Don\'t Embrace the Cloud? Gone in a Decade

Posted by meggebrecht - 2009/11/03 15:32

Richard Marcello, president of technology, consulting and integration solutions at Unisys, caused a bit of a stir at a cloud computing conference in Santa Clara yesterday. Discussing the benefits of private clouds, Marcello said that an internal deployment had helped Unisys reduce provisioning times from ten days to five minutes, reported InfoWorld.

Unisys was able to â€œeliminate a whole bunch of actually U.S.-based jobs and kind of replace them with two folks out of India to serve a 1,200-person engineering organization,â€• said Marcello.

From a PR point of view, that comment probably wasnâ€™t wise. But people have been pointing to the cloud as a potential source of IT job loss -- and major cost savings -- for some time. Still, Marcello went as far as to tell InfoWorld that â€œif people don't embrace cloud computing, I don't think the companies will be around in 5 to 10 years.â€•

What do you think? Is Marcello overstating the cloudâ€™s role, and how quickly it will grow? Will companies that fail to invest in the cloud -- whether a private, public or hybrid approach -- fail to see 2014?

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Re:Don\'t Embrace the Cloud? Gone in a Decade

Posted by Bill Wilson - 2009/11/05 08:59

I think Marcello is dead on right. It is really all about internal operational efficiencies - to his good point, why introduce more overhead into your IT department? If you trust that public cloud computing is secure then why try to recreate this environment within your company when you can purchase these cloud services for much less than the cost to build.

A cost conscience CIO will buy not build in order to keep his company competitive.

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Re:Don\'t Embrace the Cloud? Gone in a Decade

Posted by scarr - 2009/11/09 14:32

If you are comfortable with the security the service provider offers then it does make sense the cloud usage and cloud based offerings will continue to grow. I will be moving my non core applications to the cloud starting in 2010.

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Re:Don\'t Embrace the Cloud? Gone in a Decade

Posted by sediga - 2010/03/12 13:34

I think the comment was a little too harsh - I do agree that compute resources will be a true commodity with the emergence of cloud. However, that simply means that focus will be moving to other more important business functions. If you agree that much of SA that takes place is overhead, then you would agree with Marcelloâ€™s statement.

I think the cloud will commoditize compute in such a way that business can grow faster. That will create jobs, which in turn â€¦ well, you get the idea.

I donâ€™t agree that if you do not embrace cloud, you will go out of business. I heard the same thing about SOA.

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Re:Don\'t Embrace the Cloud? Gone in a Decade

Posted by srw134 - 2010/03/13 00:10

This is one of those wonderfully hopeful comments which will come up short in the end (Remember how Linux was going to take over the desktop market 10-15 years ago). The cloud is not really giving much to the technical market other than terminology. The concept of making server resources a commodity is certainly a good concept which should be explored (as it is) but there are many factors which must be figured out before anything wide scale is going to happen with public clouds. In reading the most recent network world it is obvious that not even the top security experts trust the public cloud and this will have to happen at a wide scale for it to be widely deployed.

On the jobs comment, it is obvious that the US is lagging behind many other countries in terms of growing technical talent in a number of fields. This is a problem that needs to be fixed at the source not at the destination. The source in this case is secondary education institutions and at the college level. If kids coming up are not inspired to work in technology then they will just go in a different direction.

-sean

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Re:Don\'t Embrace the Cloud? Gone in a Decade

Posted by sediga - 2010/03/14 18:00

Going to Sean's comment -
I really like to see a report (not speculation) that asks the following question:

What is/are the top 5 roadblocks that prevent your organization adopting/using public clouds?

I know security is up there, and I would guess that lack of standard is up there too. What else?

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Re:Don\'t Embrace the Cloud? Gone in a Decade

Posted by caragarretson - 2010/03/15 20:35

Do you think reliability would be on the top 5 list? While cloud providers have SLAs etc to give businesses confidence in signing their data centers over to them, it seems many major cloud service providers have suffered outages of one sort or another.

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Re:Don\'t Embrace the Cloud? Gone in a Decade

Posted by sediga - 2010/03/17 04:30

I believe that it is matter of â€œyou get what you pay forâ€•. I am sure that depending on the vendor and their target â€œaudier you will get different SLAâ€™s.
I do agree that by definition Cloud is less reliable than an internal infrastructure over which you have full control. The other choice is to lease a datacenter and outsource your compute. I donâ€™t really consider that cloud though.

So we have:
1. Security
2. Not meeting SLA
What else?

