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Quali aims to deliver automated infrastructure with Torque control plane

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Introduction

Momentum in the industry continues to shift to tooling that resolves the complexity of Kubernetes for developers and IT operations teams. Quali is accelerating its transition to infrastructure-as-a-service automation and application orchestration with additions to its Torque environment control plane.

The Take

Torque turns existing infrastructure-as-code and Kubernetes manifests into repeatable blueprints that configure resource environments, with the aim of speeding up delivery while increasing governance and control. It supports DevOps and ITOps across all aspects of the software development life cycle. Whereas Quali's foundational CloudShell product operates within on-premises environments, Torque extends into cloud as a control plane (SaaS or on-premises), with the goal of enabling users to control infrastructure so they can speed development and scale applications while managing costs and providing governance.

Details

Torque automatically discovers existing infrastructure assets such as Terraform or Helm Charts. Blueprint designers combine these elements, along with all of the other resources necessary for a complete application environment (e.g., connected services, databases, storage), and define the relevant governance and security protocols for each blueprint (such as who has access and how long the blueprint can be deployed). Developers then access these blueprints to spin up environments they need, when they need them, either through the Torque interface or existing interactive development environment tools.

Since we last met with Quali, the company has enhanced Torque's security and business workflow capabilities by automatically invoking security scans and health checks prior to deploying infrastructure — the vendor claims that this reduces risks that could result from misconfigurations. It now also supports existing Open Policy Agent policies, which are auto-discovered and auto-validated to ensure alignment with OPA and Torque requirements. Additionally, Torque automates approvals tied to OPA-based policies by defining rules-based thresholds for automatic approval and denial of deployments.

Infrastructure provisioning now can be integrated with workflows to support business outcomes by scheduling Torque or link actions to predefined events to better control environment health and usability. Moreover, Quali has introduced policy-based triggers for cost controls, as well as automated startup, shutdown and pausing of environments. Torque now also provides Helm drift detection, "bring your own" Terraform policies, automatic cost collection for Kubernetes hosts, an environment view of all blueprint elements, and audit log integrations with third-party audit tools such as the ELK elastic search service. The company notes that migration, modernization and new application development are all use cases and that customers typically have a mix of these activities in place.

Headquartered in Tel Aviv and Austin, Texas, Quali landed a $54 million series C funding round at the end of 2020 led by Greenfield Partners and JVP. Total funding is $102.9 million. It says sales of both products are increasing by more than 40% and that in big engagements half of the deal value comes from each of CloudShell and Torque. Quali targets organizations with scaling challenges (mostly midmarket), and claims over 100 key customers.

The vendor counts 20-plus global partners, including AWS, Microsoft Corp. (Azure), Google and Oracle Corp. as customers. It does 50% of sales via the channel and 50% direct, and is looking to grow its business with systems integrators. Revenue from professional services generates less than 10% of sales. Revenue from CloudShell is priced by the number of concurrent environments being operated; Torque by the number of users. Quali sees average selling prices in the $150,000 range. Recent wins include Interas Labs, which deploys Torque as an orchestration and control plane tool to offer its clients infrastructure provisioning.

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