

CLOUD COMPUTING

Issue 3

December 2014

WORLD



Staying ahead of
cyber criminals
in the cloud

The rise of the superuser:
a new problem facing IT departments

 Redefining the hybrid cloud

 Best practices in outsourcing

 Cyber insurance risks



ARE DATA CENTRES FLOATING AWAY TO THE CLOUD?

With the uptake of cloud computing showing exponential growth a question regularly raised is how will the evolution in the cloud product affect the demand landscape for traditional data centre services? If you want to understand this changing market speak to the CBRE Data Centre Solutions team. With the largest coverage and experience – having transacted in 189 cities around the world and most recently saving one major cloud client over £19 million in 15 years, **why would you not?**

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Cloud Computing World stories, news, know-how?
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The security of your data is in your hands.

Hello everyone,

Welcome to a new issue of Cloud Computing World. As cloud-based computing becomes more and more popular, there's a new sense of the importance of security for your data. Along with a realisation that cloud computing comes with risks. 'Cyber thieves' are constantly on the lookout for intellectual property, financial records, or whatever valuable data they can get their hands on, but what do they do with all this data? Do they use it to steal money? Do they sell it on to a third party? What's becoming increasingly clear is that the security of your data is in your hands, and that's become a real focal point in the making of this issue.

As we look forward to 2015, the key to survival is to do all you can to protect your business data. This includes your network, computers and mobile communication devices. Listen to what your employees are saying and they can help solve some of these challenges for you, but it's important to remember that security is only one half of protecting your business, as Justin Tivey and Fiona Pearson discuss on page 40.

While the advantages of cloud computing span way beyond personal users being able to upload photos or back up their smartphones, as the industry expands and the cloud provides more benefits to the individual, the risks for business undoubtedly become more significant. The exponential increase in data volumes on a network and the management of this data is becoming a widespread problem for IT managers throughout the industry. Fast data recovery and a proper backup strategy for your business is vital - security is great for keeping cyber criminals at bay, but what if your data is corrupted or lost? How can you recover it? Dr Wieland Alge weighs up which backup solution best suits your company's requirements on page 24. What's clear is that making the right decisions when it comes to your data storage today can save you trouble in the future. Enjoy the issue.

Best Regards, Nick Wells, Editor, Cloud Computing World

CCW NEWS

All the key news in the world of cloud. Please don't forget to check out our Web site at www.cloudcomputingworld.co.uk for a regular weekly feed of relevant news for cloud professionals.

Accenture and Microsoft have expanded their long-standing strategic alliance with the introduction of the Accenture Hybrid Cloud Solution for Microsoft Azure, a powerful hybrid cloud platform designed to bring new capabilities, economics and innovation to the enterprise. Working with Avanade, the companies are co-funding and co-engineering this platform with new hybrid technologies and services to help enterprises build and manage cloud infrastructure and applications. "Our expanded relationship with Microsoft represents a game-changing proposition that addresses the biggest concerns and complexities our clients face as they look to leverage the cloud," said Pierre Nanterme, chairman and CEO, Accenture. "With new demands being placed on IT departments every day, enterprises need to smartly connect their infrastructure, software applications, data and operations capabilities in order to become agile, intelligent, digital businesses. This unique collaboration with Microsoft and Avanade is one of Accenture's most strategic and important initiatives for driving enterprise-wide cloud adoption."

This agreement is the most far-reaching collaboration between Accenture and

Microsoft since the 2000 joint venture to launch Avanade, a leading Microsoft solution provider with more than 22,000 employees and more than US \$2 billion in global sales. "Enterprises around the globe are looking for the right platforms and partners to help them transform and thrive in the mobile-first, cloud-first world," said Satya Nadella, CEO, Microsoft Corp. "The Microsoft Cloud, combined with Accenture's industry knowledge and implementation expertise, accelerates our customers' cloud adoption and unlocks new benefits, including powerful applications, data-driven insights and increased productivity."

www.accenture.com

Digital Realty Trust, a leading global provider of data centre and colocation solutions, has appointed A. William Stein as Chief Executive Officer. Mr. Stein has been serving as interim CEO since March 2014 and has served as the company's Chief Financial Officer since July 2004, as

well as its Chief Investment Officer from 2004 until April 2014. On behalf of Digital Realty's board, Chairman Dennis Singleton stated, "I am pleased to announce that after a thorough and deliberative search process, the board has unanimously chosen Bill Stein as our next CEO. Bill meets all the criteria we looked for in a new CEO, bringing a deep understanding of data centers, real estate and the broader technology landscape based on his 30 years of financial, investment and operational experience. As interim CEO, Bill has created impressive momentum in the business and made great strides in strengthening Digital Realty's operating and financial performance."

www.digitalrealty.co.uk

Iomart Group PLC, one of Europe's leading cloud companies, announced a 28% growth in revenue in its consolidated half yearly results for the period ended 30 September 2014. Operational highlights included the strengthening and further development of the company's relationships with the world's leading technology vendors and investment in creating a cloud infrastructure and backup operation in the United States of America. Iomart has invested in datacentre space and infrastructure on the East and West coasts of the United States and through its relationship with Tier 1 storage hardware solutions vendor EMC, the group has developed a new revenue stream managing backup and compute systems for customers in the US from its Network Operations Centre (NOC) in Glasgow, Scotland. Angus MacSween, CEO of Iomart, said: "The market opportunity remains both large and long-term and, in a fast moving and ever evolving industry, we have the skills and experience to continue to perform well. Our main focus going forward is on continuing to deepen our relationships with the large Tier 1 vendors. Their growing trust in our abilities gives me great confidence for Iomart's prospects in the years ahead."

www.iomart.com

Baker Tilly, one of the UK's leading accounting and business advisory firms, is to expand its technology

consulting practice after becoming an official Microsoft Dynamics partner. The agreement allows Baker Tilly to sell user licences and provide implementation and enhancement services for the Microsoft Dynamics line of business software products. More than 220,000 companies worldwide currently use Microsoft Dynamics, a suite of Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) products designed to support key business functions. It can be delivered either via cloud computing or on-premises. The addition of Microsoft Dynamics services to Baker Tilly's technology consulting team will allow the accountancy group to broaden its IT advisory offering to larger, mid-market companies across a number of industry sectors. "Partnering with Microsoft for Dynamics services further cements our technology consulting capability, significantly enhancing our advisory services to businesses in the mid-market sector," said David Gwilliam, Baker Tilly Chief Operating Officer. "We look forward to helping our clients make their businesses more efficient with Microsoft Dynamics, and we are excited by the growth prospects this offers our business."

www.bakertilly.co.uk

Siemens Building Technologies has introduced the latest version of Datacenter Clarity LC, an advanced software solution that enables data centre owners and managers to monitor and manage their data centre infrastructure with greater accuracy and efficiency. The new platform monitors energy and building management, physical security, fire safety, power and communications, racks, servers and data storage systems, as well as switches and routers. Importantly it bridges the gap between IT and facilities processes, enabling both parties to manage assets and workflows. The outcome is a complete, real-time dashboard that can represent assets in a state-of-the-art 3D model and deliver a fully automated, smart data centre environment, with resultant cost and energy savings and improvements in manpower resources.

w3.siemens.co.uk

IS THE BESPOKE CLOUD COMMUNITY DRIVING COLOCATION



Andrew Jay investigates the full effect of cloud growth...

By Andrew Jay, Head of Data Centre Solutions, EMEA

DEMAND?

Introduction

A question regularly raised both within the data centre industry and by external commentators is how will growth in the cloud product affect the demand landscape for traditional data centre services? Can we expect a wholesale move away from the colocation model? If so, what will be the fate of the major colocation data centre hubs that have built up over the past fifteen years?

The Challenge

Our investigation began with just a few simple web searches. On the face of it the evidence suggests that a pull away for the core locations led by organisations like Microsoft, Google, Facebook and Amazon is already underway. In the past six years these four corporations have built 140MW of new IT capacity outside the traditional core data centre markets to accommodate their rapidly growing cloud services. A deployment of this size is equivalent to the entire current colocation supply in Amsterdam, Europe's third largest market. It's undeniable therefore that judged on the scale of new IT capacity deployed by these global technology giants, a considerable amount of IT outsourcing business is being satisfied away from Europe's major markets.

But studies pertaining to the colocation markets of Europe have also continued to highlight strong market demand. Total take up across the five largest markets of Europe averages 70MW a year and this has remained unchanged by a sudden onset of cloud interest. In fact, the listed data centre companies often quote cloud as the origin of new business won and business that's being chased. So how does the cloud market differentiate to be able to fuel such growth in recognised and unfamiliar data centre locations?

The solution

Our investigations have found that the relationship between cloud and traditional data centres is much more complicated than many realise. The deployments by the global technology companies represent just a small part of the burgeoning cloud services market. Put simply, the services offered by this type of organisation are consumed on a



utility-type basis without the frills of bespoke-type architecture, latency considerations and customer services. This allows location flexibility in where the data centre is situated and takes advantage of favourable tax, lower power costs and green power environments.

But there is another side to cloud. This is the market demand that's reliant on abundant connectivity, is latency critical, requires a hands on approach to customers and a bespoke-type IT build. These considerations are particularly important to large corporate end users. For cloud providers looking to service this demand with a bespoke-type offering, a centrally located data centre set up is a prerequisite.

To test the theory that the bespoke cloud community is driving colocation demand we conducted an interrogation of all known data centre transactions from the past ten years. The findings reveal that between 2005 and 2007 cloud was barely recognised as a product, so examples of colocation take up attributed to this sector were limited. The shape of IT demand began to change in 2008. The financial crisis of that year served to place significant scrutiny on all types of corporate spending. Corporate IT strategy also began to recognise and utilise efficiency gaining tools such as virtualisation and cloud.

Consequently service providers began to increase their data centre capacity in anticipation of continued growth from the corporate customer and quickly became a source of interest for colocation companies. Between 2008 and 2010 colocation take up attributed to cloud accounted for 2% of the total. Relatively small, but the seeds of interest were being planted.

The outcome

Securing the signature of a cloud provider began to be viewed as a double win for colocation companies. Firstly they would have a tenant that would continue to take increments of space as

their business grew. But the expectation was also that the cloud companies would serve as a magnet to end users who would wish to connect to that service in the future.

By the end of 2010 the full effect of cloud growth had begun to take effect of colocation demand schedules. Between 2011 and 2013 colocation take up attributed to cloud service companies accounted for 38% of the total. This level is higher than that of the financial services companies at the peak of their deployment. A review of transactions completed within the first period of 2014 highlights the effect of cloud further. At the mid-year point cloud had accounted for more than 70% of colocation take up across the five major markets.

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Cloud growth is serving to develop new data centre demand in the core locations, both from end users and growing service providers.

“Securing the signature of a cloud provider began to be viewed as a double win for colocation companies.”

Conclusion

The initial investigation posed a scenario of cloud diluting demand for traditional colocation services. Many industry commentators still consider this to be the long-term outcome of the love affair with cloud infrastructure. However, our findings suggest the opposite is true. Cloud growth is actually serving to develop new data centre demand in the core locations, both from end users and growing service providers. In many cases the fundamental requirement of connecting to the major fibre routes overrides the location flexibility that service can command. Even the global technology companies have been required to acquire space in colocation facilities to obtain an on/off ramp to the networks. Our conclusion is that cloud is far from undermining colocation demand and more providing an underpinning force.



