

HOW LEADING BUSINESSES BUILD AN AGILE INFRASTRUCTURE WITH HYBRID CLOUD

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Report Highlights

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The top criteria for choosing a cloud solution is integration with existing infrastructure.

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28% of businesses cite future feature set as a key criterion in choosing a cloud solution.

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94% of businesses using hybrid cloud say that it helped provide a more agile IT infrastructure.

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Organizations that leverage hybrid cloud are 50% more likely to have better application performance.

Businesses today face many challenges in building an effective IT platform. In this report, we analyze how Best-in-Class organizations leverage hybrid cloud technologies and platforms to overcome these challenges, and succeed in providing the best services and applications.

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Hybrid cloud, when done correctly, leverages the best of both public and private cloud, and also removes some of the criticisms of each.

Combining two things to end up with something that is greater than each piece individually is a time-tested practice, whether one is talking about mashups that combine applications, or mixing peanut butter and chocolate as two great tastes that go great together.

In the world of IT infrastructure, combinations and matchups can take many forms. From converged storage platforms, to hyper-converged systems, to web service mashups, business IT has been combining two forms of technology for a long time now.

One of the most interesting combos happening right now is hybrid cloud. By combining the best capabilities of public cloud and private cloud, hybrid cloud systems provide organizations with improved performance, flexibility, and disaster recovery.

However, there are some who still question whether hybrid cloud is worthwhile, if it offers true benefits over simply using public or private cloud alone.

In this report, we'll look at some of the key issues and challenges surrounding IT infrastructure and the cloud. And we'll compare how organizations that leverage hybrid cloud gain significant benefits over other businesses, and how they are able to build high-performing and reliable IT infrastructures.

[Making the Argument for Hybrid Cloud](#)

Why do businesses invest in and deploy the various types of cloud technologies?

When it comes to public cloud, organizations often cite the fast deployment capabilities, reduced infrastructure costs, unlimited

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flexibility, and the ability to grow capacity as needed with the click of a button.

For private cloud, businesses often talk about more effectively managing their virtual infrastructure, a greater ability to provide services and applications to the business, and increased security (especially in comparison to public cloud).

As one would expect, hybrid cloud, when done correctly, leverages the best of both public and private cloud, and also removes some of the criticisms of each.

For example, in an effectively implemented hybrid cloud, much of the security capabilities of private cloud are retained, as the most critical and sensitive data stays on premise. But the hybrid cloud-enabled business is able to take advantage of the performance and scalability advantages of public cloud, as in the retail business that can take advantage of public cloud resources when there is a surge in sales or interest during the holidays.

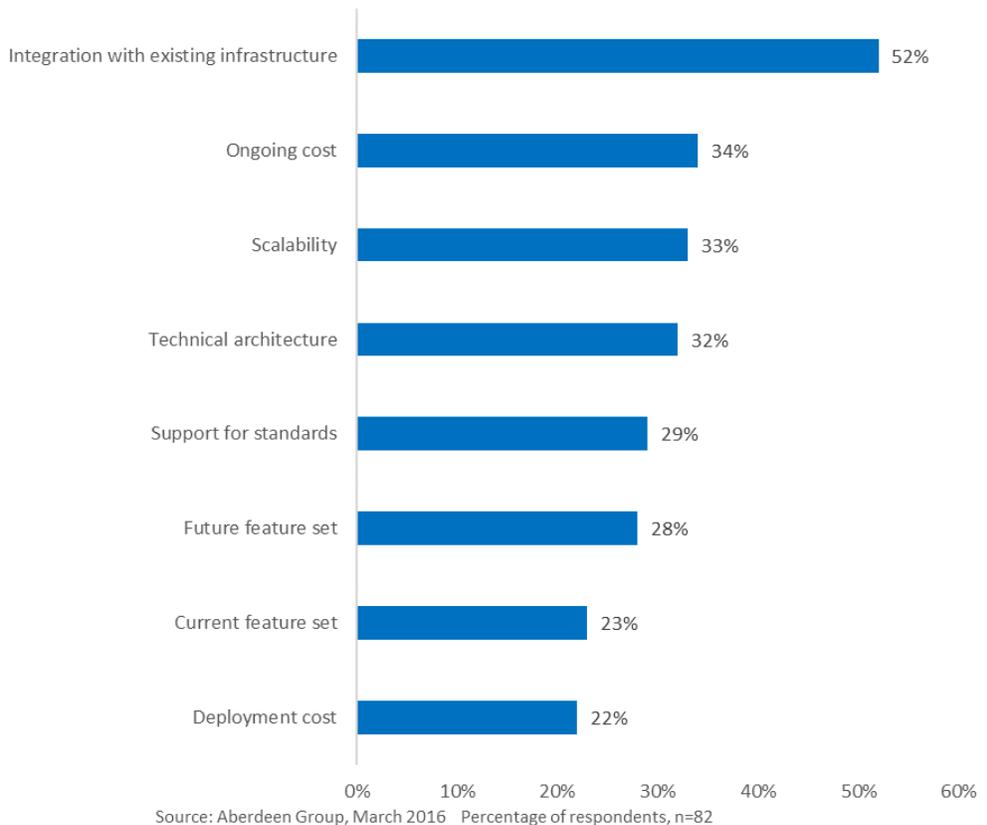
And when it comes to storage and disaster recovery, a hybrid approach brings many benefits. Organizations can operate quickly and efficiently with their private cloud systems, but can use the public cloud as a recovery option available even if the main data center of a business goes down during a disaster. Also, public cloud storage can be leveraged as a tiered backup option, with on-premise systems used for faster data access.

