

# Will we really only have three clouds?

Currently, there are three large global cloud solution providers: Amazon AWS, Microsoft Azure and Google Cloud.



Peter Scheffel, CTO at BBD

“Assuming two more providers invest heavily into this market, we may have five large cloud providers,” explains Peter Scheffel, CTO for software development company, BBD.

“This makes me think of ex IBM president, Thomas Watson, who famously said ‘I think there is a world market for maybe five computers’, referring to how many mainframes would be required to cater for the world’s processing needs back in the 1940s.”

IDC statistics quoted in a recent *Forbes* article, *Four Trends in Cloud Computing CIOs Should Prepare For In 2019*, indicate how by 2020, cloud spend will be nearly 60% of IT infrastructure and between 60-70% of all software, services and technology spend. “CIOs need to be considering how to remain competitive in the ever-changing tech environment through cloud computing.”

Scheffel asks, slightly tongue-in-cheek, “whether the clouds of today are not just the new mainframe and do we not properly understand what the computing demand of the future will be?”

For far too long now anyone working in a business has been told to adopt the cloud. But as Scheffel elaborates, “the truth is that there is not just one cloud and that as a business, you will not drop your own infrastructure. Neither will you adopt just one cloud provider, you will utilise more than one cloud provider.”



## Report unveils predictions for the future of multi-cloud

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Currently, the big three cloud providers are extremely eager for businesses to use what they have built. “They want your data and your dedication. However, it is highly likely that businesses are already invested in more than one cloud provider. Let’s look at an example - imagine you are the CIO for a large business. You might already have a small digitisation project running in AWS, that scales well when there are spikes in user numbers. However, to get away from your on-premise email server you chose to move to Office 365.”

### A multi-cloud hybrid business infrastructure

Hence, Scheffel advises, your business is now a multi-cloud hybrid business infrastructure of the future. “You have invested in two cloud providers, with no clear path to move away from your existing on-premise infrastructure. Coupled with this is the fact that you probably forgot to read the small print that explains how ‘cloud can be more expensive than on-premise deployments if you use the equipment all day and every day’. Does this example ring true with you?”

Right now, there are plenty of infrastructure-as-a-service (IaaS), platform-as-a-service (PaaS) and software-as-a-service (SaaS) providers, all providing services built on the three big cloud providers. In the future, some of the other larger players may tire of using the big three cloud providers and start to invest in their own infrastructure. This would result in more underlying clouds and more underlying cloud providers. The same is true of the private cloud and the private cloud tools. These are also ripe for improvement.

Important to note, says Scheffel, is how *Forbes* predicts that by 2020 83% of enterprise workloads will be in the cloud, with 41% of these on public cloud platforms and 22% running on hybrid cloud platforms.

While cloud infrastructure is currently being provided for by the three large players, according to Scheffel, the future is definitely “cloudy”, with a second wave of cloud providers already making headway. These include key players such as Alibaba, IBM and Oracle. Each are well positioned to challenge the current three. This will make for even more complex environments for businesses to manage.

“Keep in mind the cloud is not going to be your answer to simplifying your infrastructure, it is the start of a really complex multi-cloud infrastructure environment for the business of the future,” concludes Scheffel.

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