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THE FUTURE OF THE CLOUD



Nigel Beighton and John Engates predict their top trends for 2015...

Nigel Beighton, VP Technology, Rackspace

A struggling 2015 economy means less innovation

It will come as no surprise that 2015 will be a tougher year for businesses, but what that means is innovation and more 'risky' projects will be put on the backburner. Businesses will focus on driving efficiencies in order to knock down cost. Many will turn to public cloud and data consolidation as the monetary benefits are well known. Plus the cloud is now much more mature and able to cope with their demands.

Cloud choices abound

Businesses will be faced with more choices in the cloud than ever before. Do you go for cheap? Do you go for the most bells and whistles? And how do you know which one you'll need in five years time? 2015 sees the emergence of a multi-cloud world where you'll be able to string together cloud services from various providers based on your specific workloads. But with more choices comes more responsibility. Price isn't the only factor to consider. "Oh, it's cheap!" will no longer sell cloud. Cloud providers must differentiate themselves in stronger ways. Customers will gravitate toward the solutions that best address their specific business needs, whether that's based on support, a mix of bare metal and public cloud, private clouds or a myriad of other options. For example, Rackspace now offers three distinct types of private clouds – OpenStack, Microsoft and VMware – to give customers the choice of how they proceed with private cloud.

It's not the cost that counts

Along with the vast number of cloud choices, the focus on what drives the most value will be a key theme for 2015. Value isn't just about cost – it's also about the time and energy you spend managing and scaling your environment.



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So, while providers will become more agnostic, the importance of a trusted partner will grow stronger, whether you rely on that partner to manage your public or private cloud, automate your DevOps or keep tabs on your apps, like Google Apps for Work. Companies will have to ask themselves if they want to swell their payrolls hiring the resources needed to manage all of their tools and technologies. This will force companies to determine what matters most to them – focusing on IT management or on their business – and decide who they can partner with to deliver the most value.

OpenStack gets boring

In 2015, OpenStack will celebrate its fifth birthday. And that birthday will be boring. That’s a good thing. When a technology matures, it becomes less and less exciting. That’s where we see OpenStack going. Forrester research agrees. In a Quick Take from OpenStack Summit Paris, Forrester wrote: “At its Paris summit, the OpenStack Foundation celebrated the 10th release of the platform (code name: Juno). What stood out about this latest iteration and the progress of its ever-growing ecosystem of vendors, users, and service providers was the lack of excitement that comes with maturity. The Juno release addressed many challenges holding back enterprise adoption to this point and showed signs that 2015 may be the year its use shifts over from mostly test and development to mainstream production deployments.” We hope that maturity brings with it simplification – if we make OpenStack as easy as possible to use, manage and scale, more and more users will adopt it.

Bigger Data

For the past few years we’ve predicted a major upswing in the importance of big data and the tools and skills needed to manage it at scale. In 2015, that need for big data will get, well, bigger.

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The explosion of connected devices will create even more data to be extracted and analysed.

Enterprises are catching on to the big data wave, but they don’t have the skills needed in house to pull necessary value out of that data. The explosion of connected devices will further fuel the flames, creating more data that needs to be extracted and analysed. Data scientists will be a hot commodity, but much like the DevOps revolution of 2014, top data talent will be difficult to come by and expensive to hire. But big data won’t slow down – look for as many as five disruptive new big data technologies to emerge in the coming year. At the same time, current technologies like Hadoop will become even more ingrained into your business. To navigate the increasingly complex big data landscape, companies will outsource their big data needs to remove the burden and cost of doing big data internally. Enterprises will demand a shortcut.

IT Gets Sensored

Despite the Internet of Things being a good five to ten years away, next year we will see an explosion of companies investing in sensor technology. Companies will go sensor wild, from your light bulbs to your lawnmower, as they look to interact more with customers and get more data from them. Cars, smartwatches, tablets, smartphones – sensors will be embedded in EVERYTHING! (Well, maybe not every single thing, but most things). If we so choose, we can be connected to the Internet 24x7x365, and every product we buy will have some sort of embedded sensor to collect, transmit or distribute data. Look how Apple Pay is already disrupting the payment industry by giving users zero-click buying power in their pocket. And Apple Watch is going to take that one step further. This goes well beyond the BYOD conversations of yesteryear. Embedded devices and sensors are taking us into uncharted territory. With all of these devices generating all of this data, IT will have to exact some level of control to ensure that security and data integrity are not compromised. But it’s



a delicate balance, as end users won't want to be restricted in what devices and solutions they use.

Containers, Containers, Containers

Container-based technology is the absolute future. Next year container technologies and adoption will grow immensely. With Docker leading the pack, container use in production environments will continue to grow. Docker won't be alone. Over the next five years container-based development will be the new playground for start-ups because everyone wants it. It will give customers the portability they want and the hosting services the scale they require. A number of container-focused alternatives will emerge in an attempt to knock Docker out of the water. The technology big dogs themselves will likely try to launch their own container solutions – either through acquisition or homegrown technology. Containers' speed and portability really took hold in 2014. 2015 will be the year the ship really sets sail.

The CMO Turns Into A CMT

Gartner predicted that by 2017, marketing departments would spend more on technology than on IT. Meanwhile, according to Forrester Research, roughly 40% of marketing leaders rank technology as the No.1 area for improvement. Marketers will rely more heavily on tools like collaboration software, CRM, automation, CMS and social. In 2015, marketers will be increasingly called upon to make decisions about how to adopt these new technologies. They'll have to add more technology chops as the demand for tech know-how continually increases, thus forcing the Chief Marketing Officer (CMO) to become the Chief Marketing Technologist (CMT).

Secure It

Nearly every company I've met with in the past year mentions security. In 2015, security will evolve more into a service than a series of products daisy-chained together to build a solution. The NSA spying on citizens has caused businesses to rethink how they go about security and reconsider where their data lives. In 2014, more options emerged, whether it was the reemergence of single-tenant bare metal servers or a boom in interest in private clouds to secure sensitive information and applications. Security has to be always on, and delivering security as a service is something we'll see bubble up to the surface next year.

Alternative Silicon Rising

People have long predicted that new processing architectures were just about to take off in the hyper-scale datacenter world. We've heard buzz around ARM-based solutions for years, but have seen products that only fit niche applications. Low performance and fragmented software ecosystems were a big problem. That changed this year. 2014 saw big news around Google's involvement with IBM and OpenPOWER, and Cavium bringing out a server-grade ARM platform.

“Big data won't slow down – look for as many as five disruptive new big data technologies to emerge in the coming year.”



2015 will be the year that alternative silicon really begins to rise. Watch this space.

The slaughter of the hosting market

The UK has an abundance of different hosting providers making it hugely competitive, but competition can make it hard for the smaller hosting companies, which will struggle to compete. It's more than likely that a whole host of them will go bust.

The steady transition of Infrastructure-As-A-Service

IaaS will become subordinated to the decisions and value that IT organisations actively manage as containers, SaaS, PaaS, configuration as code and continuous deployment continue to rise as the platforms that hold attention. IaaS has spelled its own irrelevance in the mind of the buyer by its API, and the abstractions on top of that, which bring value to the user.

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Delivering security as a service is something we'll see bubble up to the surface next year.

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HOW CAN CLOUD HELP NEW BANKING PLAYERS?



Travers Clarke-Walker discusses the market entry barriers for new banks...

By Travers Clarke-Walker, Managing Director for EMEA at Fiserv

Introduction

The banking and financial services industry is fast embracing digital technology as the impact of digitisation changes the way customers interact with their banks and how those organisations deliver new products, services and processes. For instance, it's not out of the norm for customers to demand access to their bank accounts no matter where they are – without having to go into a branch to check their balance or how much they are spending on various household outgoings.

Increasingly, mobile banking and other financial services applications are addressing such a trend while still allowing clients to access their accounts with a PC or via more traditional delivery channels. The customers' digital experience has to be relevant to the environment in which they are provided: deep services in a branch and online with lighter services on mobile devices.

Consider deployment

Banks need to consider how these digital services are manufactured and deployed. The language of incubation, agile, sprint, cloud-hosted, and so on, is now pervading the C-suite of executives who are responsible for deploying services. This means that both new and existing banking players need to continue to adapt their thinking when it comes to IT, banking and financial services trends. There is no point talking about a 24-month deployment anymore because the conversation is about speed to market as competitive advantage.

Some of this is dictated by customer demand and appetite, but no one should ignore the financial aspects – it's now cheaper, as well as faster, to develop and deploy with 'follow the sun' models that give easy access to highly skilled resources around the globe. With this march of technology and customer demand we'll see the various banking models converging. Some banks, like Movenbank, are purely online, but most



others pursue a multi-channel customer delivery and communications strategy. The branch is not dead just yet, but it is not critical to the future of banking. What is vital is a fully digital environment.

Different opportunities

Bryan Foss, a visiting professor at Bristol Business School, says, "Banking challengers and digital services providers are each aiming to address different opportunities: some of these are

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Both new and existing banking players need to continue to adapt their thinking when it comes to IT, banking and financial services trends.

geographic or focused on limited product ranges such as loans, while others have purchased significant branch structures, with both the positives and negatives that this model brings.” He adds, “Traditional banks have often been wary of using cloud technologies, other than for isolated departmental solutions such as HR. This is because they haven’t been considered until recently as being core to the business. Their confidence is now growing and, as a result of this factor, they are increasingly dependent on payments and other cloud services.”

IT: the last barrier

Technology is nevertheless the last major barrier that most new entrants to the banking and financial services industry face, but it also represents an opportunity to innovate and compete against the incumbent banking and financial services players. For this reason, Fiserv teamed up with Metro Bank co-founder Anthony Thomson in July 2014 to launch Agiliti - a fully hosted, software-as-a-service (SaaS) solution. Thomson will be working with Agiliti as a non-executive director. He brings a wealth of experience from his extensive background and knowledge in bringing challenger banks to market, as well as working with both government and regulators to reduce the barriers to entry for new players. “New entrants to financial services benefit from the fact that the Agiliti business model allows them to align costs with business success, and a technology solution that could have previously taken two to three years to build could now be implemented in as little as six months,” says Thomson. Agiliti is designed to reduce the high up-front costs linked to entering a new market or delivering new products to it, and it helps new entrants to mitigate the associated risks - all of this at speed and without compromising on quality and compliance.

SaaS pricing model

With Agiliti, the pricing model is attractive because it deals with the issue of high capital expenditure costs by adopting a cloud-based ‘pay-as-you-grow’ approach. There are no set-up fees, and so the ongoing costs are only aligned to a new bank’s desired business outcomes. The model includes a tiered volume discount structure that further enhances its cost-effectiveness. This approach is strongly suited to the requirements of new market entrants, because it delivers a sustainable and predictable cost of ownership. This permits customers to only pay for what they need and only when they need it.

Addressing complexity

IT isn’t the only hurdle that new banking and financial services entrants have to tackle. The other two barriers to market entry are the complexity of the authorisation process and the substantial capital requirements. Fortunately, these obstacles have recently been weakened with the relaxation of capital and liquidity rules

in 2013. They are subsequently more in line with the actual risks to which a new bank exposes the market and this consequently leads to a more competitive landscape.

