Who Says Stress Has to Be Part of the Private Cloud Transition?

Introduction

“The only thing that is constant is change.”

-Heraclitus

Every IT professional knows that change is a constant in data centers, but that knowledge doesn’t make it any easier to tolerate. Big changes to your environment are always complex. Just to keep moving forward, you need to allow for business justification, planning, project team selection and proof of concept—long before production. It’s a wonder anybody can stay ahead of the game. Yet data center managers through the years have done a remarkable job of doing just that.

Remember when, just a few years ago, data center growth strategies were based on a physical infrastructure? Then virtualization came along and delivered new levels of efficiency, consolidation, availability and scalability—until that paradigm started to lose its edge as more and more enterprises found themselves confronting VM (virtual machine) sprawl and network congestion.
The cloud is clearly the next big thing, and for many organizations, a private cloud is the appropriate solution. Situated within the firewall and characterized by strict access control, a private cloud is the right choice for those who are looking for on-site infrastructure and the flexibility and scalability to meet ever-changing demands. What’s more, a private cloud is often the best choice for organizations that put security and regulatory compliance high on their list of mandatory capabilities.

But What Do IT Pros Really Think about Private Clouds?

Like everything else, private clouds come with both issues and opportunities—admirers and detractors too. As a founding member and Platinum sponsor of the OpenStack Foundation, and the originator of the first enterprise OpenStack cloud distribution, SUSE wanted to know what senior IT pros really think about private clouds and if there are any serious barriers to adoption that need to be remedied.

To find out, SUSE commissioned a survey of senior IT execs. The study reports on the observations and opinions of 1,412 IT decision makers in companies with 250+ employees around the world. A key area of focus is how large companies are using cloud services with a special emphasis on private cloud and the OpenStack Project.

Noteworthy findings include:

- **60%** of companies already have an OpenStack private cloud deployment.
- **91%** believe that it is important to gain experience in private cloud for career progression.
- **91%** expect private cloud to simplify data security.

Why Choose OpenStack?

There are other private cloud environments that improve server utilization, enable a more agile development environment and deliver automation that reduces management overhead compared to conventional enterprise data center environments. The problem is that these other options come from proprietary vendors, with the inherent risk of vendor lock-in and the potential for higher costs.

In fact, 98 percent of survey respondents believe there are definite business advantages to be gained from implementing an open source private cloud, helping them avoid these risks. But why opt for OpenStack cloud instead of other open source private cloud projects?
That’s all well and good. But what really sets OpenStack apart is its vast, motivated and global community of expert developers who have built a feature-rich, inherently flexible and production-ready private cloud platform that can be readily customized and configured to keep up with the needs of your business as it grows and evolves. Many of the world’s most successful companies are backing OpenStack by becoming members of the community. Many more are trusting OpenStack as the cloud platform for their business-critical workloads. According to 451 Research, by 2021, global revenue for OpenStack will exceed $6.7 billion, growing at a compound annual growth rate of 35%.

OpenStack cloud’s modular design is built around core compute, storage and networking services augmented by optional services that enable everything from service metering to bare-metal provisioning. As OpenStack evolves and community members keep contributing innovative ideas and code, OpenStack will continue to offer leading functionality, tools and services that other alternatives simply cannot match.

And because it’s open source, the cost of deploying, upgrading and maintaining OpenStack cloud software will stay low.

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As you might expect, given all of these potential benefits, 59 percent of IT survey respondents are considering moving to OpenStack private cloud. However, there’s a catch: private clouds are difficult to deploy. Fully 82 percent found it difficult to deploy OpenStack by themselves. So why are companies the world over choosing SUSE® OpenStack Cloud?


First, let’s define what exactly OpenStack is.

According to the OpenStack Foundation:

“OpenStack is a cloud operating system that controls large pools of compute, storage, and networking resources throughout a data center, all managed through a dashboard that gives administrators control while empowering their users to provision resources through a web interface.”
SUSE OpenStack Cloud is the original enterprise OpenStack distribution, which is fast and easy to deploy. Offering a choice of installation frameworks, SUSE OpenStack Cloud helps IT pros smoothly and quickly deploy a highly available private cloud environment with the widest hypervisor support available on the market. This is a big leap forward on the journey towards a software-defined data center, helping you realize the value of your investment in hours not weeks. You get a private cloud that’s tailored to your business needs, whether that’s a new application development environment, a big data analytics project or just your next step towards data center transformation.

