Accelerate IT Service Delivery with a Cloud Management Platform

THE CIO ROLE: OPERATIONS OR INNOVATIONS?

CIOs and lines-of-business (LOB) leaders are not in complete agreement about how the CIO can best support the digital business. In a recent survey of 150 CIOs, 41% considered themselves to be operational managers while only 25% embraced the role of chief innovation officer. When LOB managers were asked the same question about the CIO role, the answers were reversed: 41% expect innovations from the IT leader.

Put another way, a large percentage of CIOs are out of step with the expectations of their LOB customers. This “expectation gap” is a time bomb: As LOBs become dissatisfied with IT responsiveness, they increasingly turn to shadow IT to avoid falling behind competitors.

The Emerging Digital Business

The business press is abuzz with talk about digital transformation, which begs the question: What exactly is digital transformation? The Harvard Business Review identifies four megatrends – cloud, mobile, social and big data – that constitute the technology building blocks of the new digital business. As these trends increasingly dominate the marketplace, organizations must transform their businesses into digital businesses or risk being left behind. We believe the message is getting through. According to Gartner, adoption (of digital business) is growing rapidly, with 72% expecting to complete their digital business transformation within the next two years.

The adoption of digital business models varies widely. Companies born in the digital age – so-called Web 2.0 businesses – enthusiastically embrace these new business models. On the other hand, more established businesses often struggle to adapt because infrastructures built for a bricks-and-mortar world are difficult and expensive to change and corporate leadership has been slow to grasp what is needed to thrive in a digital world.

To enable the organization to meet its strategic goals, IT and LOBs must work together as partners. This reality puts a burden on the IT organization to transform the infrastructure from a rigid legacy system into a scalable, agile platform that can meet the ever-changing needs of business units within the necessary constraints of time and budget. Put another way, IT must be seen by LOB managers as an enabler of digital business, not a stumbling block.

IT Challenges of the Digital Business

As CIOs in a wide range of industries embrace the need for a fundamentally new infrastructure to support the digital business, they face challenges in the areas of application delivery, resource utilization, and security and compliance.

Time to Market

Faster and faster time to market is the new normal. The ability to accelerate application delivery creates a competitive advantage that translates into increased market share, greater customer loyalty, and enhanced revenues. Unfortunately, many IT groups have been unable to deliver resources fast enough to satisfy the needs of the business. Provisioning infrastructure resources for new applications is often a complex, time-consuming process performed by multiple individuals who

perform a series of repetitive tasks to move the process forward. While automation is making inroads, business units often must wait weeks or months, an unacceptable situation in highly competitive markets.

Enter the public cloud. Cloud service providers can deliver the resources needed to support applications in minutes instead of weeks. Faced with substantial pressure from business leaders, many CIOs have been forced to support a hybrid environment. Such a solution helps to accelerate application delivery but also complicates infrastructure management.

Application Access Control
Speed isn’t the only challenge. Digital business models are successful in part to the extent that they provide business users with access to sensitive intellectual property and customer information. To prevent unauthorized access and meet regulatory requirements, the organization must implement fine-grained application access controls and other security measures. In a climate of tight capital budgets, IT needs to ensure efficient resource utilization through policy-based governance and usage reporting. Such security and governance, risk mitigation, and compliance (GRC) considerations add to the complexity of infrastructure management.

Assessing these challenges, many CIOs have concluded that traditional management tools are inadequate for today’s complex, heterogeneous, and hybrid cloud environments. They need a more agile management suite that allows IT teams to provision resources quickly, efficiently, and securely; in other words, a cloud management platform.

What is a Cloud Management Platform?
The name may be deceptively simple, but the reality is that cloud management platform (CMP) means different things to different people. Some vendors use the term for products that can only manage the private cloud deployment, which forces the IT team to manage the public cloud separately. IT administrators quickly become frustrated trying to manage multiple on-premises and off-premises environments with basic CMP tools, because these solutions can’t provide a single unified view of the entire infrastructure. This situation wastes valuable IT resources, limits the organization’s ability to take full advantage of the potential flexibility of a hybrid environment, and complicates compliance and governance.