Customer success

The competitive benefits of the cloud have already attracted Think Money to Agiliti, and interest in this SaaS solution is growing. Atom Bank has selected Agiliti as its platform solution too. Many of Agiliti’s components are already deployed within Tesco Bank.

The future is cloud

Cloud-based banking services, full utility and individual component modules are the future – both in the UK and abroad. The cloud offers new banking entrants the ability to scale up or down, to pay only for the services they use and to invest more in operational expenditure rather than on using capital expenditure that would involve creating an internal IT infrastructure. With the cloud, new and existing banking players won’t need to become IT experts. This allows them to focus on what they do best - sell and market financial products and services. By embracing a cloud deployment or transformation, they will be more competitive. So if cloud technologies enhance competition, this can only be a good thing for consumers and businesses alike who rely on banking services and whose expectations are rising every day.

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The branch is not dead just yet, but it is not critical to the future of banking.





WHY CONSIDER THE CLOUD?



Beverley Flynn looks at outsourcing your cloud computing strategy...

By Beverley Flynn, Head of Data Protection & IT, and Jennifer Howell at Stevens & Bolton LLP

Introduction

IT has always been a popular candidate for outsourcing. Many businesses look to outsource or offshore their business practices, whether it involves the outsourcing of software, hardware or using a more traditional outsourcing approach.

Alternatives

Cloud computing can be considered as involving one or more of three main services. Infrastructure as a Service (IaaS) provides a range of servers, network connections, storage and other simple IT resources. Platform as a Service (PaaS) offers a platform and an environment that allows users to create application software. Software as a Service (SaaS) can offer the infrastructure, environment and access to a range of software applications.

Assessing the provider

Having determined your cloud computing requirements, the next step is to assess potential providers and ensure that your provider is a solid one. Cloud providers can be at different stages in their own business cycle and range from start-ups to more established suppliers. It will be the business that's responsible for data security under the Data Protection Act 1998.

In the case of law firms the Solicitors Regulation Authority (SRA) guidance 'Silver Linings: Cloud computing, law firms and risk' recommends taking references from other companies already using the provider, checking service level agreements, audited information security standards, guaranteed uptime and continuity protection.

The Article 29 Working Party Opinion on Cloud Computing 05/2012 also sets out a variety of safeguards for cloud computing, including using a third party certification to judge a provider's compliance with their obligations. An independent verification system can be used as a credible way to distinguish between providers and promote best practice.

Risk management

It is important to implement measures to deal with disaster scenarios such as lost or corrupted data. Ensure you are aware of how the provider plans to deal with such situations, including the time scale and recovery methods. Existing company data security policies and incident responses should incorporate the cloud strategy and data security threats should be monitored continuously. Measures should also be in place to deal with data should the company want to withdraw from the relationship, agreement or provision of services for whatever reason. Automatic encryption of the data by the company is another option to improve security, although it is worth bearing in mind that corrupted encrypted data is harder to recover than unencrypted data. Compliance with ISO/IEC-27001/27036 standards is an excellent basis for security.

Service levels and liability

Clearly every service is vulnerable to outages or technical difficulties, but in the case of cloud computing there is a balance of a substantial loss of solution control with broad exclusions of liability in favour of the provider.

Service level agreements are one way to combat this issue, although most existing cloud providers tend to keep performance assurances to a minimum, some even going as far as to exclude service performance warranties. Therefore until the proposed 'Cloud Service Level Agreement Standardisation Guidelines' from the European Commission are more commonly used, businesses can either restrict the parts of the business for which it uses cloud services or take a chance and rely on providers who most want to protect their reputation. Meanwhile, look for a provider who adheres to the Code of Practice for Cloud Service Providers from the Cloud Industry Forum, which deals in detail with:

- Transparency
- Capability
- Accountability

Data protection

Most of the operations in the cloud are likely to fall under the Data Protection Act's (DPA) broad definition of 'data processing'. Under the DPA the business and not the cloud provider is likely to be the 'data controller' and bear overall responsibility for complying with the DPA. The risks and burdens of data security and transfers therefore lie with the business, which can be considered somewhat unfair given their lack of control.

The Information Commissioner's Office's (ICO) which is responsible for Data protection enforcement has issued 'Guidance on the use of cloud computing'. This recommends:

- Creating a list of data types and assessing the risk for each type of data (e.g. sensitive, non-sensitive)
- Consider undertaking a privacy impact assessment
- Assess the type of cloud e.g. private, community or hybrid for each type of data
- Due diligence of the provider/accreditation
- Consider physical, technical and third party risks
- Have a written agreement in place to meet the requirements of the DPA
- Consider transfers outside the EEA which and put in place appropriate safeguard or model clauses required under the DPA

The future

There are new obligations for data processors in the proposed EU Data Protection Regulation (amending the Data Protection Directive 95/46/EC) that may prove useful if implemented. Nonetheless, it appears cloud computing is here to stay, and with the increased regulatory focus and best practice standards working their way into the mainstream business market, it may be time for you to make use of cloud computing.

CANOPIES UK AND OUTSOURCERY

How Canopies UK migrated its existing email infrastructure...

The Client

Canopies UK is a leading designer, manufacturer and installer of outdoor canopies to homes and businesses across the UK. During more than 25 years in business the Lancashire-based outfit has supplied well over 30,000 canopies to homeowners and commercial businesses, operating in various sectors including education, health, leisure and the public sector, as well as serving the domestic market.

Keeping up in a growing market

With aspirations to maintain their position as the number one supplier of outdoor canopies in the country, internal processes have been put in place to capitalize on any market opportunities that may enable further growth. Rob Cassidy, Marketing Manager, explains: "The company operates in a fast-moving industry and our sales path is made up of a number of different stages, requiring constant communication between our



“Outsourcery’s enterprise-grade O-Cloud platform gives customers the freedom to securely access all of their communications tools from any device.”

sales teams, the office staff and the manufacturing arm. We aim to always be in a position to secure potential customers quickly and keep up with sales momentum at all times. It is absolutely essential as a business that we keep on top of this. The entire business structure is focused internally. Nothing is outsourced and we have built the company in such a way as to have experienced employees at every level. Good communication is absolutely key.”

The Outsourcery solution

Before approaching Outsourcery, Canopies UK’s incumbent in-house email client was preventing them from keeping up with customer demand – communication between employees was not properly integrated, meaning that sales staff risked missing out on potential leads.

Infrastructure analysis and consultation

After an initial consultation, a thorough review of the existing in-house email solution and a

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Using smart devices on the go keeps the entire company integrated with access to updated emails in real-time.

discussion around key business goals and aspirations, Canopies UK implemented Outsourcery’s Cloud Mail service.

The cloud-based offering and ease of implementation

Hosted on Outsourcery’s enterprise-grade O-Cloud platform, Cloud Mail combines market-leading Exchange and Lync technologies with additional services from security, backup and availability solution provider Symantec. It’s designed to give customers the freedom to securely access all of their email, contacts and conferencing tools from any device with an Internet connection. It also provides internal instant messaging, presence awareness and PC-to-PC calling and video capabilities.

Migration and support

Outsourcery worked with Canopies UK throughout the process of migrating its existing email infrastructure while enabling the company to carry on with business as usual. “Operations within the business have become much more focused,” Rob explains. “The enhanced communication processes have enabled us to improve customer service and speed up the sales cycle. The new Cloud Mail and Lync solution ensures all departments can operate in a proficient and proactive manner and we are seeing a direct impact on productivity as a result. Cloud-based email has enabled all our employees to keep in regular contact with each other throughout the day, while also accessing emails away from the office if a situation requires more urgent attention.”

Integrating to enhance processes

“Outsourcery’s cloud services, Unified Lync and Cloud Mail in particular, have benefited Canopies UK greatly in the five years that we’ve been a customer,” says Rob. “We are the number one provider of outdoor canopies in the UK and this is largely due to our commitment to making sure all parts of our business work in tandem at all times. Using smart devices on the go keeps the entire company integrated with access to updated emails in real-time. This is fundamental to the work that we do – the cloud-based mail solution really has transformed the way we do business.”





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Many employees are deciding for themselves what IT they need and are proceeding to use it without corporate approval.

THE RISE OF THE SUPERUSER



Jim Clarke reveals a new problem facing IT departments...

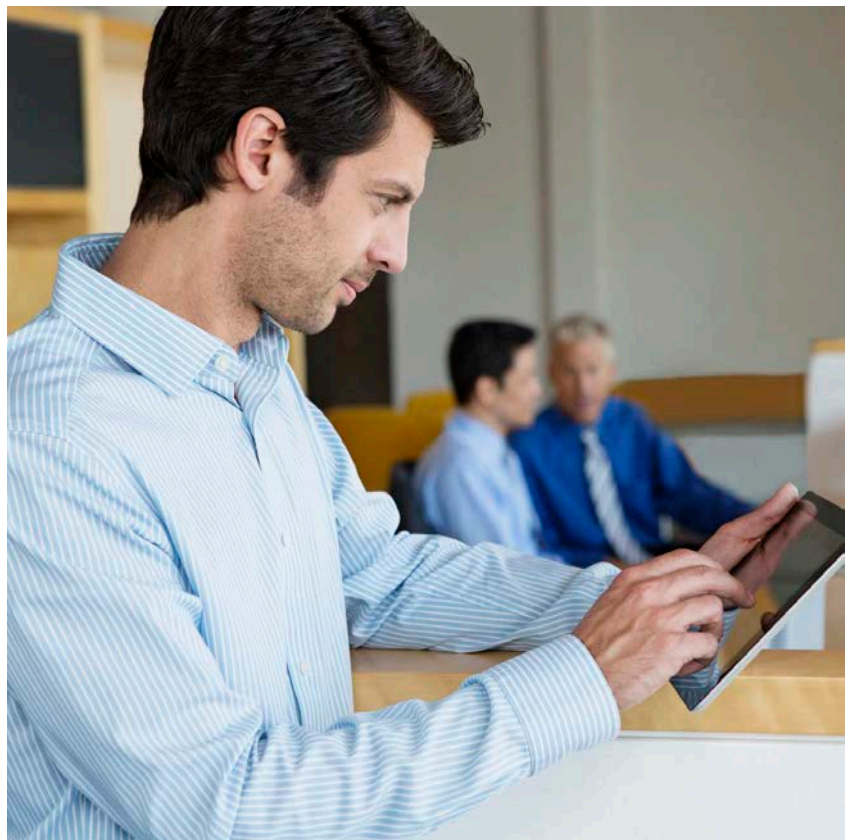
By Jim Clarke, Director, Marketing, Product & Pricing – International Global Enterprise & Services

Introduction

Until recently, the main challenges facing IT departments have been selecting the right hardware and software, deploying them quickly at minimal cost and keeping them working. However, a new challenge is edging its way up IT executives' list of concerns. Many employees are deciding for themselves what IT they need and are proceeding to use it without corporate approval. The risks related to this growing trend – termed Shadow IT – are huge. If the IT department has not extended its security policies and technical solutions to the unauthorised technology, the company's IT environment and data may become considerably more vulnerable. So, how should IT departments deal with the emergence of shadow IT? The answer – according to a new report published by Telstra – is to start listening to individuals and teams throughout the business to help ensure employees have access to the latest collaboration tools they want, empowering them to do their jobs more effectively.