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Re:Don\'t Embrace the Cloud? Gone in a Decade

Posted by srw134 - 2010/03/20 23:45

I believe when it comes down to it various non-confidential applications like email, chat, discussions and other collaboration software could easily be integrated by a public cloud service with minimal concern. It is the more confidential things like finances and the like which will take a long time to truly nail down in implementation.

I tend to think the cloud is a buzz work that is very high right now. However, the ideas coming are quite interesting whether you associate them with the cloud or not.

-sean

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Re:Don\'t Embrace the Cloud? Gone in a Decade
Posted by sediga - 2010/03/22 10:28

I like to separate the two types of applications:
- sequential
- parallel

I know that cloud is clouding this notion, but I still believe that if you are putting an email application on the cloud, you are basically an â€œASPâ€•. Not sure of the benefit here other than benefits of outsourcing.

Whereas if you are running a parallelizable application, you are better off on the cloud. This benefit can be realized rather easily.

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Re:Don\'t Embrace the Cloud? Gone in a Decade
Posted by caragarretson - 2010/04/13 20:56

That's a great idea for a report, maybe sourced by companies who have moved something to the cloud and can talk about lessons learned. I wonder if reliability would factor in, and trustworthiness of vendors?

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Re:Don\'t Embrace the Cloud? Gone in a Decade
Posted by sediga - 2010/04/14 08:21

I hope trustworthiness factors in â€“ donâ€™t you? If I am putting my data, no matter how inconsequential this data is, I want to make sure that it is safe. A certain level of trust must be there before I start putting more sensitive data â€œout thereâ€•â€¦ Unlike the X-files, I donâ€™t want the truth to be out there.

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Re:Don\'t Embrace the Cloud? Gone in a Decade
Posted by caragarretson - 2010/04/19 08:55

Yes, I hope trustworthiness factors in regardless of what kind of data is put in the cloud. How do companies rate this, though? Do they move data to the cloud only with trusted companies that they have already built a relationship? I think this is one of those fuzzy areas that is going to be very hard for companies to define.

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Re:Don\'t Embrace the Cloud? Gone in a Decade
Posted by srw134 - 2010/04/20 22:47

I think when it comes down to it the only way for these companies to gain trust in their offerings is through small steps. For example, offer the ability to host email or groupware functionality (Which is by some providers). These tend to be important but also tend not to carry highly sensitive material. Once the companies have an established experience with these offerings over time then the other possibilities can be explored.

-sean

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Re:Don\'t Embrace the Cloud? Gone in a Decade
Posted by caragarretson - 2010/04/21 07:16

Good point re: small steps. Seems the prevailing advice re: starting to move things to the cloud is to move non-critical, non-confidential data first and see how it goes. If a company is comfortable with this, and the cloud vendor proves its

trustworthiness, then there may be a level of comfort to allow for more critical, sensitive data to be moved to cloud - although I would guess this second step is harder to take than the first one.

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Re:Don\'t Embrace the Cloud? Gone in a Decade

Posted by sediga - 2010/04/23 14:07

The devil is in the details, obviously. I had a scenario where a small company wanted to use cloud resources â€“ not one of the big vendors like EC2, etc â€“ and things were ok for prototype purposes. Once they were ready to scale out, the vendor would not agree to some of their restrictions, mainly their requirement not to share physical disk with other users. They had to remap everything and start from scratch. Not saying that this is an indicative of every scenario, but something to watch out for. I tend to have â€œdeal breakersâ€• when I start working with a new vendor. Smaller companies, unless they have experienced people working for them, wouldnâ€™t know some of these gochas.

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Re:Don\'t Embrace the Cloud? Gone in a Decade

Posted by caragarretson - 2010/04/23 14:11

That's quite a cautionary tale, and too bad for the small business that had to, I'm guessing, delay the project and spend extra time and money, since the provider wouldn't bend. I wonder how this could have gone better, should the company have checked all requiremements and restrictions before doing the prototype, or was the provider responsible for spelling out the details before the customer began?

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Re:Don\'t Embrace the Cloud? Gone in a Decade

Posted by sediga - 2010/04/24 22:44

My view is that an enterprise could run tests on a cloud env â€“ performance testing, QA, scalability testing ,etc, first. Every organization does this, and it is the low hanging fruit, per se. This would also be the first â€œwinâ€• and can become the first internal â€œwhite paperâ€•. I also think that if data is encrypted, it is technically ok, but I know that I am being too soft on the issue.

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