In our recent survey that explored the use of cloud computing within businesses, we asked respondents what the key criteria

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were that they used when evaluating any cloud solution, as shown in Figure 1.

Figure 1: Top Criteria for Evaluating Cloud Solutions



Interestingly, the number one criteria (by a wide margin) that businesses use when evaluating a cloud solution (public, private, or hybrid) is its ability to integrate with their existing infrastructure. We found this to be especially relevant, as good integration is a cornerstone of any effective hybrid cloud implementation, as it allows an organization's public cloud to work seamlessly with its private cloud and other on-premise systems.

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Among the other top criteria especially relevant for hybrid cloud implementers, we see scalability in the top three, which makes sense, as a hybrid cloud makes it easy for private cloud users to quickly scale via the public cloud.

We also see technical architecture and support for standards among the top criteria, which are both vital for enabling a hybrid system that can operate well in a variety of use cases, and that can integrate with any number of standards-based systems and cloud providers.

It is also good to see future feature set as a key criteria. Over the last few years, we've seen many changes and innovations in cloud computing, and this rate of change will certainly continue or even speed up. Any business implementing a cloud solution will want it to be able to evolve along with the technology.

How Hybrid Cloud Enables a Better Infrastructure

So far we've discussed the varied reasons why organizations are investigating and implementing various cloud solutions, from public cloud and its flexibility, to private cloud and its greater control, to hybrid cloud and its attempt to offer the best of both worlds. And we've looked at the key criteria that businesses use when evaluating cloud solutions.