The rise of the superuser

The report, Rise Of The Superuser, is based on a global survey of 675 IT decision makers based in Australia, Hong Kong, Singapore, UK and the US. Critically, it reveals that nine out of ten IT leaders struggle to implement the communications and collaboration IT that employees really want. These desired technologies range from video conferencing to desktop virtualisation. Encouragingly, it did also reveal a superior group of organisations - which we've called superusers – that's offering the tools that employees demand and mitigating the threat of shadow IT. These companies are realising



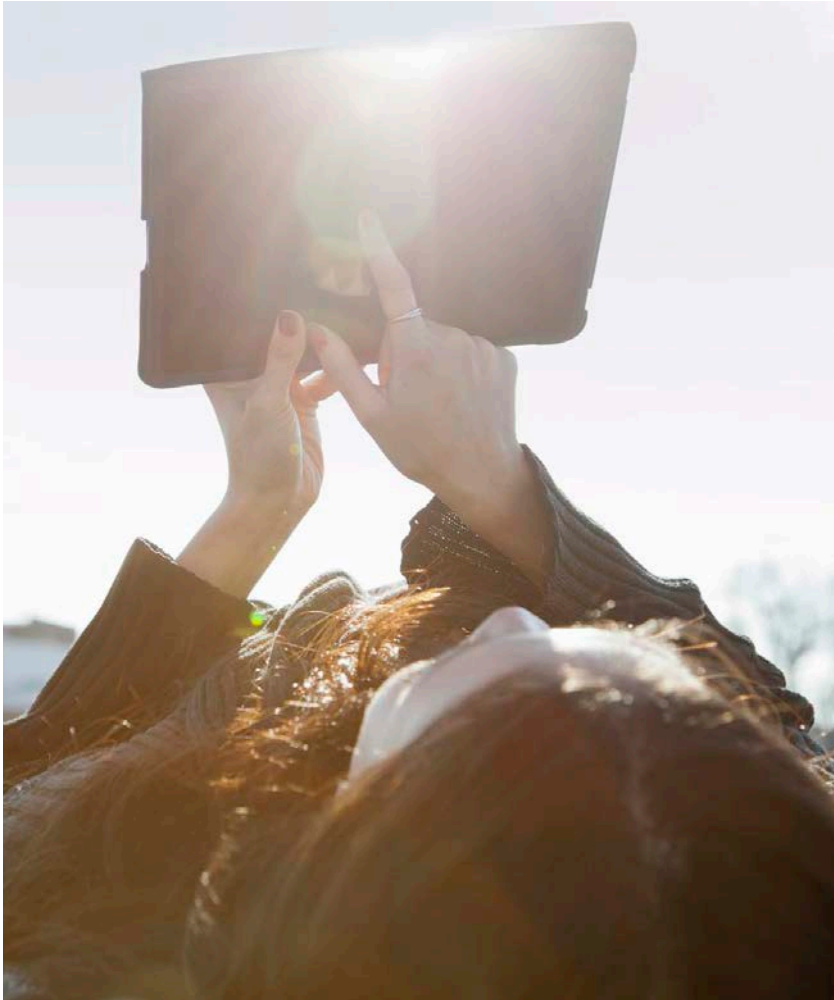
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Nine out of ten business leaders struggle to implement the communications IT that employees really want.

significant benefits as a result, and often find themselves ahead of the adoption curve and with a strong competitive advantage. For those looking to satisfy employee IT expectations and consequently achieve the associated gains and retain control, there is much to learn from the superusers who are leading the charge.

The first lesson here is to listen to what employees are saying. The signs of a seachange in

“Listen to what your employees are saying and they can help solve your collaboration challenges for you.”



corporate IT are difficult to miss: fewer than 15% of companies reported that end users actually fought the adoption of collaboration tools. Sure enough, superusers tell of end users leading the adoption of collaboration tools. Also, they want them sooner rather than later. This implies that superusers are listening to their employees to a greater extent than other organisations and responding fast.

Address the shadow IT threat

The report also highlighted that the principal roadblock to adopting employees' preferred IT was not ignorance, but the reality that other IT goals take precedence. 47% of respondents claimed that having higher priority IT projects prevented them implementing the technologies that end-users wanted. While 36% of IT decision makers said they already found shadow IT to constitute a challenge, almost half of superusers said they were likely to address that threat, compared to less than a third of non-superuser organisations. If organisations do not make end-user expectations a higher priority, then the

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Superusers are listening to their employees to a greater extent than other organisations and responding fast.

risk and cost implications of out-of-control shadow IT are likely to outweigh the costs of not listening more closely to end users to begin with.

Let your people lead the way ...

For many businesses, the answer lies in accepting that when it comes to collaboration, employees have a good idea about what they need and what will work. Employees' own experiences help them understand which communications tools will assist them to get their jobs done faster and help generate better business outcomes. Rather than seeing employee demands in this area as a threat, executives should treat those perspectives as an invaluable guide in helping them make smart, successful decisions.

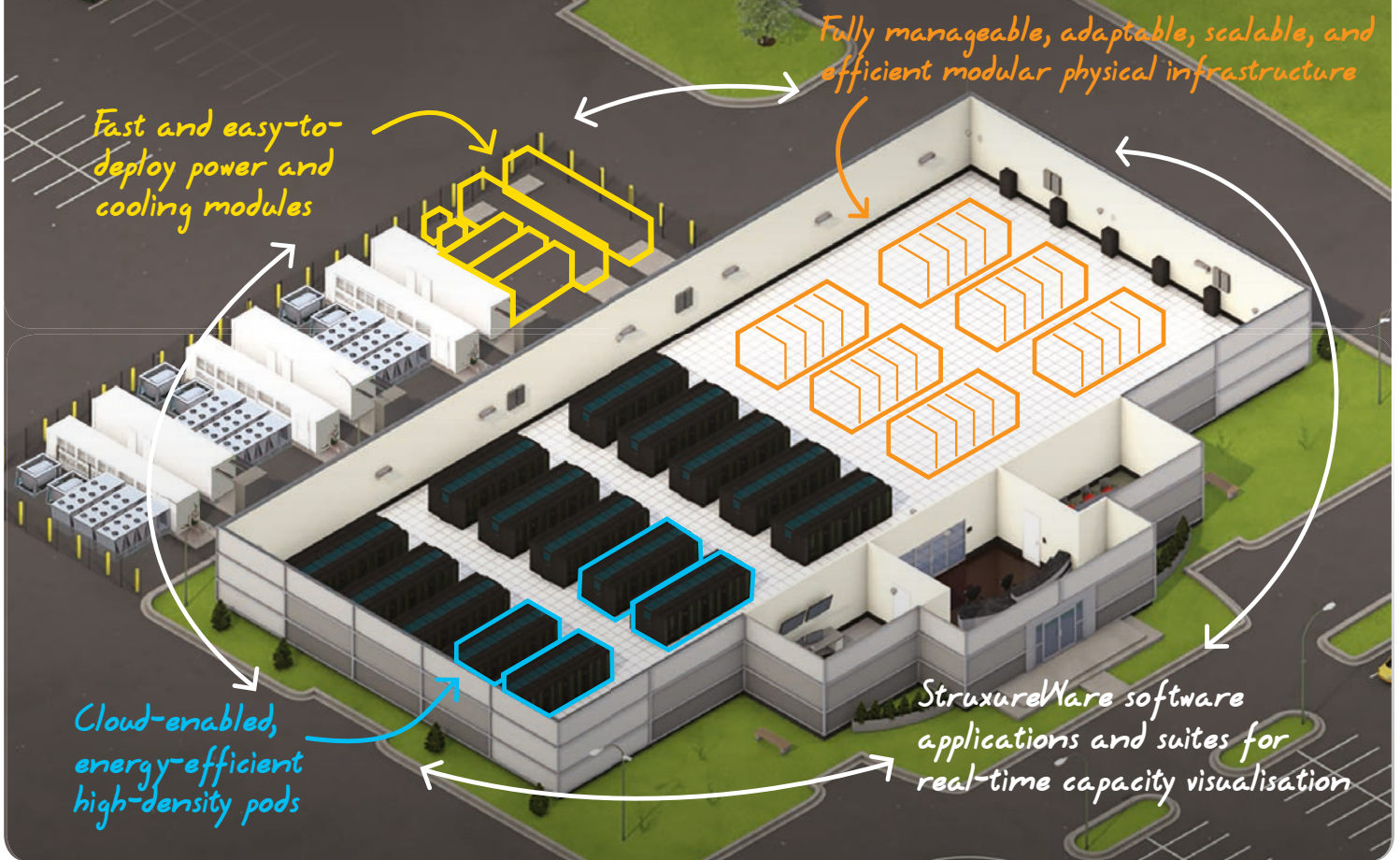
... onwards, to the cloud

The last pointer is where superusers source their IT, or rather, how. Interestingly, most organisations still purchase the essential components of unified communications (UC) – including video, voice, data and instant messaging – as individual solutions, rather than as part of an integrated or packaged service. This is surprising, given that 67% of organisations believe that purchasing UC as a service (UCaaS) will improve communications and efficiency within the workplace. Again, superusers are in the vanguard, with a far higher proportion believing that the flexibility of purchasing UC as a cloud service helps them to achieve business goals.

Work with your workers

For most businesses, the answer is simple. Listen to what your employees are saying and they can help solve your collaboration challenges for you. Combine this with cloud technologies to facilitate reaping the rewards of better decision-making at every level.

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CLOUDED JUDGEMENT



Wieland Alge weighs up which backup solution best suits your company's requirements...

By Wieland Alge, General Manager & VP EMEA at Barracuda Networks

Introduction

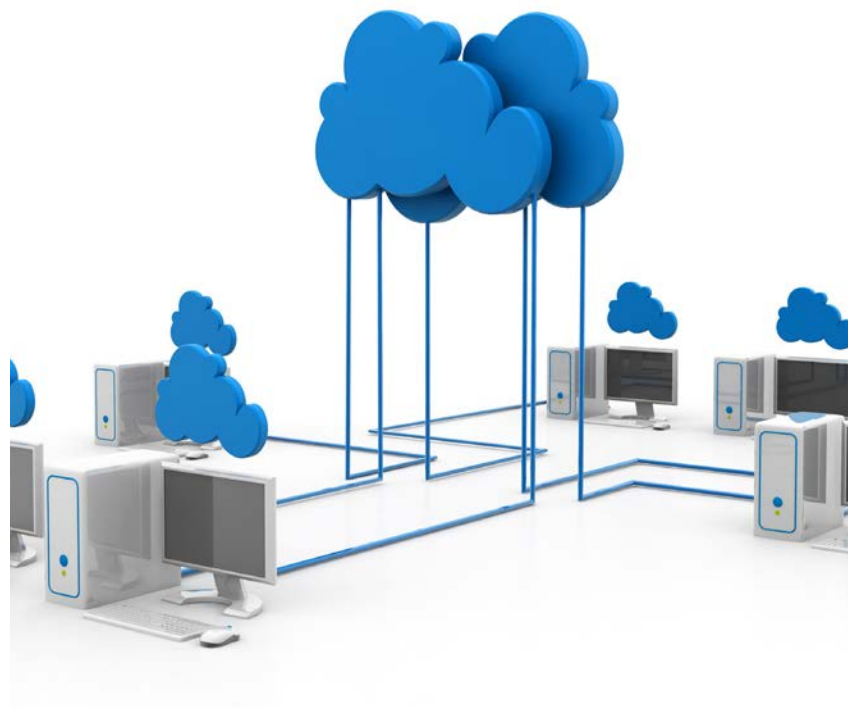
The exponential increase in data volumes on a network and the management of this data is becoming a widespread business problem. IT managers need to find a way to ensure maximum security, facilitate redundant data storage and provide fast data recovery in case of system failure. To achieve all of this, the lure of cloud computing is becoming more and more enticing. There are a number of advantages and disadvantages to backing up in the cloud and businesses are constantly weighing up which solution best suits their company's needs. The case for the cloud is growing stronger, but it is apparent that IT managers remain sceptical about its security.

