

Hybrid cloud strategy to be a major area of focus

Companies predict that more than half of their applications and services will be deployed on the hybrid cloud within an average of three years, according to global survey results released by Avanade, a global business technology solutions, cloud and managed services provider.



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The study of 1000 global C-level executives, business unit leaders and IT decision makers in 21 countries, including South Africa, also shows that while businesses of all sizes in all geographies view hybrid cloud adoption as a priority, there is much confusion about what exactly hybrid cloud means and what is required to prepare an organisation for hybrid cloud implementation.

Despite concerns - real or perceived - about security and privacy, there is a clear tipping point for hybrid cloud adoption on the horizon. Avanade's study shows that companies around the world expect hybrid cloud solutions to give them an edge over competitors in the field. Interestingly, with IT spending decisions continuing to move outside of the traditional IT department, C-level executives are the most optimistic about the value of hybrid cloud solutions, and the most motivated to adopt them. Indeed, they are 32% more likely than IT leaders to advocate immediately moving critical applications including data and analytics, e-commerce applications and customer-facing services to hybrid cloud environments.

However, the research also shows that businesses have not yet taken one important step toward realising this competitive edge: most have not developed a strategy to use hybrid cloud as an integrated part of their corporate IT infrastructure.

Survey highlights

- Companies are investing in hybrid cloud solutions at a faster rate than private or public cloud, with 69% of companies agreeing that implementing a hybrid cloud strategy will be one of their biggest areas of focus in 2015;
- Despite clear agreement that hybrid cloud adoption should be a priority, 58% of companies currently do not have a hybrid cloud strategy in place;
- Few companies fully understand hybrid cloud's potential. Just 16% of respondents are able to identify the full range of benefits afforded by hybrid solutions. These benefits include the ability to integrate private and public clouds, place workloads in the cloud type of best fit, share workload on multiple public clouds and scale up or down as needed;
- Companies overwhelmingly agree that hybrid cloud will enable their organisations to focus on issues which are core to the growth of the business (74%). For the C-suite, this is even truer with 76% in agreement;
- Most companies are not yet developing applications to truly leverage cloud-native capabilities. Seventy-one percent of companies are simply using the cloud infrastructure to run existing applications, which means that they are not realising the speed, scale and efficiency that cloud solutions offer;
- 53% of companies identified security and privacy issues - real and perceived - as top concerns to hybrid cloud implementation, yet 60% admit that public cloud solutions are more secure than they were three years ago; and
- In spite of their concerns, organisations are optimistic about the promise of hybrid cloud and its ability to differentiate them from the competition.

Companies of all sizes and in all geographies expect that more than half of their applications and services will be deployed

on in a hybrid cloud environment within an average of three years.

"Hybrid cloud gives companies the speed and flexibility they need to transform into digital businesses and enables them to focus on driving growth and outperforming their competitors," said Peter Drube, Country Manager of Avanade South Africa. "Budgets and control may be shifting away from IT, but hybrid cloud solutions represent an opportunity for IT to align itself with C-suite priorities, delivering strategic value to the business in a secure and properly governed manner."

The research supports the findings of Accenture's High Performers in IT: Defined by Digital report, as well as the Gartner 2014 Cloud Survey, which indicates that 72% of companies will be pursuing a hybrid cloud strategy by 2015.

With improvements in security and privacy over the last three years, Avanade believes that hybrid cloud has moved from hype to reality and is a competitive advantage that better positions organisations to focus on issues that are core to the growth of the business. Additionally, Avanade contends that hybrid cloud will give IT departments the tools, capabilities and control they need to stay relevant to the business in the future.

Find out more about Avanade's perspective on hybrid cloud at www.avanade.com/hybridcloud

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