

ADAPTING YOUR INFRASTRUCTURE IN A HYBRID WORLD

There's no end in sight. Constantly changing technology and the demand for always-available operations are driving the need for sky-high business agility. And as organizations like yours strive to grow and compete successfully, they need to know that their IT infrastructures can handle emerging requirements and provide greater responsiveness with ease.

Given these conditions, most organizations realize that operating in a hybrid IT infrastructure is no longer a question. It's an eventuality. In fact, Gartner predicts that 90 percent of organizations will adopt a hybrid infrastructure by 2020. By making this shift, they hope to gain the speed and flexibility to better address their current challenges, as well as potential competitive threats or other business disruptors they may soon face.

For these reasons, you may have already begun your organization's hybrid IT journey. But are you getting the best results from the platforms and environments you've put in place and the partners you're working with? Or are you experiencing new constraints that are hindering your ability to adapt? If so, you could be limiting your ability to grow and evolve—and putting the customer experience at risk, as well.

Let's look more closely at the issues involved in the transition to a hybrid IT environment and what could undermine your efforts along the way.

CHALLENGES IN TODAY'S HYBRID ENVIRONMENTS

Even though you may be among the 85 percent of companies today that have a multi-cloud strategy,¹ you may still be unable to adapt your hybrid infrastructure fast enough. When change inevitably occurs, such as a new product release, or even a technical issue that needs to be addressed, you're struggling to move assets quickly in response.

Part of the problem is that not all workloads and platforms are cloud ready or cloud native. Often, they involve proprietary technology that simply doesn't work in the public cloud. Other times, these workloads or platforms may have inherent limitations due to customized parameters around software or security that aren't compatible with the new cloud environment.

Dealing with migration issues on your own can take a lot of time and effort in this situation. You need to understand what's required from a tooling and support perspective before you can accomplish this task. Meanwhile, you can't neglect your primary responsibility, which is to ensure you have the necessary resources available to keep your infrastructure up and running.

As an alternative, you may engage a consulting partner to handle migrations and a conversion partner to perform application conversions in order to bring related workloads to the cloud. This approach can be tricky, too. Now you have to oversee the work of multiple partners and be confident that they can live up to the expectations they've set. For example, some partners may tell you that they can move everything you have over to the public cloud. And with the pressure on you to rapidly



**Almost
7 OUT OF 10
global business
leaders say the rapid
rate of technological
and digital advance is
the biggest challenge
they face today.¹**

Source: Rapid Technological Change is the Biggest Threat to Global Business, Forbes, 2017.

transition to a hybrid IT environment, you could be convinced that this approach is not only the most effective, but also feasible. But, unless your organization has been “born in the cloud,” it’s very difficult to guarantee such an outcome.

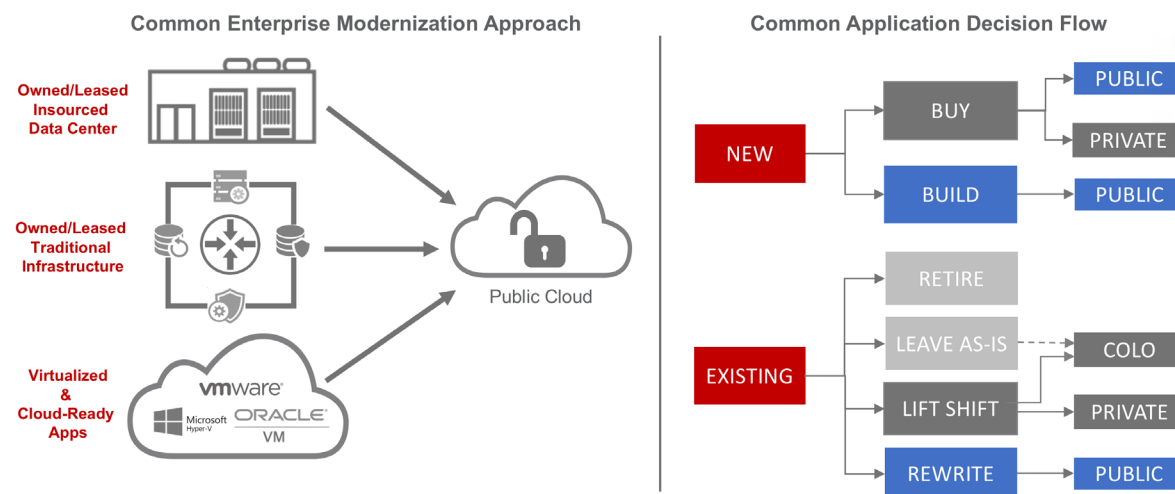
At the same time, you may be subject to contractual restrictions that undermine agility in your hybrid IT infrastructure. So while you may have partnered with a cloud provider to enable cloud services, you’re on your own when it comes to moving those same workloads back in-house.

To better understand what’s involved in migration efforts, let’s look at what happens during a typical enterprise modernization approach, where the goal is to transition to a more modern public and private cloud solution that offers greater agility and cost savings.

In Figure 1, you can see that the organization is supporting a mix of owned and/or leased data centers and traditional infrastructure, along with numerous virtualized and cloud-ready applications. While the organization wants to move as much as possible to the public cloud to achieve greater agility and cost savings, there’s a lot to consider in the process. For example:

1. Where should new applications reside based on whether the organization is building or buying them?
2. Should the organization’s existing applications be rewritten and then moved to the public cloud? Or should some be lifted and shifted to a colocation center or private cloud?

