

# Follow the private cloud for secure business operations

 By [Roelof Louw](#)

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Businesses looking for a secure virtual environment will only consider the private cloud in the near future, says research firm IDC. According to the researcher, the private cloud is the closest to a virtualised infrastructure which offers better controls.

"The decision in the next year or two will only be about the private cloud. The bigger the company, the more they will consider the private cloud. The enterprise cloud is locked down and totally managed."

The lack of privacy in the public cloud is a significant issue IDC argues, pointing out that a lot of hacking incidents happen in the consumer cloud. Businesses looking for a secure virtual environment will only consider the private cloud in the near future says the analyst firm.

## Character plusses

Putting the above into a practical context, the two differentiating characteristics of the private cloud is its delivery of tight security controls and service level agreement (SLAs). It is what sets it apart from the public and hybrid cloud.

It is also these characteristics that should form an important role in any organisation's decision-making when deciding on what cloud route to follow particularly when it comes to industry regulated compliance. Your cloud provider should therefore be able to offer security as part of its solution proposition.

An effective private cloud offering will offer the all the controls needed to abide to auditory and governance requirements - a major plus point for most organisations.

## The small guys too

However, the private cloud is not exclusive to large organisations. It is also a feasible solution for smaller organisations which operate in highly regulated environments.

For one, it is often costly to establish an environment that meets compliance and regulation controls. The private cloud mitigates this investment as it already abides to industry standards and certifications and offers this as part of the shared infrastructure.

In addition, most cloud service provider offer packages that are tailored to smaller organisation needs.

Quite obviously, the decision for a smaller organisation to opt for the private cloud is dictated by its industry. For companies which operate in relatively unregulated environments the public cloud might still be a better option.

It should, however, be noted that whilst the private cloud mitigates the establishment of a costly infrastructure, most private cloud implementations require start up and run down payments in order to establish the service.

It is still well worth the investment when comparing the infrastructure costs and maintenance associated with owning your own physical data centre and resultant certifications and adherence to regulatory compliance.

## Security issues

It would be arrogant to declare any infrastructure or service bullet proof against security onslaughts. The private cloud is no different.

Saying this, the private cloud offers storage and business continuity that meets all the necessary security controls and more. It is the key differentiator offered by most private cloud providers and should be a deciding factor when opting for the service.

The one flaw therefore in any private cloud service's armour is the Web - it is the one constant faced by IT services and its customers across the globe.

This is why it is so important to partner with cloud provider that invests heavily in security, staying on top of threats and thwarting onslaughts as they arise.

Security should also not be seen as merely as protection but also an 'essential' in developing and growing a business. It is an important enabler of successful business operations and also allows organisations to conduct business with their clients and supply chain in a secure manner.

The private cloud is therefore not only safer but an important cog in the business engine room. It makes sense, improves company agility and saves on costs. It is the future.

## ABOUT ROELOF LOUW

Roelof Louw is cloud expert at T-Systems in South Africa.

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