HPE GreenLake

Why a hybrid cloud model is the key to optimal handling of all your workloads

Five considerations to guide your hybrid strategy

Most enterprises are running at least some parts of their IT estate in the cloud, with a mix of workloads placed across a variety of cloud platforms, some public, some private. Some workloads remain on-premises under tighter internal control while others run in a public cloud environment to help manage costs.

This type of hybrid cloud environment has become commonplace. Research by Hewlett Packard Enterprise found that 91% of organizations use at least two types of cloud technology, many in combination with on-premises operations. Less than 10% of enterprises use just one form of cloud or run exclusively in an on-premises environment.[1]

Many enterprises arrived at a hybrid model by accident, as early cloud-first strategies did not reflect the complete needs of all workloads. But this is changing, says Scott Wiest, CTO for global sales at HPE. "We are now seeing companies take a more deliberate, focused approach to delivering a hybrid cloud operating model," he says.

Organizations recognize that hybrid cloud affords them greater freedom to place workloads where they will have the biggest business impact — in a private or public cloud, at the edge, in a colocated environment, or anywhere in between. When thoughtfully implemented, hybrid cloud models also allow you to adapt dynamically as your needs change.

[1] "From hybrid cloud by accident to hybrid cloud by design," HPE, April 2023

Charting a path to hybrid cloud

Foundationally, many companies are looking for a combination of the control they get from private cloud and the performance of public cloud. "Hybrid done right offers a unification effect that gives you visibility and control everywhere," Wiest says, adding that getting there takes planning and looks different for every organization. "Hybrid cloud is a journey, not a destination."

Business leaders who favor hybrid cloud say it improves their organizations' flexibility and responsiveness by helping them maximize IT resources and making IT more fully available, allowing them to match IT workloads with the appropriate compute or storage capacity. This approach allows you to incorporate multigenerational IT into your environment, address security and redundancy issues, and meet increasingly complex compliance standards.

When charting your course to hybrid cloud, it helps to take a comprehensive approach. All enterprises have unique IT environments and, more important, business goals distinct to their organization and industry. However, Wiest says many got started on the road to hybrid cloud because they wanted to focus on their core business strategy, not on running data centers.

1.

As you devise a hybrid cloud strategy to advance the business, consider these five key objectives:

Maximize the value of your IT resources — especially your budget

Enterprises are beginning to understand that a hybrid cloud approach offers the best of what the cloud has to offer. They are rethinking models and integrating solutions that don't require them to host everything in owned data centers, which are expensive to maintain.

Wringing maximum value from your cloud spend goes hand in hand with ensuring you can make workload deployment choices based on business needs for performance, latency, security, sovereignty, and cost.

A hybrid cloud approach helps you do more with less and gives you greater control. This control can be further enhanced by cloud-based solutions that can plug into a hybrid cloud architecture to make it easier to manage your IT estate — including workload placement — through a single pane of glass.

2.

Make IT fully available

Hyperscale public cloud providers typically promise high availability, but it's common to experience performance variability, particularly with business-critical applications that were moved to the cloud early on. "Organizations moved critical workloads to the cloud by lifting and shifting those apps," Wiest says. "This often resulted in suboptimal performance and in some cases forced them to move workloads back on-premises."

To best serve the business, technology teams must become IT service brokers that can source cloud operations everywhere. "That means providing everything as a service," Wiest says. Being able to place workloads where they can be handled most efficiently supports this objective while enhancing IT availability overall.

A hybrid cloud model can help your business move much faster, but you need to build process optimization into your strategy, along with other critical elements like security, visibility, and flexible workload placement.

3.

Achieve true resilience

What every enterprise wants is resilience and availability for all data and applications. But Wiest points out that expecting always-on availability from the public cloud may be unrealistic — especially when you need greater control over workload placement.

"For example, routing changes might cause a production outage because monolithic apps must be started in a serial fashion," he says. "You can't just power them all on and expect that they work."

In a hybrid cloud model, however, you're not relying on the public cloud alone, so you have the flexibility to match workloads with the resources they need, which bolsters resilience.

4.

Enable insights by matching workloads to needed performance

Enterprise data continues to explode, but it often remains siloed and difficult to access holistically. To use data to enable more nimble decision-making, drive innovation, and facilitate deeper customer relationships, you need to unify that data and employ data solutions or services you can integrate with existing systems.

Optimal workload placement plays a vital role in your ability to ingest, store, process, and analyze data, which means you need a compute platform engineered to provide the necessary performance wherever the data resides.

Wiest advises companies to integrate data unification and processing performance directly into their hybrid cloud strategy. "If it's part of your strategy from the start, you're more likely to prioritize solutions that can help aggregate critical data and use it to fuel intelligent automation, advanced analytics, and artificial intelligence initiatives," he says.

The more IT becomes embedded in the business — not simply aligned with business strategy — the easier it will be to achieve data-driven transformation. You want business-critical data at your fingertips, so it can drive decision-making and help you innovate faster.

5.

When in doubt, call in experts

The good news is many experienced technology service providers make it their mission to help companies rethink their IT operating models relative to cloud. These experts can help you seize opportunities to put hybrid cloud to work exactly as desired and make decisions for optimal workload placement based on several factors, including cost, availability, and even environmental sustainability, which is rising to the top of many enterprise IT agendas.

Partnering with the right provider can help you achieve true resilience, true optimization of process and speed, and true partnership between business and IT.

Look for a technology partner whose solution portfolio spans edge, on-premises, and public and private cloud. Also, verify that they have the expertise to help you fine-tune your hybrid cloud strategy in lockstep with business goals. As with many important technology transformations, getting to hybrid cloud is always easier when you have guidance from someone who's already been there.

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