Local backup technologies

Many companies use local backups, in the form of tape or disk drives, simply because they remain relatively cheap. However, they are also failure-prone and will naturally degrade with continued use over time. Unless these backup systems are taken offsite every night, they also fail to protect data against natural disasters, fraud or theft. Increasingly, companies are realising the need to make automatic backups and store them in at least two different locations to ensure redundancy. This is why the offer of storing data in the cloud is becoming increasingly popular.

Cloud backups: The Pros

Backing up to the cloud has several advantages. It allows companies to back up their data both locally and offsite without the hassle of tapes or other removable storage. Once the backup is made, companies can then access data at all times via the Internet. Another advantage is the so-called 'fire-and-forget', which means that when a backup has been initiated it will function automatically. The



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There are very few people left that doubt the rise of cloud computing.

backup appliance constantly monitors changes and synchronises corporate data to the cloud. Cloud backups can also be economical, especially with a Pay-As-You-Use business model.

Cloud backups: The Cons

On the negative side, cloud backups are relatively new and companies might be cautious about relinquishing their data to it. In the cloud, it is

“The case for the cloud is growing stronger, but it’s apparent that IT managers remain sceptical about its security.”



services. Those findings are borne out by research conducted for Barracuda of more than 900 businesses across the UK, France, Germany, Italy, The Netherlands, Belgium, the US, Australia, New Zealand and Japan.

Cloud is gaining traction for data storage

The State of Cloud Backup study found that 83% of all businesses backed up some of their data to the cloud and only 17% did not use cloud at all. Over half (53%) of those who did use the cloud stored more than 50% of their data there. Despite these impressive figures, there was reluctance among some businesses to fully embrace it. Over a quarter of them did not believe the cloud was secure enough for them to back up 100% of their data.

The big factor undermining their faith to make the leap completely was their lack of trust in the public cloud. Nearly seven in ten (69%) of those surveyed viewed the data they stored in the cloud as sensitive, so they were understandably reluctant to entrust that data to the public. As a result, private cloud was three times more trusted than the public cloud and a strong third choice in the rankings behind removable storage and site-to-site replication.

If the cloud is to become comprehensively adopted for data backup, concerns over data loss and security issues need to be addressed. Businesses need to be confident their data is secure when backed up to the cloud for them to entrust it with sensitive data. The Barracuda study found a fifth of those using cloud storage had suffered significant problems with their provider, including lost data and security issues. Over one-third reported instances where their data hadn’t been available when they needed it and 42% said their data wasn’t secure.

Security and compliance concerns remain

Security is a major issue for many businesses. A massive 89% of firms described the security credentials of their cloud provider as an important or very important consideration. This suggests customers will look much more favourably at storage providers that place a strong emphasis on security and can prove their credentials. Resellers looking to build a cloud business model should consider aligning themselves closely with security vendors because the most trusted cloud providers will be those perceived as having the most secure credentials.

Compliance is another area of concern. If personal data constitutes part of the backup then it’s a legal requirement that the cloud operator

often unclear where the data resides and whose responsibility it is to keep it safe and secure. This can be an issue for industries – such as the financial sector - where laws and regulations require data to be stored in a restricted geographical area. Companies also require a fast Internet connection to recover data or backups from the cloud and without this, they run the risk of extra downtime.

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Businesses are keen to use cloud storage if they can, but they want to do so on their own terms.

The Pros outweigh The Cons

Despite these concerns, there are very few people left that doubt the rise of cloud computing. The momentum of the cloud continues to build and it is well on its way to becoming an integral part of the IT environment. Recent research published by the Cloud Industry Forum (CIF) showed 78% of UK organisations surveyed had adopted at least one cloud-based service. CIF CEO Alex Hilton predicts 90% of all businesses in the UK will formally adopt at least one cloud service by the end of 2015, adding that UK cloud adoption has grown 61.5% since CIF’s first survey in 2010. The CIF survey also identified web hosting, email, CRM, data backup and disaster recovery as the most pervasive cloud

“The momentum of the cloud continues to build and it’s well on its way to becoming an integral part of the IT environment.”



They are currently being replaced by hard drives in dedicated appliances, complemented by additional mirroring in the cloud. The popularity of private cloud infrastructures as a ‘halfway house’ shows that businesses are keen to use cloud storage if they can, but they want to do so on their own terms as much as possible.

The CIF survey found that 85% of organisations were deploying a hybrid on-premise and cloud strategy and would continue to invest in on-premise IT alongside (and integrated with) cloud solutions. Hilton describes this state of affairs as “the normalisation of cloud in the hybrid IT market”. The most important benefit of combining the appliance and cloud, from the compliance standpoint, is that every backup image can be sent automatically to remote locations more frequently. Such frequent backups would have required a sophisticated and expensive logistics chain in the days of tapes. This means that although the individual tape is still the more robust storage medium in comparison to individual hard drives, Appliance/Cloud solutions are better for guaranteeing restorability and business continuity.

The IT industry has a role to play

Organisations continue to choose a hybrid of removable storage, replication and private and public cloud infrastructures. The quality of the strategy they implement will be critical to their success. In order for businesses to evolve their backup strategies, it is imperative that they can trust and rely on the options they have. To achieve this, they need the IT industry and service providers to work with them to address any thorny issues such as compliance, regulation and data privacy. Technological advancement will not drive mainstream adoption of cloud storage among business without the support of knowledge, guidance and good customer service.

must store the data within the EU. Access to the data by non-authorized parties must be prevented using encoding or access blocks. Auditors and administrators should be able to complete their tasks without having access to the stored data at the same time. The legal and moral responsibility for safely storing company, employee and customer data falls to the organisation itself. However, almost one-fifth of those in Barracuda’s survey said they did not know if their cloud provider met the required data compliance regulations for their business sector. Ignorance is no defence. It is the responsibility of the business to ensure it abides by the requisite national and international laws, regulations and standards.

This blind spot could be a serious area of risk for your business and a major concern to board members across the globe. MSPs and technology partners need to work more closely with customers to help them understand the standards and regulations they are bound by and ensure they understand if, and how, they comply.

Most businesses prefer to stay in the halfway house

Cloud storage solutions are still in their infancy and there is some reluctance to embrace the medium fully. However, there is no doubt that people are starting to bring it on board. Tapes were the standard medium for backups for many years.

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In order for businesses to evolve their backup strategies, it is imperative that they can trust and rely on the options they have.

About Dr. Wieland Alge

As VP & General Manager EMEA, Barracuda Networks, Wieland Alge is responsible for Barracuda Networks’ business in Europe, Middle East and Africa. Before this he was CEO and co-founder of Phion AG, which merged in 2009 with Barracuda Networks. Dr. Alge has also a profound knowledge of the user and administrator’s perspective on security. After attaining the PhD of Science, he was lecturer and Scientific Assistant at the Institute for Theoretical Physics at the University Innsbruck. In the year 2008 he won the recognition ‘Entrepreneur of the Year’ from Ernst & Young.



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FROM CUSTOMER TO PARTNER

Ultima Business Solutions works with Pulsant in delivering cloud...

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The main requirements for the client were security and reliability, with a location that was within a reasonable distance of the support centre.

The Client

Ultima Business Solutions, an IT solutions provider with a 24-year track record, has grown from a traditional reseller into the solutions-focused organisation it is today. The company is structured around three core areas – fulfilment, professional services, and managed services, much of which involves the support and sales of cloud computing.

The brief

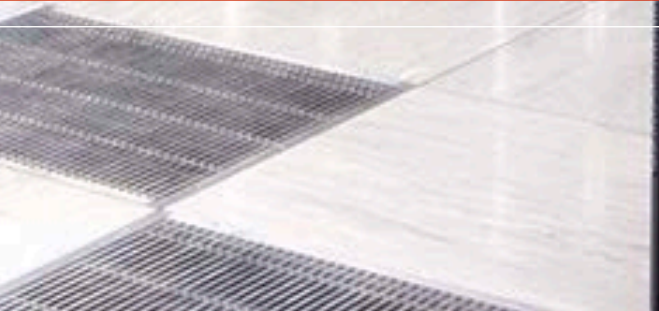
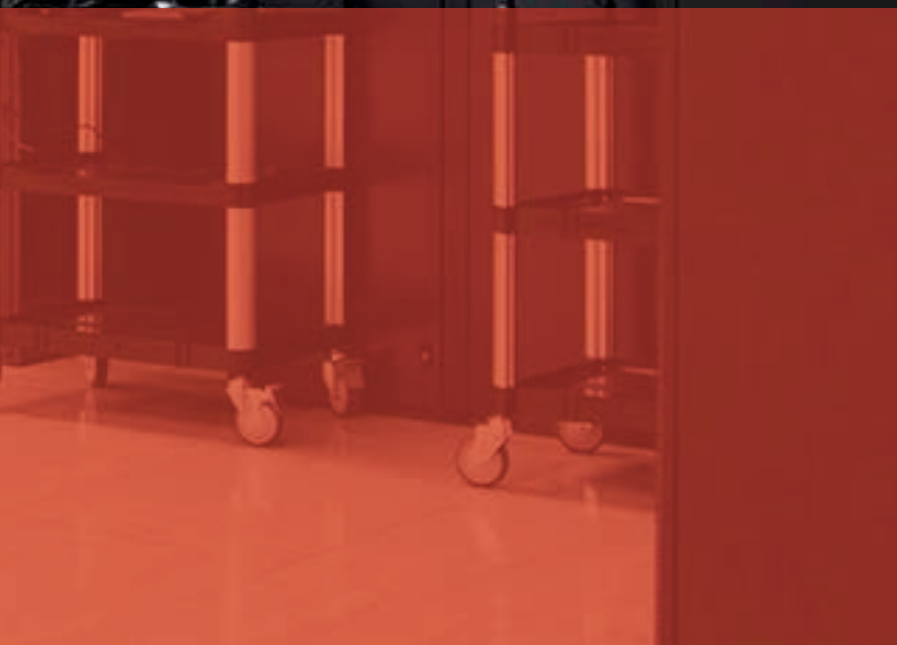
The relationship between Pulsant, the cloud computing and colocation expert, and Ultima began four years ago. The Reading-based computing provider sought a secure, caged area within Pulsant's Maidenhead data centre facility to host its cloud infrastructure. "Part of our managed services portfolio includes cloud services that are supported, backed up and managed by our technical support centre in Berkshire," said Danny Fisher, Head of Managed and Support Services at Ultima. "Our requirements were, of course, security and reliability, but we also wanted the location to be within a reasonable distance of our support centre. Ideally we also wanted a partner that was able to work alongside us, as a visible extension of our offering." In addition, Ultima required a hosting environment that was scalable, in order to offer additional colocation services with networking interconnects.

