



Top 10 Facts: Hybrid IT

A hybrid infrastructure—bringing together on-premises and cloud capabilities—is a strategy many enterprises are embracing in order to maximize the flexibility and performance they need from their IT operations. Here are ten things to think about as you consider a hybrid strategy for your organisation.

Cloud IT

We have invested in our very own fully secure and diverse Cloud infrastructure in recognition of the growing demand of our customers who wish to have additional flexibility in their core business strategy.

We can provide you with your very own private Cloud, a space in our tenanted environment or simply supply you with rack space to host your own servers.

On-Premise IT

One of the most significant investments an organisation can make is in its IT infrastructure. Today IT systems are the backbone of almost all business processes and communications. Whether your business relies upon IT for performance measurement, finance and accounting or manufacturing processes, streamlined systems can ensure secure and robust monitoring and control of critical business processes.

1

Hybrid Cloud: the time is now

Unless your IT is 100% physical infrastructure or 100 percent cloud, you are a “hybrid.” And if that is not the case now, it likely will be in the future. By 2017, the research firm Gartner predicts that half of mainstream enterprises will have a hybrid infrastructure. The growing popularity of the hybrid approach shows how smart enterprises are not following an “either or” approach.

A hybrid strategy is less a waystation on the way to the cloud (or away from traditional IT) and more a way to maximize the benefits that both have to offer: the control and easy access of an on premises/private cloud solution with the convenience, scalability, performance, cost, mobility, and collaboration benefits of a solution managed by a public, multitenant cloud provider such as Silver Lining.

2

Taking “Shadow IT” out of the shadows

Today, more and more enterprises are seeing their employees supplementing their traditional reliance on internal IT resources by taking advantage of public cloud services. Enterprise IT departments typically see this as a troubling trend that raises important issues of security and control. But it’s also evidence of the pervasiveness of the hybrid cloud and a starting point for IT to position itself as an internal service provider.

3

The right resource for the right workload

A hybrid approach gives you the option of scaling resources for each workload and choosing the best application for the job. Applications can run on whichever platform is best suited for that workload: a highly dynamic app with unknown spikes may be best supported in the public cloud while a performance-intensive application may be better off in a private cloud. Data can be located where regulatory or security requirements dictate.

4

Varying levels of Hybrid sophistication

A hybrid approach can have different levels of sophistication: deep integration between cloud and private/on-premise environments or more simplistic, static, point-to-point connections designed to serve a particular functional need. For example, many organizations have connected a software-as-a-service expense-tracking applications to automatically link to their back-office billing system. In effect, that puts them squarely at the centre of a hybrid approach.

5

ROI and agility

Any enterprise that has virtualized IT components within its four walls has essentially created its own internal private cloud and is likely to have achieved significant reductions in capital and operational expenses.

A hybrid cloud can be a logical extension of this strategy and—with the appropriate investment in metrics, self-service software, automation features and other capabilities—a way to achieve significant advances in enterprise agility.

6

Start small

Gartner recommends starting a hybrid project with a small pilot, getting comfortable with the ins and outs of the hybrid model, then rolling it out further across the organization.

Keep scalability in mind right from the start: while the pilot project may be small in scope, the infrastructure deployed should be ready for growth and capable of delivering an ROI within a defined time frame.

7

Test and run

A popular use case for a hybrid strategy involves developing and testing new applications in the cloud and then moving them back into the on-premises or private production environment. New applications and services can be quickly prototyped in cloud environments and then rapidly deployed and measured for success.

The cloud can be relied on for fast, on-demand capacity without having to build an in-house IT environment. Once the applications are ready for prime time, the cloud-based development environment can be ratcheted back.

8

Management

The success of any hybrid approach is going to rest to a great degree on the infrastructure management that is put in place: control of both the public cloud and private assets from a single administrative console using a unified set of security, user, and application policies.

9

Look at your network

A hybrid strategy requires a close look at your enterprise network for bandwidth and scalability. With a hybrid strategy, companies will be relying on their network to ship large amounts of data back and forth (as opposed to more episodic dumps and updates), putting far more demand on the network than previously.

10

Culture shift

Ultimately, some of the biggest challenges in moving to a hybrid infrastructure are less about the technology and more about management.

Most IT departments have a culture centred around control and technical expertise and now have to accommodate a more collaborative, service-oriented approach for the provision of automated, self-service IT capabilities via the cloud.

For more fun facts, check out our Cloud infographics at www.everycloud.eu

