BIZCOMMUNITY

Three signs that say "Let's do analytics in the cloud"

By Paul Vermaak

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Meteorologists have been doing it for ages; looking at the clouds to analyse current weather patterns as basis to predict short, medium and longer term weather expectations. And like the rain brought by the clouds, information is an equally important and strategic asset to everyone.

Therefore information needs to be managed in such a way that value can be derived from all angles and in a timeous manner. The cloud itself provides an incredibly useful platform for doing just that, especially since it allows us to collaborate better, bring data from vast amounts of different sources together, provide scalability and ultimately allow organisations to focus on what they do best: running their business.

So if moving systems and data into the cloud is such an obvious choice, why hasn't everyone done it? Or are we the only ones still left doing everything on-premise?

Let's be brutally honest: Many organisations have made serious investments in their current systems, serving their existing information needs very well. The skills to adapt and maintain these systems are well entrenched within each organisation and collectively they add enormous economic and strategic value.

On the other side, technology vendors are investing heavily in providing cloud applications and infrastructure as this is mostly where the real innovation is happening. Following the main analysts' views, it's no secret that this is where the market is headed.

While the decision to move a certain application into the cloud can be a no-brainer, moving analytic capabilities into the cloud is not as straight forward. As mentioned before, current systems generally meet today's analytics needs, while data sensitivity leads to organisations being cautious about storing data in the cloud. At the same time many business leaders realise that cloud based analytics, where analytical data is modelled once and used for a variety of analytical applications like business intelligence, planning, running predictions and managing risk, has the potential to transform the way in which business decisions are being made.

Many IT leaders are therefore asking the question: How do we dip the proverbial "toe in the water" and get started with cloud analytics? What are the top three use cases for organisations with mature on-premise analytics capabilities for deploying analytics in the cloud?

Extranet analytics

When it comes to providing analytics to stakeholders residing outside the organisation, cloud-based analytics delivers rich insights without the costs to implement and maintain an extranet. Security becomes much less of a concern since security is built into the solution itself and the data and application can be separated entirely from the rest of the organisational backbone.

Line of business analytics for cloud applications

As more and more applications are shifted into the cloud, it makes sense to use cloud based analytics against these applications for insight. Additional to this, it's highly advantageous to consolidate information from various cloud applications into a single view, while enriching it further with information from local systems.

Users are able to experience the same level of mobility and collaboration within the analytics piece as they would from the current cloud based line of business application perspective.

Complementing a current on-premise analytics deployment

Cloud-based analytics can add value to organisations with mature on-premise deployments by making pieces of analytics available to a broader audience, for example where users are located in a different country or where high levels of mobility are required. Traditional solutions for business intelligence, enterprise performance planning, predictive analytics and governance, risk and compliance usually consist of a number of separate solutions and cloud analytics provide a single application, being a more practical and preferred option to many.

Another practical and highly valued example is the digitalisation of the boardroom, where all board material is made available digitally across locations with deep drill down capabilities, against real-time data where available. Combined with in-memory technology this enables businesses to be "run live" where data is updated in real time, planning can be done and predictions made as events occur. Every meteorologist's dream!

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Paul Vermaak, business intelligence and predictive analysis guru at SAP Africa.