# Move Up to an OpenStack Private Cloud and Lose the Vendor Lock-in

*"Peace, commerce and honest friendship with all nations; entangling alliances with none."*

-Thomas Jefferson

# Introduction

In business and technology terms, "entangling alliances" can be a real problem. For example, cloud solutions are a hot topic. They offer a compelling option for organizations looking for more agile architectures to deliver competitive or market advantages. However, the proprietary nature of most of these solutions is setting off alarm bells for many senior IT professionals. In fact, they are so concerned about the possible lock-in caused by proprietary products, that there is now a strong and growing trend towards open source private cloud software as a more attractive option.

## Among the open source options, OpenStack is the most popular by a wide margin.

It has matured to the point where many of the world's most successful global companies are running their production environments on it, and it's being touted by many technologists and analysts as a mainstream platform and even as the future of cloud computing.

SUSE released the first OpenStack-based enterprise private cloud distribution back in 2012, so we have a really good grasp of the appeal of OpenStack software. However, we're always doing our best to stay in sync with our customers. To that end, we recently sought up-to-date intelligence as to how large companies around the world are using private cloud technologies and services, with a particular emphasis on OpenStack private cloud. The result is a SUSE-commissioned independent research report, *Private Cloud Research: 2015\**, which examines opinion across seven countries from 813 senior IT professionals in companies with 250+ employees. It explores issues relating to adoption rates, drivers, future plans and the likely impact on IT professionals' careers. Here are some key findings:

**90%** of IT professionals say they have already implemented some form of private cloud solution

**15%** have already moved to an OpenStack private cloud and 66 percent plan to do so at some stage

**91%** think deploying a private cloud for their organization is vital to their own future career prospects

**93%** think that Infrastructure-as-a-Service is the future of the data center

It's clear that private clouds are replacing conventional data centers, and that an open source private cloud—specifically OpenStack cloud—is in the near-term plans for companies around the world and in industries across the board. However, if a private cloud is in your future, what can you do to ensure you're getting the greatest value out of your technology investment?

# How to Avoid Being a
# Victim of Vendor Lock-in

It's an age-old story: An innovative vendor develops breakthrough proprietary technology; companies buy it en masse; and, next thing they know, they're stuck. The value of their environments and investments are totally dependent on the vendor's continued ability (and inclination) to innovate and support customers at a fair price.

It's called "vendor lock-in," and far too often it doesn't end well. Companies sign on because the technology delivers powerful advantages. But there's no telling where the vendor or the enterprise will be a year or two down the road, or how attractive the vendor's solutions or pricing will be. Rip-and-replace may be the only option should the enterprise choose to go in another direction.

Many of today's leading private cloud offerings are proprietary. And while they may be impressive, the proprietary nature of those solutions raises concerns among many IT professionals.

**92%** of IT professionals surveyed agreed that they are concerned about vendor lock-in when it comes to choosing a private infrastructure cloud solution

**96%** of respondents think there are business advantages to implementing an open source private cloud:

- Flexibility and reduced costs top the list of advantages (both 55 percent)
- These are followed by agility (43%) and freedom of choice (37 percent)

An OpenStack private cloud is open source. It offers vendor neutrality, and it's the most mature, most popular open source private cloud initiative. Also, OpenStack cloud development and future-proofing are the shared responsibilities of a highly dedicated and motivated developer community, numbering in the tens of thousands. On that level, companies offering proprietary solutions simply can't compete.

SUSE, a founding member and platinum sponsor of the OpenStack Foundation, starts with these open source advantages and packages them into the SUSE OpenStack Cloud distribution to maximize their usefulness for your business.

# How SUSE Can Help You to Keep Your Options Open

Forget rip-and-replace. SUSE OpenStack Cloud is the original OpenStack distribution, and we have flexibility and choice down to a science.

- SUSE OpenStack Cloud gives you a BYOH (Bring Your Own Hypervisor) solution. With the widest hypervisor support available, including KVM, Xen, Hyper-V, vSphere and IBM z/VM—you get to take your pick for developing new applications or easier migration of existing virtualized workloads into your private cloud environment

- SUSE fully complies with OpenStack DefCore standards for interoperability, so you can be confident that you're choosing technology that retains the fundamental building blocks of OpenStack and that you are not locked in. DefCore compliance means that the core cloud components are compatible between

certified OpenStack solutions. This means that should you wish to change your OpenStack partner, you can do so without the huge complication and expense of having to rip and replace your technology or go through a major data migration.

- SUSE has 20 years of experience in developing strong working relationships with hardware vendors and ISVs. The resulting benefit to our customers is outstanding interoperability due to the widest hardware certification and broadest software and application support of any OpenStack cloud distribution on the market.

That's in stark contrast to many other OpenStack vendors who either don't have the depth of experience as enterprise Linux vendors or who have no solid history of hardware platform support or neutrality. That's not encouraging if you are looking for a partner to help support your existing data center infrastructure as well as your entire cloud solution stack.

# Who Needs an OpenStack Partner?

You have a first-rate data center operations team. So you could download the software and deploy an OpenStack private cloud quite capably without outside assistance, right?

Well, probably, but it pays to learn from the experience of others. Consider this:

## 65%

of companies report that they have found the experience of trying to implement OpenStack cloud on their own difficult. Some admitted that they quit trying altogether.

## 85%

of senior IT professionals surveyed say that a lack of available skillset in the market is making their company reluctant to pursue private cloud.

At SUSE, we believe that CIOs are capable of assessing their internal capabilities, doing their own TCO calculations and, when necessary, choosing the best partners. As part of those deliberations, we are confident that you will want to consider what SUSE has to offer.

SUSE OpenStack Cloud can help you automate and orchestrate your IT infrastructure while driving innovation for your business. It is built to be the fastest to deploy and the easiest to manage and to be robust, solid and reliable. In fact, it is tailor-made for IT professionals who want to get up and running fast with minimal outside expertise.

SUSE can provide as much or as little human capital as you need in order to design, deploy, update, maintain and optimize your private cloud. Some vendors claim OpenStack is for the development new cloud applications only. We say that in addition, it's for getting your enterprise to the next level of efficiency, automation and elasticity. Together, we can get there—sooner than you might think.

* Source: Dynamic Markets, "Private Cloud Research 2015"

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