

Top 3 Reasons Why You Need Cloud Management

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Companies in almost every industry are responding to new opportunities in the digital economy by pursuing new business models and new revenue streams. This is driving the need to dramatically speed up application delivery. The need to get applications to market quickly is causing increased expectations for IT to rapidly provide resources to development, QA, and line-of-business teams to develop and roll out applications. The inability of IT to meet these expectations is a major reason why the public cloud market has exploded.

While business wants IT to be more responsive, IT must address the need for speed with policy-driven governance, compliance, security, reliable resource delivery, management, and performance. Additionally, IT is increasingly being tasked to manage IT environments across private and public cloud environments.

A mixed cloud environment is now the norm. According to a recent study, 69 percent of respondents use a hybrid cloud approach.¹

What Is a Cloud Management Platform?

The concept of a cloud management platform emerged initially as a response to the requirement that IT be able to provision resources more quickly and efficiently.

In its basic form, a CMP helps you accelerate provisioning of IT services across private and public clouds. But a CMP should be much more than automated provisioning. A true enterprise-ready CMP includes both Day 1 and Day 2 capabilities, enabling both provisioning and ongoing management and optimization of compute, storage, network, and application services.

With Day 1 capabilities you can rapidly provision a complete services stack—compute, storage, network, and application resources—using blueprints that embed both automation and related operation policies.

Day 2 capabilities allow you to monitor and manage the health and performance of those resources across physical, virtual, and cloud environments, and to understand and manage the cost of both public and private cloud resources.

¹“Multi-Cloud Environments are Becoming the New Normal for IT,” Dimensional Research, February 2016.

Top Three Reasons for CMP

In a recent study, 64 percent of participants preferred a unified management tool that can manage both public and private cloud resources from a single interface.² In our experience, we see three underlying reasons why businesses want a cloud management platform.

1. Meet today's competing priorities of bimodal IT.
2. Prepare for the future: software-defined data centers (SDDC) and hybrid IT environments.
3. Gain compelling business and IT benefits.

Let's examine why each of these reasons has bubbled to the top of this list:

1. Meet today's competing priorities of bimodal IT

In the cloud era, IT faces ever-changing and often-conflicting priorities. For example, IT teams now need to be poised to:

- Quickly adopt new technology while keeping a lid on spending.
- Make strategic contributions that support business objectives, yet maintain operational excellence.
- Encourage innovation while watching out for security and maintaining compliance.

These priorities all play into an overarching challenge in the cloud era: support the business in its need for speed and agility while maintaining control and reducing costs.

2. Prepare for the future

With the allure of hybrid IT environments, IT organizations are increasingly moving toward a software-defined data center (SDDC) architecture as a foundation for building the hybrid environment. The SDDC is the next step for what's coming: workloads that are increasingly a mix of traditional and modern application architectures. And they will be provisioned in an increasingly virtualized mix of physical and virtual environments that are managed both on-premises and in public clouds.

In response to this complex set of management requirements, the concept of a cloud management platform is gaining stature. With a robust CMP platform, you can effectively manage the complete lifecycle of services delivered in an SDDC and a hybrid IT environment that encompasses the traditional enterprise data center, private clouds, public clouds, and hybrid clouds.

² "Multi-Cloud Environments are Becoming the New Normal for IT," Dimensional Research, February 2016.

3. Gain compelling business and IT benefits

A CMP is as much about business benefits as it is about IT benefits. Let's look at some of the most important benefits of a well-architected, enterprise-ready CMP.

Agility. Speed up the delivery of IT services, allowing your IT staff to meet the growing expectations of line-of-business partners.

Control. Maintain control of your company's assets and support the needs of your IT team in your quest to balance the dynamics of agility, risk, and cost.

Efficiency. Raise the productivity of your IT staff and the utilization of your in-house and cloud-based data center resources—which are two keys to reducing operational and capital expenditures.

Choice. Gain the flexibility to match the right mix of private and public cloud services with the needs of business units, application owners, and development teams.

Business and IT alignment. Transparency into the operations and the cost characteristics of your IT services help strengthen ties between business units and your IT organization.

Key Use Cases

While most businesses are still early in making decisions about cloud automation, most companies want sophisticated automation that will enable both automated infrastructure and application deployment, and eventually to offer self-service to their end users. With this in mind, we see the most common and highest-value use cases for cloud management platform solutions fall into three categories:

- **Intelligent Operations**
- **Automated IT to IaaS**
- **DevOps-Ready IT**

Let's take a closer look at each of these use cases, and how CMP delivers benefits for all three.

Intelligent Operations

As you expand your reliance on applications that directly interact with customers, the number of mission-critical applications is mounting. And even if you can ask for patience from your employees to wait while you solve an application issue, you know some customers will just find someone else to do business with.

Applications are more important than ever, but maintaining those applications in a hybrid IT environment means corralling multiple resources, managing more dynamic workloads, and coping with greater operational complexity.

The right CMP can help you proactively address health, performance, and capacity management of IT services across heterogeneous and hybrid cloud environments, improving IT service performance and availability

Key Benefits

An enterprise-ready CMP helps you:

- Proactively solve performance issues.
- Continuously monitor and manage capacity.
- Streamline processes with customizable policies, guided remediation, and automated enforcement of standards.
- Understand the cost and consumption of private and public cloud services.

Automated IT to IaaS

With the growth of the public cloud, users keep elevating their expectations for IT responsiveness. While many IT teams are addressing the challenge by partially automating service delivery through scripts and configuration management, opportunities remain for additional improvement.

Without full automation, provisioning still requires significant human intervention, resulting in errors and lost productivity. Additionally, a lack of standardization slows down response times for line-of-business partners. And with an inability to track and manage deployed resources, IT teams are unable to maximize the use of data center resources.

By leveraging CMP you can measure up to the expectations, reducing provisioning time from weeks to hours, even minutes while improving the ongoing management of provisioned resources.

Key Benefits

An enterprise-ready CMP enables your team to:

- Embed automation and policy within blueprints to help you stand up production-ready infrastructure in minutes rather than weeks.
- Rightsize, reclaim, or retire already-provisioned resources to maximize capital expenditures.
- Continuously monitor the health, performance, capacity, and costs of already-provisioned resources.

DevOps-Ready IT

As more IT organizations pursue cloud solutions to support their DevOps teams, they are recognizing the need to serve a mix of developer types with different requirements for how they interact with infrastructure.

Challenges include delivering a complete application environment to development teams upon request so they can be immediately productive; providing “as-needed” governance and control over resources without negatively impacting developer productivity, and adopting concepts such as continuous delivery and continuous integration that automate more of the development process than just resource provisioning.

With enterprise-ready CMP, you can deliver a complete application stack, support developer choice in the form of both API and GUI access to resources, and provision resources across a hybrid cloud.

Key Benefits

An enterprise-ready CMP helps you:

- Rapidly provision a complete application stack within a private or hybrid cloud.
- Provide both self-service and an API approach to support developer choice in how resources are accessed.
- Deliver a solution for continuous delivery that seamlessly integrates with the VMware CMP for resource provisioning.

Learn More

Manage and automate a heterogeneous, multi-cloud environment with an enterprise-ready cloud management platform based on VMware vRealize® Suite and optimized to run on Intel®-based server platforms. The combination of vRealize Suite powered by Intel® Xeon® E5 v4 processors, Intel® Solid State Drives, and Intel® Ethernet 10/40 Gb Ethernet Adapters provides a robust solution for effectively managing enterprise workloads, and addresses advanced management requirements including Day 1 provisioning and Day 2 ongoing operations for compute, storage, network, and application-level resources.

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