to Codefresh

codefresh

"Codefresh gives us the flexibility and extensibility to meet our current requirements and anything else we come up with, in the future."

By customizing Codefresh to its own needs, Skillshare got just the CD platform it was looking for.

Skillshare is an online learning community where millions come together to take the next step on their creative journey. More than 12 million students love Skillshare for discovering inspiration, learning new skills, and putting their talents to work in ways they care about. As the world's largest online platform for creativity, Skillshare offers 30,000 plus classes in topics like design, illustration, photography, animation, and more.

COMPANY

Skillshare – an online learning platform offering thousands of classes.

TECHNOLOGIES

AWS, Kubernetes, PHP & Node.JS applications, custom chatbots, migration from Harness.

The technological backdrop

The tech stack that powers Skillshare's seven services is fairly standard – AWS and Kubernetes, with PHP and Node.js applications and ChatOps via Slack to automate and integrate its deployment process with its continuous delivery tool.

The challenge

As the subscription to its existing CD platform came up for renewal, Skillshare took the opportunity to check what else was available on the market. Impressed with an initial demo by Codefresh, the company moved forward with a proof of concept (POC).

Two sets of POC success criteria were defined.

- The first set related to features that its existing tool already offered – anything missed here would be a deal breaker. These included simple rolling deploys with automated rollbacks, Kubernetes job-based preflight checks and smoke tests, a secrets management solution with secrets operations for helm charts, happy and failure path in pipelines, connecting to Kubernetes clusters/ AWS accounts, links to Slack notifications, and multi repo/service pipelines.

- The second related to additional functionalities Skillshare didn't have and hadn't been able to implement with its previous CD tool. These included managing its pipeline as automated infrastructure-as-code, triggering pipelines from GitHub Deployment web hook events, automated canary analysis using DataDog metrics, blue/green deployment for A/B testing, and conditional deployment strategies.

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"In switching CD providers, the core issue we were looking to fix was that we couldn't extend the product in any way," says Adam Hawkins, Site Reliability Engineer at Skillshare. "Every application and code base is different, and not everything can be redesigned to fit the model of the way a CD product thinks it should work. With our previous CD vendor, we were limited to using the steps it provided us, with absolutely no flexibility."

The solution

Flexibility and extensibility became the crucial selling point for Skillshare.

"What impressed me the most about Codefresh is that, due to its architecture, it can effectively do anything you can think of," says Adam. "Whether in testing or deploying software, whether we need custom Docker images or specific command templates – these requirements simply become configurable steps in a workflow, and we can structure that workflow any way we want. Being able to build custom steps into the Codefresh platform was a total game changer!"

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Other Codefresh features that impressed Adam and his team included the ability to map or trigger multiple repositories to one pipeline instead of creating separate tests in each repository, the ability to create as many pipelines as needed, and the superior Docker image layer caching capacity. Additionally – the team also was very impressed with the user experience.

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"I like going into Codefresh – it looks better and is overall much easier to use and work with," says Adam. "The developer experience is far better than what we had before, and the pipeline debug feature gives us faster feedback when figuring out what's working or not, making my job much, much easier!"

The result

Following successful completion of the three-week POC and into implementation of Codefresh, the Skillshare team continued to build its own steps to achieve the desired outcomes, effectively leveraging Codefresh's flexibility to create a 99% customized CD solution that meets all its needs. As the platform becomes an increasingly essential part of Skillshare's engineering processes, the company is considering expanding its use of Codefresh to include CI as well.

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Codefresh is a next-generation enterprise software delivery platform for Cloud-native applications. We help you automate your GitOps workflows and advanced deployments such as Canary and Blue/Green and are the premium Argo enterprise solution. DevOps teams from GoodRx, Monday.com, Deloitte, and more depend on Codefresh to deploy their software in a safe and scalable manner. Codefresh can support any pipeline end-to-end.

Learn more at codefresh.io