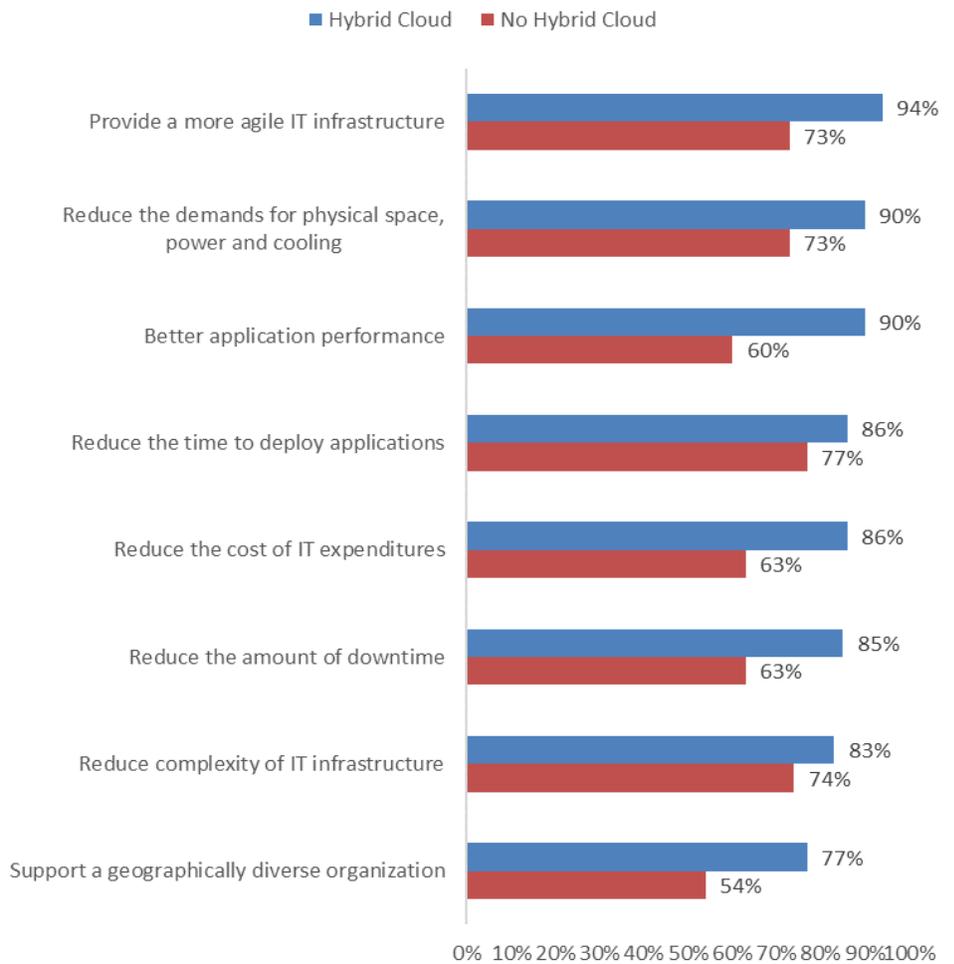
This is all well and good, but what are the actual benefits from adopting hybrid cloud? And does it offer any advantages over businesses that aren't adopting it?

To find the answers to these questions, we did a deep dive into our cloud computing survey data. Specifically, we looked at organizations that had adopted hybrid cloud, and compared the

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benefits they reported to those reported by businesses not using hybrid cloud.

Figure 2: Benefits of a Hybrid Cloud Infrastructure



Source: Aberdeen Group, March 2016 Percentage of respondents, n=97

Looking at the data from Figure 2 here, we see that organizations that leverage hybrid cloud are 50% more likely to have better application performance. This shows that they take advantage of both the in-house management and control capabilities of private cloud, while leveraging the scalability and agility that

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comes with public cloud. And this speed is no surprise, as these hybrid cloud users are also 43% more likely to state that they have succeeded in building an agile IT infrastructure, with the hybrid cloud giving them the opportunity to use the resources they need, when and where they need them.

And it's no surprise that hybrid cloud businesses are 43% more likely to have seen improvement in their ability to support the type of geographically diverse organization that is common today. By integrating their private cloud resources and applications with the broad reach of the public cloud, they can deliver services and applications to their many locations without the high costs of dedicated WANs or on-site data centers.

Given this, it's no surprise that the results show that businesses with hybrid clouds are 38% more likely to have seen a reduction in overall IT expenditures. This is also shown in that they are 24% more likely to have reduced data center demands for space, power, and cooling.

And from a reliability and business continuity perspective, hybrid cloud is also paying off for these businesses. Respondents with a hybrid cloud infrastructure are 35% more likely to have reduced the amount of downtime they experience. Given that Aberdeen research shows the average cost of an hour of downtime is now over \$200,000, this reduction alone can offer considerable benefits.

Key Takeaway

The term “hybrid” can mean a lot of different things to different people. Sometimes it's seen as positive - as in combining the best

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of two things, and some see it as worse – not as good as either thing alone.

In the case of hybrid cloud, the research shows that it is clearly the former. Organizations that leverage hybrid cloud capabilities achieve clear advantages over businesses that aren't utilizing hybrid cloud.

By leveraging hybrid cloud, these leading organizations are truly getting the best capabilities of private cloud...with the advantages of public cloud. And that's a hybrid that can drive your business a long way.

For more information on this or other research topics, please visit www.aberdeen.com.

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