Every so often in the world of IT, there’s a seismic shift, a new “game-changing” approach arrives, a cut-off point is reached—one technology era ends, a new one begins, and nothing is ever quite the same again. It’s been happening every so often ever since there were computers.

In the beginning we had mainframes—the huge super computers that were popularly seen as the future of IT and would one day be capable of answering any question we might have, even as Douglas Adams famously put it, “The answer to life, the universe and everything.” But then, along came the PC and turned the world on its head. Few saw the change coming, and even when it did many scorned the potential. “I think there is a world market for maybe five computers,” IBM CEO Thomas J Watson is alleged to have said. The evidence that he really said it is pretty poor – but the reason the quote caught on in the public imagination is crystal clear: it neatly sums up the prevailing attitude of people at the time, and it perfectly encapsulates IBM’s own attitude to their own creation—the PC was not a priority in comparison to the mainframe and the

Why OpenStack Should be on Your Shortlist

Why Do We Need OpenStack?
Today we're again seeing a new era born and the old swept away. It all started with server virtualization, giving us the ability to run multiple operating systems and workloads on a single physical server. Using a hypervisor, a software layer acting as a virtual machine manager, each virtual machine running on a server host has its own guest operating system and is given access to compute, memory and other resources that it needs to run workloads. The resources of the physical server are shared between these virtual machines and the hypervisor makes sure that they play nicely together without any disruption. This meant cutting the server hardware bill, and the power and cooling bills with it. You can even run your data center on a smaller footprint. Good news for you, your CFO, and the business’ bottom line; bad news for server vendors. Most started with a pilot project, built up the necessary skills and then jumped in with both feet. Server virtualization has been quickly adopted across most large data centers.

What started with server virtualization is now moving swiftly on to cloud computing. Just as with all the revolutions of the past, it’s impossible to predict the final outcome. Once change is underway it can proceed at a frantic pace with forecasts of industry analysts often proving as reliable as that Watson quote.

Cloud computing now gives you the ability to control pools of compute, storage and networking resources across an entire data center; in effect, allowing you to virtualize an entire data center and then sharing it between applications. While the initial driver for virtualization was cost savings, the biggest driver now is the promise of agility—the capability to do things much quicker, to deploy new applications rapidly and to empower business change. Traditional IT projects can take a long time to get up and running and cloud computing can significantly accelerate time to market and time to value for new workload development or DevOps.
Given a free choice, most CIOs would probably not choose the IT set up they currently have. While the poster children of the hyperscalers—the pure cloud players like Netflix—were “born in the cloud,” pretty much everyone else’s data center wasn’t.

Large chunks of the estate were likely in place before your current CIO took the job. Alongside the modern x86 blade racks, converged infrastructure, switches and routers, you can often still find the tech of the past: big iron such as old AS400s or maybe RISC/UNIX systems quietly still running mission-critical workloads such as customer databases and payroll, glued into finance systems with bespoke code written by someone who has since retired.

**IT grows organically, project by project over time, department by department, application by application.**

It may be engineering spaghetti, and in places sometimes a little Heath Robinson, but nevertheless it works and it’s part of your existing investment. The data lake from all these systems must be managed and analysed for market beating big data insight.

As we move toward peak virtualization in our data centers, we are looking for the next steps in automation, efficiency and cost savings. More than that, we need more speed and agility and faster turnaround time on projects. Faster completion of those projects translates into your business beating the market and the competition because your products go on sale first, and they are better than those of your rivals.
Think about that for a moment and the reason why OpenStack should be on your wish list will become clear. Some vendors will have you believe that OpenStack software is only for new cloud-based application development projects. While it’s true that OpenStack is an ideal platform for these new workloads, partnering with an open source pioneer like SUSE, also gives you the ideal cloud platform for transforming your data center and maximizing the investment you already have in place.

SUSE, OpenStack Cloud has the widest hypervisor support available, including Xen, KVM and VMware vSphere. This allows you to Bring Your Own Hypervisor (BYOH), making it easier to migrate existing virtualized workloads into your OpenStack private cloud. Built on SUSE Linux Enterprise Server and leveraging our strong hardware and ISV partnerships, it also has the widest hardware certification and broadest application support available, meaning you can bring more of your existing data center investments into your private cloud. It’s also incredibly fast and easy to deploy and manage.

While there are proprietary private cloud solutions that you could choose, OpenStack is the leading open source option. It gives you choice and flexibility, as well as helping you to avoid the risk and high cost often resulting from vendor lock-in. According to a recent study commissioned by SUSE, a staggering 90 percent of senior IT professionals at large companies were planning to move or were already moving to OpenStack private cloud.

There is little doubt; we are at an inflexion point in the world of IT. Some of that change is alarming, but the challenges won’t go away just because you ignore them. Every IT pro knows that IT’s inevitable revolutions change the game. As as French novelist Jean-Baptiste Alphonse Karr famously put it, “plus ça change, plus c’est la même chose,” which translates to: the more things change, the more they stay the same. CIOs have always geared up teams for change because change is the one thing that’s been constant all along.