Cloud of clouds: a global vision for cloud services integration

Luis Alvarez, CEO, BT Global Services

Something is preventing business from making the most of the cloud. Boards have an appetite for the operational flexibility and commercial benefits of cloud computing and it's a great platform for innovation. The CIOs we talk with at BT are certainly keen to make the most of these opportunities. But even though they agree that the cloud could help solve their toughest business challenges, there's still reluctance to adopt cloud deployments for more than tactical outcomes.

We must make it easier for organisations to embrace the cloud and use it for truly transformational purposes. This is where BT's 'cloud of clouds' vision comes into play: to give CIOs a practical route into cloud computing that meets their needs for choice and flexibility, total security and someone who knows how to make it work together.

Your cloud is only as good as your network

In a cloud environment, there's only one way to guarantee service and security and that's to have a single, end to end global network that can prioritise applications, manage access to data and optimise performance. Industry analyst Ovum[1] suggests that as a result: "enterprises are increasingly likely to discriminate toward cloud service providers with combined data centre and networking orchestration skills as their trusted brokers across hybrid clouds." In other words, if you don't have your own end to end network, the best way to guarantee performance of your cloud is to use the established global networks and infrastructure of companies such as BT.

We believe the BT network is in a class of its own and it's central to our cloud of clouds vision. As a telco, our network offers industrial strength security and connectivity. And because we own all of it, we are confident in every aspect of its performance.

Freedom of choice

Our cloud of clouds approach gives CIOs freedom of choice. They can freely choose and combine public and private clouds as well as services and platforms from independent software vendors, in any combination. We're already offering services from leading third party vendors and we'll bring more cloud providers securely and seamlessly into our cloud of clouds in the coming months.

[1] Realising possibilities in the cloud: The need for a trusted broker, Ovum 2014

Our network extends to 198 countries/territories and includes our 46 data centres around the world. CIOs can choose what and where to connect, blend together their private assets and ours or add services and infrastructure from third parties. They can scale capacity up and down, turn services on and off. They can move to the cloud at the right speed.

Choice and flexibility are balanced by control. CIOs can control their cloud formation through our Compute Management System. It lets them see all their resources at once and make changes easily. Which is just how cloud computing should be.

Bringing it all together

Bringing together a rich mix of cloud services and infrastructure so that everything works seamlessly is a serious integration challenge. It takes creativity, special skills, expert technical knowhow and good relationships with multiple cloud service providers. It's an art as well as a science – and not an easy undertaking for even the most technologically minded organisation. This is what we call the art of connecting.

Setting up a complex cloud ecosystem is a job for specialists. Our team of technology and industry professionals will help CIOs make the right choices, and design a unique cloud ecosystem for each organisation. No two clouds will ever be the same.

Keeping the plates spinning

Setting it up is one thing. Keeping it all working satisfactorily day in, day out, is quite another. Transitioning to the cloud is a big commitment and CIOs must be completely confident that delivery will meet expectations. Few companies have as much experience as BT in maintaining consistently high levels of network performance. Again, our history as a telco means that one of the things we do best is deliver consistently high levels of service. When a customer moves to our cloud of clouds, we can take total responsibility for all their cloud operations in one single contract, with a single SLA.

In the future digital age, no business will be successful unless it makes the most of the cloud. With our cloud of clouds approach, CIOs now have a partner who can make the move to the cloud straightforward, and help to bring about truly transformational outcomes.

Find out more at www.bt.com/point-of-view