

The dynamic cloud has arrived

A recent report by research authority, Gartner, cites that cloud computing is transforming the market as the technology service meets the needs of today's key business requirements: flexibility, scalability and agility, which in turn leads to quicker time-to-market and a competitive edge.

By [Roelof Louw](#) 22 Oct 2010



However, as cloud computing matures, it is important to find a partner that can offer a 'dynamic service' or 'pay-per-use' model in order to leverage the benefits further from a cost perspective.

This requirement is particularly evident in a competitive economy where companies have to readily deal with the challenges of emerging competitors and resultant business models - and dynamic cloud computing offers a means to react to these changes and quickly scale up or even down depending on market demand and changes.

Why now?

Although cloud computing has been available for some time - particularly the public cloud driven to mass adoption of Infrastructure as a Service (IaaS) offerings by the likes of Google and Amazon - it is the maturity of the technology that is available through the private cloud that now enables organisations to benefit from the promised business advantages and cost savings.

Cloud computing meets current business needs - that's the bottom line. It offers the above-mentioned flexibility, agility and speed-to-market organisations require; real solutions that tangibly makes a difference and not only look good on paper. We see the results on a daily basis - both service providers and their clients are experiencing the benefits of the cloud.

The reality is the world is changing, expectations are higher and the pace is quickening. Additionally, organisations have to deal with the pressures of meeting governance requirements and shortened business cycles. You have to be flexible, adding service, ensuring that demands are met quicker than before while still making a decent amount of money.

In addition, whilst the most thorough strategic boardroom sessions can provide some answers it is ultimately up to information technology and your ability to choose the right partner that will drive these strategies to fruition.

The right partner now

This all said, how do you as an organisation, choose the right cloud computing partner? For one, it is important to assess your needs - do you only require a basic service such as e-mail or do you want to take to next level? Therefore services that are business critical require rock-solid SLAs (service level agreements). In addition, can your service provider offer certain governance guarantees and ensure that they meet your industry's regulatory and compliance requirements?

This assessment will effectively determine whether an organisation is more suited to the public or private cloud model. If you require a strategic, business-critical solution, it is imperative that your service provider choice) is willing to share some of the risk.

Moreover, when embarking on a more complex cloud computing strategy, automated provisioning, and pay-per-use services are a must - and this equates to a dynamic services offering. In the case of the public cloud you are basically just buying a chunk of processing that meets your storage or data protection needs. With a private service you need those guarantees that the provisioning is automated - services can be added dynamically - and the reassurance that you are on top of your spending.

Are they compliant?

Dynamic services offer automated provisioning and a pay-per-use model that enables organisations to add their services as the need arises; and effectively transforms fixed costs into variable costs and takes flexibility to a new level.

Also, when looking at governance, one needs to consider whether your service providers offer compliance to key regulations and standards such as the Information Technology Infrastructure Library (ITIL, ISO 20000), SOX (Sarbanes-Oxley), King III, ISO 9001 - 2008 and ISO Environmental Management regulations.

There is no doubt that the network is the most important aspect of a cloud service offering- a stable network will ensure that you do receive the services for which you signed up. It is preferable that your service provider is also MPLS (Multi-Protocol Label Switching) provider that can back up its cloud services with strong and reliable networking capability.

Lastly, dynamic data centres also offer an additional element to a service provider's offering, providing key areas of service: workload mobilisation, driven by the virtual cloud platform; data mobilisation enabled by usage per capacity offered irrespective of the hardware and software; and data centre provisioning which offers interconnected data centres that provide high-availability and disaster recovery gains.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Roelof Louw is team leader ITO pre-sales, at T-Systems SA ([www.t-systems.co.za]), part of the Deutsche Telekom group of companies, which allows the company to combine information technology and telecommunications into replicable, cost-effective solutions. T-Systems is one of Europe's largest IT and Telecommunications service provider with a turnover of in excess of €9 billion (about R82 billion) per annum.

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