On review

After several months of reviewing the cloud market and evaluating solutions in terms of their technology offerings, contract flexibility, delivery of SLAs and overall management mechanisms, Ultima selected Pulsant. "We are driven by our customer base and in Pulsant we found a business that's very similar to us in its approach. Pulsant is very much aligned to our philosophy and offered us a cloud platform based on HP software, a VMware hypervisor, a high performing network with Cisco as the backbone, and security provided by Check Point – all things that reinforced the synergy between our two organisations. The big plus was that Pulsant specialised in providing private, public and hybrid cloud solutions which is exactly what we were looking for."

The team at Ultima worked closely with Pulsant to shape an Ultima-centric offering and very quickly started migrating a number of its customers from on-premise and other cloud platforms onto Pulsant's Enterprise Cloud. "We host some of our own systems in the Maidenhead facility and it's excellent, they have a great team that works closely with our technical support centre and product champions for cloud. As a solutions provider we are bound by our SLAs, so it is imperative that we have people on the ground who are capable and efficient to see that through," said Fisher.

The company also enjoys a collaborative relationship with the cloud provider as a member of the Pulsant Partner Programme. When selling cloud solutions to potential customers, Ultima works with Pulsant from a deal's inception, pre-sales and sales assistance, and to create commercial and technological flexibility. "We looked for a partner that offered us a compelling technology-proven, contractually stable, secure platform for us to leverage. And we definitely found that in Pulsant,"



SAAS DEPLOYMENTS ARE NOW MISSION CRITICAL

Global buyers of cloud applications cite cost, innovation and agility as reasons for adoption...

In May and June 2014, Gartner conducted a survey across 10 countries in four regions to examine organizations' adoption and deployment of cloud services across SaaS, infrastructure as a service (IaaS) and platform as a service (PaaS). The countries included within the 2014 survey were the U.S., Brazil, Mexico, the U.K., Germany, France, China, India, South Korea and Australia.

"The most commonly cited reasons the survey found for deploying SaaS were for development and testing production/mission-critical workloads," said Joanne Correia, research vice president at Gartner. "We've seen a real transition from use cases in previous surveys where early SaaS adoption focused on smaller pilot projects. Today, the projects are mission-critical and production grade. This is an affirmation that more businesses are comfortable with cloud deployments beyond the front office running sales force automation (SFA) and email."

44% of survey respondents said that overall cost reduction continues to dominate as the main reason for investment. However, when the data is organized by role, the cloud adoption survey indicates that cost reduction rated highest for the more junior IT roles (IT staff and IT managers). Senior business executives (excluding CIOs) also rated cost reduction as a key benefit, but not at the same rate as the IT staff. The CIO and IT director roles all rated cloud as a modern approach, innovation and operational agility as top drivers. The senior IT leaders also rated "business advantage" significantly higher than junior IT roles. The conclusion is that CIOs are focused on using the cloud to establish a modern, innovative IT environment with operational agility and business advantage as key outcomes whereas business leaders (non-IT) still see the cloud as a means to save costs and may not yet have full appreciation for the business benefits or strategic opportunity of using cloud services.

Regardless of the reason of implementing cloud, Gartner advises that public cloud is not always the most appropriate model for all use cases within companies. The decision to deploy SaaS-based applications within an enterprise depends on the business-criticality of the solution, as well as the organization's geography, business agility, usage scenario and IT architecture.

Therefore, few organizations will completely migrate to SaaS and will live with a mix of SaaS and traditional on-premises application deployment models, with a focus on integration and migration between them. The survey found that security, privacy and fear of government snooping remain leading concerns for respondents (especially outside of the U.S.) that do not consider public cloud-based models. Although protection methods are continually upgraded and providers' position public cloud services as secure, concerns remain.

"Data loss, data breaches, unsecure application programming interfaces (APIs) and shared technology in a multitenant environment are just a few of the concerns expressed by respondents tackling the option of using public cloud," said Laurie Wurster, research director at Gartner. "In addition, recent concerns of government snooping in the name of anti-terrorism and general privacy issues contribute to the lack of public cloud adoption."

In reaction to these concerns, respondents will push the adoption growth of private (a combination of internal or as hosted private cloud managed by a third party) cloud (46%) for deployment across all software markets by nearly twice the rate of public cloud (24%) adoption over the next two years. The trend indicated by respondents' cloud adoption behavior for software deployment suggests the majority of data centers are moving to private cloud deployment for implementation of new software. The traditional deployment model for on-premises software is expected to significantly shrink from 34% today to 18% by 2017. Legacy software will remain on-premises in the traditional model until end of life unless updates and upgrades allow for private cloud deployment models.

Despite security and privacy concerns, survey respondents continue to invest in public cloud for SaaS deployment of software applications. Key drivers for SaaS include the fact that 'hands off' IT enables redirection of limited in-house staff to other responsibilities since the SaaS provider is responsible for ongoing support. Rapid deployment and faster access to innovation are also important since SaaS vendors are able to roll out applications when you are ready and lower upfront costs with a pay-as-you-go pricing model.

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Owen Morgan, IT Director, CafeX

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CAN YOU PROVE YOU ARE WHO YOU SAY YOU ARE?



Mushegh Hakhinian looks at multi-factor authentication and the issues of privacy and security online...

By Mushegh Hakhinian, chief security architect at Intralinks

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Multiple layers of security technologies are needed to protect us from modern threats.

“If consumers don’t know where their data is being stored, how can they ensure that it is sufficiently protected?”

Introduction

Some say that the ‘death of the password’ is imminent, while others tout new biometric technology as the answer to all our data security fears. In order to make informed security decisions users need to be educated in cloud technology risks, understand available technologies and the value of their information. And there are no silver bullets – multiple layers of security technologies, such as strong authentication and encryption, are needed to protect us from modern threats.

A simple password is no longer enough to deter sophisticated adversaries. Apple announced it was expanding “two-step verification” checks to its iCloud backup service earlier this year. Other companies are also moving from a single password to multi-factor authentication. Malicious hackers attempting to defeat these more advanced protection methods have to collect more information, sometimes a one-time password or a code sent to a user’s smartphone.

Protocol

Let’s quickly review the three types of authentication information or factors: something you have (e.g. a code or device), something you are (e.g. a fingerprint) and something you know (e.g. a password). Security methods which involve using two out of these three categories will always be more secure than those that only use one (using only the user’s iris scan is still one factor authentication). In ancient times, someone entering a city under siege needed to be wearing local clothes, say a form of password and carry a seal – essentially, providing three factors of authentication. Electronic authentication protocols should follow the same pattern.

As more and more information is placed online, we are not only putting our valuable data in a variety of places, but we are also making it easier for hackers to assume our identities. The public availability of information, such as a mother’s maiden name or first pet, means that consumers are finding their “secure” information is no longer safe if a hacker is determined. The recent spate of celebrity photo leaks is a clear example.

Data storage

One of the biggest issues surrounding data storage is that most people don’t realise how much data is automatically uploaded online or where it’s being stored. Cloud storage is commonplace and most devices are now pre-configured to back up to the cloud. People are not necessarily choosing to save those holiday snaps on the cloud, but are saving them there unknowingly.

If consumers don’t know where their data is being stored, how can they ensure that it is sufficiently protected? Blissful ignorance may keep some consumers from worrying about their data, but organisations cannot afford to ignore the issue. Knowing where your data is being stored must be the first step towards ensuring your data is safe. Only then can you consider whether the security protocols in place are effective enough.

The value of your data

Deciding if the security measures protecting your data are sufficient will come down to one question: how valuable is your data? More importantly, how valuable might it be in 40 years? The value of information changes constantly. An embarrassing photo of a 16 year old caught drinking with friends may seem unimportant, but when applying to join a Board of Directors at the age of 50, that photo could be potentially damaging.

There is no “delete” in the cloud, so controlling access to the data is all we can do. Using multi-factor authentication is essential to secure valuable data today against cyber-attacks that will only become more sophisticated as technology advances. Companies might worry that deploying complicated authentication mechanisms will alienate consumers, encouraging them to switch to other simpler services. Ease and convenience is key for consumers – remembering just one password may suit them better.

Forward thinking

Enterprises must balance the risk of losing users against the damage a data breach could do to their reputation and business. Consumers do ultimately want to know their information is secure and are beginning to question how safe their data actually is. Maybe this trend will lead to a more widespread adoption of multi-factor authentication.

Internet banking has already introduced many consumers to risk-based authentication, and businesses worried about alienating consumers with more sophisticated security processes could also consider this approach. After all, Google may have more users than the Bank of America, but not many more. If online banking already uses risk-based authentication, so should online applications.

Furthermore, although multi-factor authentication is a step in the right direction, encryption will always be the prime solution for security concerns. The majority of websites now use secure HTTPS connections, which encrypt data flow between the client and the server. If we are encrypting our communications on a daily basis, why do so few of us use storage services that also encrypt information when stored? Forward-thinking companies that have already made changes to protect their information are seeing the value in this extra level of security.

Conclusion

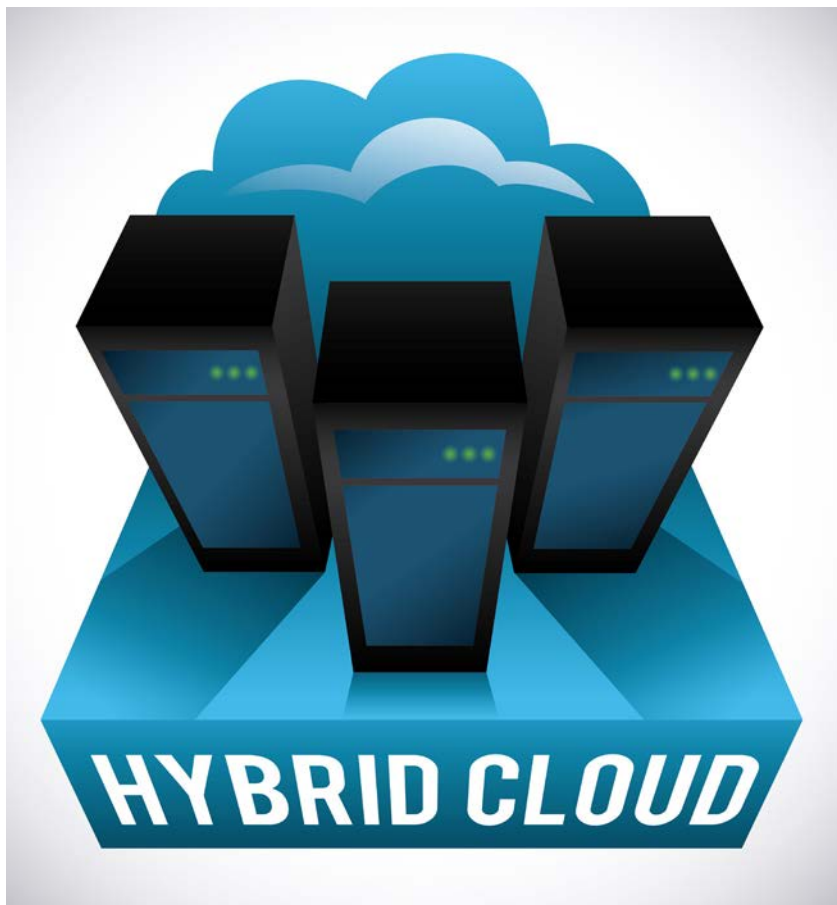
Making the right decisions when it comes to your data storage today can save you trouble in the future. Don’t ignore the obvious: hackers are getting smarter so security systems have to do the same. Your data is valuable, either to you or to someone else. How easy are you making it for someone else to get their hands on it?