FIGURE 1. USE CASE: ENTERPRISE MODERNIZATION



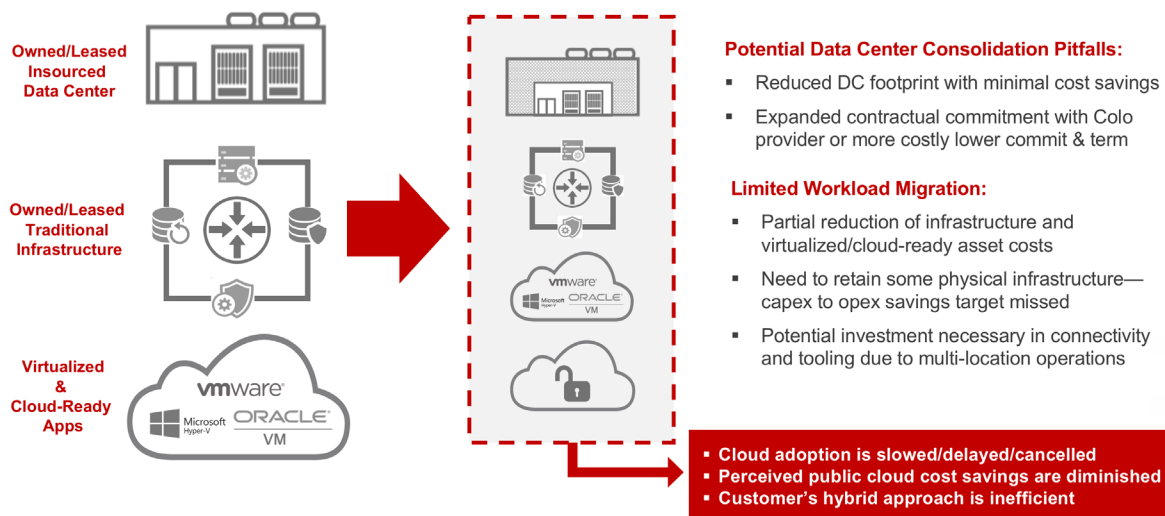
Yet, after making decisions like these, the organization may find that it can’t proceed as planned or achieve hoped-for gains. As shown in Figure 2 on the next page, while the organization has been able to reduce its data center footprint, it hasn’t fully realized anticipated savings.

Some partners may tell you they can move everything you have—all your applications and workloads—over to the public cloud, but unless your organization has been “born in the cloud,” **it’s very difficult to guarantee** such an outcome.

For starters, the space reduction may have occurred in the organization's own data center, which represents a sunk cost. So now the organization is paying for a lot of wasted square footage. Alternatively, the organization could be locked into costly contractual obligations with a colocation provider, and see no monetary benefit from the cut back.

At the same time, the speed of cloud adoption may slow to a crawl because the organization has to make additional investments in connectivity and tooling before certain key workloads can migrate. And related delays can occur over and over again if the organization employs a reactive strategy that involves prioritizing what it migrates based on the biggest need at the moment—and not what's immediately possible.

FIGURE 2. USE CASE: ENTERPRISE MODERNIZATION CHALLENGES



Meanwhile, the organization needs to retain some physical infrastructure for those legacy applications that can never be migrated for security or other reasons. In the end, the organization has shifted more workloads to the cloud, but not as quickly or as flexibly as planned. And to top it off, the organization must now manage a more complex and less-efficient hybrid IT infrastructure.

So how should you approach your hybrid IT strategy—and what considerations are important—on the path to a more agile and adaptable hybrid IT infrastructure?

A BETTER APPROACH: NAVIGATE SEAMLESSLY BETWEEN ALL YOUR ENVIRONMENTS

With business requirements constantly changing, your organization needs to be able to easily move applications and workloads back and forth among on-premises infrastructure, colocation data centers and public and private clouds. That means quickly, whenever you need to, without any costly restrictions or delays. The resulting speed and agility from this approach becomes even more critical as your organization grows and the ability to adapt and scale increasingly drives success.

As a result, it's important to both re-evaluate your contracts with existing partners and closely examine what any prospective partners offer from this perspective. What technical restrictions or contractual terms and conditions may limit your ability to grow and evolve—and at what cost?

As you accelerate your hybrid journey, you must also ensure that you can manage all the moving pieces without getting caught up in complexity. In the most effective environments, everything is connected and working together, so shifting and adapting your infrastructure can be performed faster and more efficiently. So the more partners you're involved with, the more difficult and expensive it will be to achieve this due to disconnects.

When you've fully vetted considerations like these, you'll be better prepared to move forward with a solution that meets your end goal for a quick-to-adapt and more cost-efficient hybrid IT infrastructure. You'll also be better positioned to set proper expectations and timelines, avoiding missteps and delays that could leave your organization at a competitive disadvantage.

THE QTS ADVANTAGE

When you partner with QTS, you can anticipate and more easily adapt to new requirements in your hybrid IT infrastructure. QTS offers flexible contract terms without any restrictions on how you want to move your applications and workloads—so you have full solution portability.

For example, if you sign up for a colocation solution, and you need cloud resources (public or private), you can quickly and easily move your spend into that area. You can move between on-premises, colocation and cloud environments at will—so you can optimize applications for the right locations within the right platforms. You'll be able to more readily scale and grow while achieving better agility and cost management in the process.

You'll also have access to a comprehensive range of services that allows you to choose from among many different environments. All these environments are connected, which provides you with simplified management across locations, as well as an integrated experience that matches the needs of your hybrid IT environment.

Learn how you can quickly adapt your infrastructure to accelerate your hybrid IT journey. Visit QTS at qtsdatacenters.com



81% of decision makers surveyed say they are moving toward a multi-cloud hybrid IT environment—a strategy that can leverage both on-premises systems and off-premises cloud/hosted resources in an integrated fashion.

Source: 2018 RightScale State of the Cloud Report

ABOUT QTS

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