Yes, SUSE OpenStack Cloud can be fast and easy to deploy, but a stress-free cloud is about more than just deployment. In today’s 24x7 unforgiving data center environment, any service outage can have negative consequences. IT infrastructure must be mature, robust and reliable.

SUSE has more than 20 years of experience delivering hardened, highly available, open source software distributions for business-critical environments. In fact, open source distributions are why we’re in business—they’re in our DNA. We know how to make them production-ready for business-critical workloads. We did it for Linux and are now embedding that same quality and thoroughness into our OpenStack Cloud distribution.

With SUSE OpenStack Cloud, you can get your private cloud up and running quickly and avoid unplanned downtime, ensuring that your business can continue to access the key resources it needs. And, going forward, SUSE can provide the broadest hardware certification, the best interoperability and the most comprehensive application support. All of this helps you make the most of your existing IT investments and establishes a rightful place for them within your data center transformation.

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77% of companies think the current private cloud offerings are reliable enough for mission-critical workloads.
Our Solid OpenStack Distribution and Skilled People = Less Stress

Your IT personnel already have enough to do, and hiring additional staff probably isn’t in the offing. So, how are you supposed to make the transition to private cloud? Again, SUSE OpenStack Cloud is the solution. A distribution takes the legwork out of deploying, maintaining and upgrading—SUSE OpenStack Cloud is the leading distribution in all these areas. As for ongoing operational efficiency, SUSE Manager automates all the code updates for your Linux and OpenStack environment, giving you the advanced patching you need to limit security risks and maintain compliance with internal policies and external regulations.

For IT managers, concerns about having sufficient staff with the right level of skills are always front of mind. In fact, the 72 percent of senior IT professionals in companies who have yet to adopt private cloud are being put off by the skills shortage. SUSE can provide the world-class support that your business needs—either experts to help you design and implement all or part of your cloud infrastructure or to help you upskill your existing team. We offer worldwide consulting, training and support through a network of dedicated professionals and partners.

SUSE OpenStack Cloud Security = Less Stress

As you might expect, a vital aspect of “less stress” is security, that humongous elephant that never leaves the room. Networks belonging to everyone from Fortune 100 companies to government agencies are breached with alarming regularity. Of course, both public and private clouds are targeted. However, the one great advantage of a private cloud is that it remains behind the firewall and within your control. You don’t have to depend on an anonymous somebody somewhere to grant or deny access. Maybe that’s why 94 percent of IT pros in our survey expect that a private cloud will simplify security.

An OpenStack-based private cloud can indeed simplify and enhance security enforcement and compliance. The OpenStack Foundation has an aptly named Security Group with contributors from all over the globe working on security-related issues and standards. Specifically, in SUSE OpenStack Cloud, its open APIs let you easily integrate many security solutions from third-party vendors to further protect your private cloud.
Solid, Reliable and Production-ready When You Are

An impressive 77 percent of senior IT professionals think the current private cloud offerings available from vendors are reliable enough for mission-critical workloads. We’re confident that if more of them were familiar with SUSE OpenStack Cloud, that number would be even higher.

SUSE OpenStack Cloud is the OpenStack cloud solution of choice for business-critical private cloud workloads. It automates the high availability configuration and deployment of critical cloud services in an elegant manner. This helps data center managers avoid the pain of unplanned downtime and ensures that the business can continue to access the key resources it needs.

Here again, our heritage stretching back more than 20 years is worth mentioning because that’s how long SUSE has been producing hardened code to run business-critical workloads. This heritage has helped SUSE build strong hardware and ISV partnerships, resulting in the widest hardware certification, the best interoperability and the most comprehensive application/workload support for our enterprise solutions. It’s no wonder more than 70 percent of SAP customers on Linux prefer SUSE.

Simply put, SUSE OpenStack Cloud is the “less-stress” OpenStack private cloud distribution that can help you move forward with confidence. Contact SUSE to learn more, or visit us online at www.suse.com/cloud.

* Source: “SUSE Global Cloud Research, 2017”

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