REDEFINING THE HYBRID CLOUD



Steven Harrison looks at the evolution of the hybrid cloud and the impact it will have on the industry...

Steven Harrison, Lead Technologist at exponential-e



Recent research from the Cloud Industry Forum revealed that 78% of UK organisations have adopted at least one cloud-based solution. However, businesses are still resistant to moving all IT operations into a hosted environment, often starting their journey in stages. Typically, organisations will begin by placing a communication or collaboration service, like email or CRM, into the cloud and then deploy more services as they begin to become more confident.

A prudent approach

Modern businesses no longer want a wholesale 'wipe-and-replace' model when it comes to transitioning to cloud services. In the past, moving to a private cloud environment has involved architecting operations in a certain way. There has also been an implicit risk that if an organisation wants to move or evolve their IT environment at a later date, then it will involve a tremendous amount of work.

Concerns about vendor lock-in, the performance of business critical applications, licensing restrictions and the costs associated with storing large data volumes have continually been cited as some of the biggest resistance points to moving towards full-scale cloud deployment. In addition, public cloud servers are built on commodity hardware that is fundamentally built to fail and businesses are growing tired of different providers pointing fingers at each other when something doesn't work as promised. As a result, a new cloud strategy is needed that reflects how organisations are embracing a more prudent and phased approach to cloud adoption and deployment.

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The crucial ingredient for a successful hybrid cloud model is the network on which it operates.

“The hybrid cloud is becoming the model of choice for those organisations that want to leverage existing infrastructure in tandem with the elasticity of the cloud.”

Hybrid Cloud

Ultimately, organisations want to implement a combination of whatever works best for their business. Moving to the cloud should not necessitate a complete overhaul of a company’s operations, but should be used to augment whatever existing IT infrastructure is already in place. This approach is centred on delivering more flexibility to organisations. It allows businesses to combine their own dedicated hardware with the burstable capacity and enhanced functionality of the hybrid cloud, so they can scale resources on-demand to meet business requirements.

Furthermore, this approach puts companies in the driving seat of the ICT landscape. Organisations who want to deploy cloud projects can start by considering which applications or content can be entrusted to run in a public cloud, and what business critical information should be stored in a private environment due to security or privacy concerns.

For example, during the busy Christmas season, retailers often need to treble infrastructure to successfully handle marketing campaigns and significant increases in the volume of sales orders. Given that these campaigns are short-term projects, businesses don’t necessarily want to invest valuable time in building internal infrastructure for peak period usage and then risk this resource being under-utilised for the rest of the year and becoming a depreciating asset.

To ensure that they can cope with seasonal spikes in traffic, while making cost savings on hardware and IT resources, retailers are moving towards a hybrid cloud approach. This enables brands to spin-up additional services in the cloud to meet customer demand, but ensures that operational functions, such as processing payment mechanisms, remain in the backend to deliver a private environment for compliance standards. Such strategies help form the foundation for IT cloud success and enable organisations to maximise their investment in existing hardware, but also utilise the latest technologies for new projects, or when hardware is at its end of life.

Connectivity

Undoubtedly, the hybrid cloud is becoming the deployment model of choice for those organisations that want to leverage existing infrastructure in tandem with the elasticity of the cloud. However, it’s important to remember that moving to a cloud model adds additional complexity to the network.

The challenge for organisations adopting a hybrid approach is ensuring that systems can interoperate and collaboratively function as one homogeneous system to prevent data and security islands. Businesses need to ensure that



the infrastructure already in place can seamlessly interwork with hybrid cloud servers, so that both can act as one.

Fundamentally, the crucial ingredient for a successful hybrid cloud model is the network on which it operates. If the cloud is delivered in a multi-tenanted environment that’s accessed across the public internet, then it will also remain synonymous with poor security and performance. Alternatively, organisations need to ensure that the underlying network can provide secure, fast and uncontended connectivity to the cloud. Having a reliable, robust, low-latency network infrastructure is critical. Once businesses have adapted to this strategy and developed the supporting network, the hybrid cloud will become the vital enabler for full cloud on-boarding in the future.

About Steven Harrison

As a founder and board member of Exponential-e, Steven leads the technical innovation within the company, introducing major new features such as VPLS, Intelligent QoS and VoIP services. With over 30 years’ experience in the telecommunications industry, Steven has worked in multi-national, enterprise and global carrier markets. Before joining Exponential-e, he held various senior roles within AT&T and was the CTO of Neos Networks, where he designed and developed the UK’s first long haul MPLS-based Gigabit Ethernet network. Steven has a passion for photography and is often called upon to take photos at Exponential-e events and social occasions.

SUCCESS FOR PRE-TERMINATED NETWORKS

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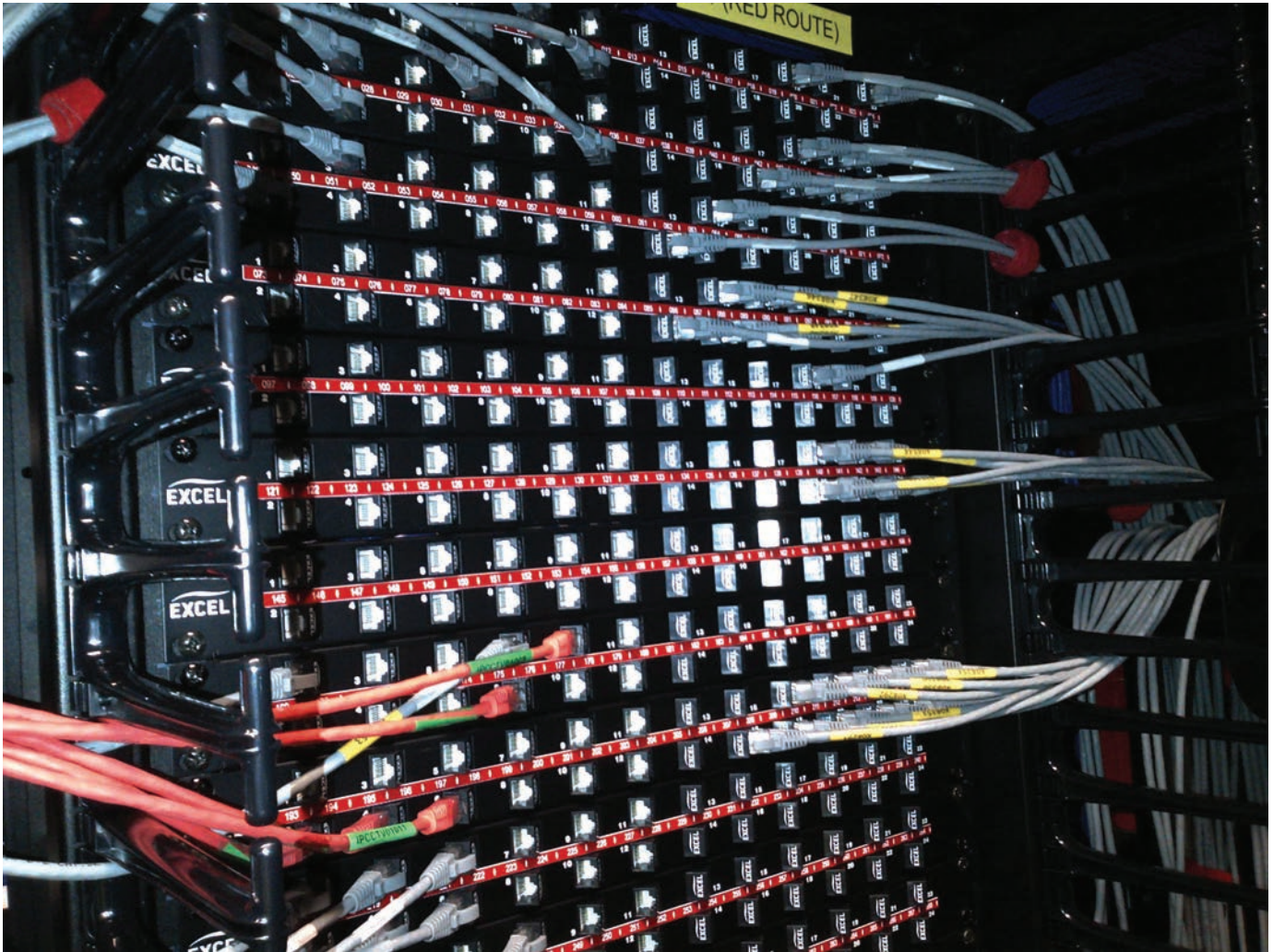
Pre-fabrication makes life easier at the sharp end...



Paul Cave examines the benefits of pre-fabricated networks...

By Paul Cave, Technical Manager, Excel Networking Solutions





Introduction

Pre-terminated cabling systems have been around since the beginning of computing - well before the inception of structured cabling.

Early IBM System 36 and 38 computers, for example, used to be connected to their peripherals by way of factory terminated twin-ax assemblies - very similar to the ones still used today for 40 & 100Gb connectivity within the data centre.

The use of pre-terminated solutions falls into a number of areas, one being data centres and the other increasingly used option is in commercial office fit-outs, as the project timescales are constantly being reduced by the competitive nature of the market.

We are now starting to witness the use of pre-fabrication within the construction industry. By that we mean not only the construction, but the partial fit-out of wall sections.

Data centres

This is the one area that is very competitive, not only the cost but also the delivery schedules required to satisfy the very quick turn-around of modern data centre deployments.

It is not uncommon for a data centre operator to want to turn an empty data hall into a fully functioning and revenue generating suite in a

matter of weeks - time is money, and as soon as the decision is made the operator - will want to start earning revenue.

Therefore the time pressure quite simply dictates that pre-termination is essential for the rapid commissioning of new data halls.

Copper pre-terminated cassettes have been traditionally restricted to Category 6 and below due to the potential problems of alien crosstalk. Individual keystone jacks are more commonly deployed for screened solutions especially Category 6A.

One of the traditional drawbacks of copper is the density that can be achieved, especially within the main patching field. The use of traditional outlets and patch management bars every 2U can be very restrictive and waste a lot of space.

To get around this issue, manufacturers have come up with a wide range of angled options, from angled 'V' style panels, standard outlets mounted at an angle within a flat panel, an angled modular panel that houses a standard presentation outlet in groups of six etc.

Unique approach

Excel has come up with a unique approach by having the front presentation of the jack itself at 45 degrees, this means the patch cables lie flat at

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Excel has come up with a unique approach by having the front presentation of the jack itself at 45 degrees.



the front of the panel with standard presentation at the rear, meaning the profiles do not need to be adjusted and the dressing of the cables within the cabinet can be optimised.

