

SILVER LININGS

Eight reasons to move to the cloud

More than a third of organizations have a cloud-first policy where new applications are deployed on a public cloud platform, unless there's a compelling case to deploy it on-premise. Here is why cloud computing is becoming the architecture of choice for companies small and large.

• by Rebecca Gibson

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IAN BROWN
SENIOR ANALYST, OVUM ENTERPRISE SERVICES

According to the “2017 Public Cloud Trends” study from Gartner’s Enterprise Strategy Group, the public cloud services market will grow 18% to US\$246.8 billion in 2017 alone. Such growth makes it clear that platforms developed by technology giants Amazon Web Services, Microsoft, Google and IBM are fast becoming a popular platform for hosting servers, facilitating collaboration and much more.

Top benefits that are compelling companies of all sizes in all industries to embrace the cloud include:

• **AGNOSTIC:**

Public cloud architectures work well with most standard operating systems – including Android, Apple iOS, Microsoft Windows and Linux – and deliver a consistent user experience across smartphones, tablets, laptops and desktop PCs.

• **APPLICATIONS AND UPDATES:**

Public cloud frees organizations from the costly and time-consuming responsibilities of running, maintaining and upgrading their IT infrastructures. Cloud providers manage all hardware and software updates, ensuring that companies’ data is always protected by

the most advanced security features and that their employees automatically have access to the latest functionalities in business applications.

• **COLLABORATION:**

Cloud technologies power instant communication and collaboration among colleagues, partners and customers via secure tools such as instant messaging, video and voice conferencing, group chat and email. By processing and storing application data on the cloud, companies also give authorized users instant access to continuously updated information.

• **COST MANAGEMENT:**

On-premise servers and data centers are expensive to install, power, run, maintain and upgrade on a 24/7 basis, and require significant upfront capital investment. Cloud computing enables companies to convert these capital expenditures (CAPEX) into manageable operating expenses (OPEX). Data metering, meanwhile, allows costs to be billed back to specific lines of business. Cloud provider Rackspace, for example, helped a retailer to reduce costs by 37% over a three-year period by moving its on-premise data center operations to a cloud platform.

• **MOBILITY:**

Public cloud platforms have the processing power and built-in capabilities to support critical business applications and deliver rich services to all users, regardless of device or operating system. Mobile users can access global marketplaces, secure storage, data backup and rich data stores, increasingly important considerations as more enterprises develop custom apps. “It’s easier to maintain one cloud-located version of an end-user software application that’s used by multiple employees on multiple devices,” said Ian Brown, senior analyst for research firm Ovum Enterprise Services.

• **SCALABILITY:**

Companies with on-premise IT systems must provide sufficient computing power, data storage and

network capacity for periods of peak demand – meaning that much of their capacity sits idle most of the time. “Cloud platforms allow companies to rent capacity according to actual demand and deploy it almost immediately,” Ovum’s Brown said. “If they need to add new users or support new business, they can quickly provision and configure more virtual machines and storage via the cloud platform’s self-service portal.”

• **SECURITY:**

Most enterprises now accept that cloud operators have the resources and skills to provide a higher level of protection than they can provide on-premise. Although cloud computing allows authorized users to access data from anywhere, it also protects intellectual property by eliminating the need for suppliers and

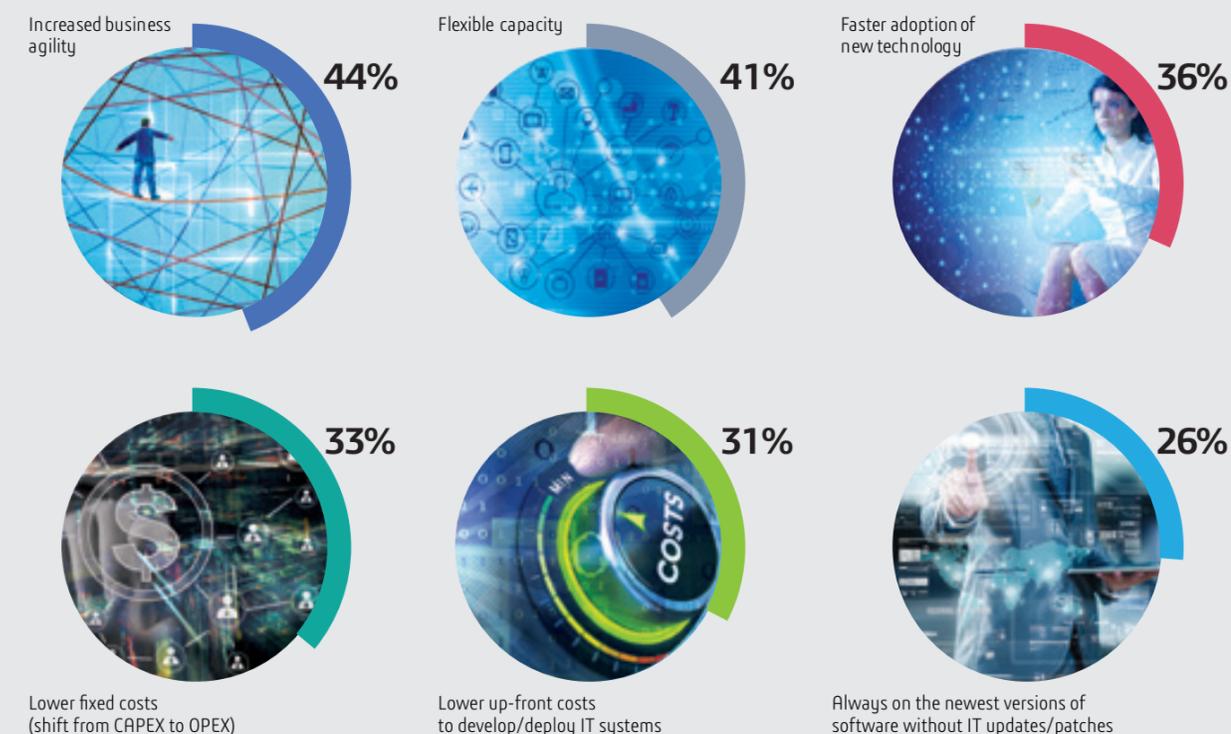
partners to download or copy data. A 2017 report by Intel Security and McAfee, for example, found that 85% of companies now store some or all of their sensitive data on public cloud platforms.

• **SIMPLICITY:**

Powerful service-oriented architectures developed by major cloud providers leverage well-established standards and best practices, creating services that can be shared and reused across multiple applications. This makes it easier for companies to store and deliver critical business resources and data to end users. ♦

Business and technology leaders’ most highly valued benefits of the cloud

Totals are more than 100% due to multiple answers



Source: Harvard Business Review Analytic Services, “How the Cloud Looks from the Top,” 2011