When it comes to a definition of CMP, Forrester has it right: “a cloud-agnostic, standalone software solution that automates cloud application and infrastructure service delivery, operations, and governance across multiple cloud platforms.”

It’s worthwhile to break down that statement to understand clearly the benefits of a true enterprise-ready CMP.

As a cloud-agnostic solution that works across multiple cloud platforms, the enterprise-ready CMP avoids vendor lock-in for both public cloud and private cloud solutions. As a result, IT has complete freedom to choose the best combination of public and private cloud services and quickly and seamlessly alter the mix at any time without having to change the management system.

A true CMP automates application and infrastructure service delivery, which has a number of tangible benefits. For starters, IT no longer has to spend a significant percentage of its time manually provisioning resources needed by development and QA teams; instead, that time can be redirected to more strategic initiatives that drive innovation. There’s also a time-to-value benefit: LOBs get access to new revenue-generating applications in days instead of weeks or months, enhancing their ability to compete.

In an era of tight budgets and heightened regulatory scrutiny, more and more management attention today is focused on operations and governance. An enterprise-ready CMP addresses these issues through intelligent operations, which provide the analytical and management tools needed to maximize performance and availability, manage capacity across the environment, optimize resource usage, and streamline compliance activities.

3 In this document, “hybrid environment” refers to a blend of public and private cloud services.

Driving Business Success with CMP

To compete in the emerging digital business environment, organizations in all industries must change their business models to take advantage of technology advances in cloud, mobility, social networking, and big data. By leveraging these technologies to the best advantage, IT can accelerate application delivery and thus partner with LOBs for business success. Faced with these needs, most enterprises opt for a hybrid environment – a mix of public and private cloud resources – to gain the needed flexibility and scalability while minimizing operating and capital expenses.

To meet the challenges of managing such a complex environment, IT teams need an enterprise-ready cloud management platform that can support multivendor environments, automate application and service delivery, and facilitate operations and governance. VMware provides an enterprise-ready cloud management platform that can support multivendor environments, automate application and service delivery, and facilitate operations and governance. VMware provides an enterprise-ready cloud management platform that can support multivendor environments, automate application and service delivery, and facilitate operations and governance. VMware provides an enterprise-ready cloud management platform that can support multivendor environments, automate application and service delivery, and facilitate operations and governance. VMware provides an enterprise-ready cloud management platform that can support multivendor environments, automate application and service delivery, and facilitate operations and governance. VMware provides an enterprise-ready cloud management platform that can support multivendor environments, automate application and service delivery, and facilitate operations and governance.

Day 1

Day 1 refers to service provisioning, the start of the service lifecycle. The Day 1 capabilities of the CMP allow IT teams to rapidly provision a complete services stack—application, compute, storage, and network infrastructure—heterogeneously and across both private and public clouds. The enterprise-ready CMP also features embedded policy management which give IT control over decisions such as where resources are provisioned and who can request resources.

Day 2

Day 2 refers to the post-provisioning capabilities for managing applications and services throughout their lifecycle stages, including the ongoing operations needed to continue to deliver services that meet the service level agreements (SLAs) of the organization’s LOBs. The Day 2 capabilities of the enterprise-ready CMP enable IT to intelligently monitor and manage the health and performance of infrastructure and applications across physical, virtual, and cloud environments.

In addition, Day 2 capabilities enable IT to fully manage changes to the service stack, everything from right sizing to retirement, as well as the ability to fully address quality of service (QoS) requirements associated with running services.

Rapid Resource Deployment and More

What separates an enterprise-ready CMP from a basic CMP is the breadth of application and resource deployment capabilities that can be managed and optimized from a single, unified console. The ability to manage the entire lifecycle can be categorized as so-called Day 1 and Day 2 capabilities.

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Day 2 capabilities go beyond provisioning to enable management across a hybrid IT landscape.