As can be seen from the main illustration, when a patching field deployed within a typical data centre – which is fully patched in a 45U 2post frame containing 960 outlets - almost 50 per cent more usage is achieved than by taking a traditional approach - all of which were pre-terminated and labelled off-site, then just plugged in and tested.

Whilst traditional termination of fibre is still used, increasingly using a fusion splicer within a data centre is mainly restricted to rectifying faults.

Almost all fibre assemblies are pre terminated whether that is conventional construction fibre that is terminated at both ends with SC or LC connectors, or more commonly used, MPO/MTP 12 fibre assemblies that are used as inter-cabinet links (trunk cables) which are then connected to cassettes housing the fan-out cables to LC presentation.

Each approach has seen a 'step-phase' in the time to deploy. Using conventional and fusion splicing pigtailed within patch panels, can take days if not weeks, pre-terminated conventional fibre, can take days, whereas the time taken to deploy MPO/MTP can be measured in just a day or so, if not hours.

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Pre-terminated cabling systems have been around since the beginning of computing.

Commercial offices

The completion of the handover of a project is critical, mainly due to the fact that the lease deadline of an end user client's existing facilities typically have to be met to avoid the costly penalty of having to extend their previous lease by a further three to six months. This situation is then compounded by protracted negotiations to get the best price.

It's against this backdrop that the pre-termination for commercial office installations is becoming increasingly popular as the project timescales are being constantly shrunk.

Some integrators have even taken the step to invest in their own facilities to keep up with the demand. Whilst it is basically the same product set being used, there are a few key additions and techniques being utilised.

One key difference is the lengths involved, they are usually much longer, and if there is a concern about the accuracy of drawings or measurements provided, some minimise the risks by just pre-terminating the floor outlet end at the factory.

This approach is a two visit approach, to the floor locations. First stage is to 'pull' or lay the loom, usually from the floor location back to the SERs (Secondary Equipment Rooms/Floor Distributors) at which point 'the floor' can be handed back to the main contractor for other

trades, with the outlets or GOP (Grid Outlet Point) box bagged and coiled for safety under the raised floor and the termination of the other end can continue in the SERs.

Solid core

Along with the solid core harness links used in the data centre we also see the use of longer versions of these assemblies being used as consolidation cables in coordination with consolidation points that are used to service zones or service areas within a floor or building.

Consolidation points have been a building block within the standards for a long time however they have only recently started to come into their own due to the additional flexibility they provide in a dynamic office environment that undergoes a lot of moves and changes.

There is an increasing demand for conventional tight buffered fibre to be pre-terminated offsite. This approach not only saves a great deal of time, it may be essential due to the lack of power onsite for a fusion splicer.

The days of 'glue and polish' are gone especially with the lower losses of OM4 fibre - certainly we do not know of anyone who is currently attempting the manual approach for single mode.

Pre-fabrication

Another area on the increase is that of pre-fabrication where complete sections of buildings are being constructed in a factory with all services are being 'pre-plumbed in' it used to just be the power and water but now complete walls for schools and hospitals are having all their services installed in a factory environment including items such as gas/oxygen and IT cabling.

The completed wall is then wrapped up taken to site by lorry and craned into position.

This means the time and resources required onsite are dramatically reduced. If everything is labelled correctly, the process takes a fraction of the time - and cost - required for a traditional installation, which perhaps explains the large number of construction companies that operate in the education and healthcare sectors who are looking to invest heavily in this approach.

Considerations

With all deployments of this nature, there are some serious pros and cons to take heed of one size does not fit all, however the pros certainly outweigh the cons.

Pre-terminated benefits

Our observations suggest that, when used correctly pre-terminated solutions can bring a raft of benefits to both the installer and the end user.

It all comes down to money and all the pros listed above have a 'cash' value. Yes the assemblies have a higher initial cost as they include the factory termination time, however the savings go beyond this.

Time saving also enters the frame here, which in itself brings benefits of cost saving, as if you buy the assemblies pre-terminated you don't need as many onsite engineers pulling cables in and terminating them for as long, saving on the labour bill.

Cost savings include all the other items of equipment that have to be hired, such as podiums and lifts, if the turnaround is quicker they don't need to be on hire as long.

Then there is the key advantage of their being less wastage - importantly the installer is purchasing a more accurate quantity of cable, they are buying by the metre and not by the drum.

Concentration of resources leading to smaller onsite teams for a shorter time and subsequently a smaller labour bill.

Furthermore, if the assemblies have been tested in the factory sometimes means less testing onsite. As an example, Excel has one data centre customer who accepts the factory test results for warranty purposes, and this has led to a reduction of testing times by as much as 75 per cent.

Conclusions

Pre-termination is not a fad, it is an increasingly popular way of delivering a project in a more timely and cost effective manner.

It should not just be confined to the major projects delivered by the large integrators, this approach can provide benefits for all sizes of project.

Excel Networking is investing and will continue to invest in both products and services that can support any level of project with many different variations of product presentation, panel to panel, solid core harness links, panel to GOP, Panel to CP etc. Including both copper and fibre, both traditional and MTP.

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Pros:

- Time saving
- Cost saving
- Less wastage, both packaging and cable off-cuts
- Concentration of valuable resources
- Pre-tested
- Less failure onsite

Cons:

- Accuracy in measurement required
- Lacks on-site flexibility for change in program

CYBER INSURANCE RISKS



Justin Tivey and Fiona Pearson discuss security provisions for cloud storage...

By Justin Tivey, Legal Director, Bond Dickinson LLP & Fiona Pearson, Associate, Bond Dickinson LLP

Introduction

Computing experts are questioning security provisions for cloud storage sites and the FBI is now investigating the 'cloud' celebrity photo leaks. Apple's iCloud, which backs up content from devices to the internet, has been rumoured to have been the access hub for many of the celebrities' leaked images, Apple have therefore come under scrutiny and are being held at the forefront of this scandal. However, the design company maintain that they cannot be held solely responsible, specifying that iCloud's security was not in fact breached, but that users own security may have been overcome. This reveals the vulnerability of cloud computing technology, and demonstrates the importance of making the vigilance of both user and provider, a priority.

The cloud is a revolutionary storage method that invisibly backs up files and alleviates the

potentially endless and costly search for extra storage space. The benefits span beyond personal users being able to upload photos or back up their smartphones and tablets, it makes data in general more readily accessible and portable.

Such benefits are highlighted by The Economist, which concluded that the cloud would fundamentally transform the technology industry. As such, cloud computing is becoming increasingly attractive to businesses, largely due to the potential cost savings in being able to store large quantities of data remotely. This possibility of having access to data from virtually anywhere provides huge advantages to businesses and is profoundly changing the way both individuals, and companies are operating. However, as the industry expands and the cloud provides more benefits to the individual, the risks undoubtedly become more significant.

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As the industry expands and the cloud provides more benefits to the individual, the risks undoubtedly become more significant.



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Getting connected

The cloud in essence is a form of outsourcing, where parts of a business's IT environment are rented, instead of being operated by the business itself and can then be connected to as needed. While originally a storage tool the cloud now provides offsite platforms, software and infrastructure. Many businesses now use cloud computing in some way, often for services such as payroll and payment processing, employee benefit portals and data storage. However, the sheer volume of data and number of users means that the cloud is an attractive target to hackers and this latest hacking scandal reminds users that data no longer resides only on the device that captured them.

The risks

In storing information virtually, you must consider the risk that the information may be accessible to others, potentially people who you do not wish to have access. The 2012 Gauntlet cloud hacking contest exposed the very real risks of cloud computing. CloudPassage, the American cloud infrastructure security provider, held the contest with the aim of understanding how vulnerable cloud environments are to hackers. Throughout the contest, the winning hacker was able to fully compromise a server in less than four hours, demonstrating just how easily a motivated hacker can gain access to remote data. The contest also demonstrated that although almost every service used online requires a password, more often than not, it is human weakness that gives hackers the simplest route to compromising accounts.

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The sheer volume of data and number of users means that the cloud is an attractive target to hackers.

“In storing information virtually, one must consider the risk that the information may be accessible to others.”

‘Phishing’, which means tricking the user into giving up their password, is now considered to be the simplest and most effective way hackers gain access to accounts and is already being blamed for giving access to some of the aforementioned leaked celebrity photos. The challenge facing both users and providers in terms of security is that it's a shared responsibility between the two, the cloud vendor and the cloud customer. It is crucial therefore that both sides are aware of security issues to prevent a breach and it may not always be clear who is at fault when there is a security failure. Many companies will believe they have transferred their risk when their data is in the hands of a third party, however the reality is that cloud contracts often seek to leave little liability for cloud providers. Under current data protection legislation in the UK the data protection obligation rests with the user of the data (the data processor) and not a third party storing it in the cloud for them. Upcoming European data protection laws will change this.

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“As well as putting adequate insurance in place, it’s important for businesses to manage their own cyber risks.”

Hazards to Insure

Fire



Explosion



Terrorism



Workplace Violence



Pandemic Diseases



Utility Outage



Mechanical Breakdown



Supplier Failure



Cyber Attack



Natural Hazards



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Most recent policies can offer cover for the consequences of hacks including those that cause physical damage or production delays.

Cyber claims

Cyber insurance policies often define the insured’s computer system to include third party networks with which the policyholder has contracted. Accordingly if a breach occurs, the policy will usually respond regardless of whether the breach occurred on a local computer system or in the cloud. However, there is still a question mark over who has responsibility for the breach. In order to protect yourself or business, it’s a good idea to require the cloud service provider to carry cyber security cover as well to help fund a loss, this, along with security standards is something that you should discuss with the provider before becoming a customer. If the company relies on a third-party cloud vendor to transact business on their behalf and a security failure shuts down the cloud; the policy may not cover the resulting

loss of profit. In order to do so, the policy should specifically include cover for contingent business interruption.

Insurers are expecting to write more policies that allow companies to manage the financial fallout when their systems are compromised and the market for such insurance has grown steadily from close to zero in 2000, but it remains limited. Regulators have raised concerns about the lack of provision. “The market for cyber insurance policies is not well developed,” said supervisors including the European Banking Authority in a recent paper about the risks in the financial system, noting that there are only a few big providers. The cyber insurance that was available mainly covered data breaches. More recent policies can offer cover for the consequences of hacks including those that cause physical damage or business interruption and production delays. Most policies covered payouts to customers for the loss of confidential information, which in individual cases are often low value claims, but there is growing recognition that it’s first party cover that insurers need for investigations into what went wrong and even the hiring of public relations consultants. As well as putting adequate insurance in place, it is important for businesses to manage their own cyber risks. This includes evaluating first and third party risks associated with the IT systems and networks in your business, assessing the potential events that could cause first or third party risks to materialise and analysing the controls that are currently in place and whether they need further improvement. However, these steps will also be useful to insurers when seeking insurance cover.

Conclusion

Celebrity photo leaks aside, the cloud has provided efficiency for individuals and businesses alike and in some cases even brought improvements in security. However, cyber threats continue to be a growing issue, and add complexity to risk management decisions. The bottom line is that when it comes to storing data in the cloud, risks should be identified and managed in the same way as if you were storing data yourself.



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