

# Cloud brokerage services improve IT visibility and governance



*Help rid your organization of the risks posed by shadow IT*

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## Highlights

Cloud brokerage software and services provide an IT-as-a-Service model that helps:

- Give business users greater agility and choice of cloud platforms
  - Improve visibility and governance while eliminating the use of shadow IT
  - Provide one location for IT to view on and off-premises resources—improving resource usage and lowering costs
  - Provide a way for IT to plan, buy and manage across cloud models, regardless of provider
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Thinking about implementing hybrid cloud? Chances are, you already have—whether you know it or not. Hybrid cloud melds traditional IT infrastructures and private clouds with an array of scalable, purpose-bought public cloud computing environments. Look closely enough at your organization and you'll almost certainly find employees who have purchased public cloud computing capabilities without the knowledge or approval of the central IT organization.

Developers are a prime example. They use public clouds to quickly build, test, deploy and scale new applications. The easy provisioning of these environments makes it fast and simple for developers and line of business users to get the computing power they need. But there's a problem: these employees too often bypass established IT protocols when purchasing cloud services.

Autonomous purchases—often called “shadow IT”—lead to security risks and cost overruns. IT doesn't know who is buying these services, for what purpose, or at what cost. It cannot know which public clouds house organizational data or what protocols, if any, are being followed to secure that data. Often, IT can't even scope the problem. In its *Security Exposure of Shadow IT* report, Saugatuck Technology estimates that IT divisions typically only know about 10 to 20 percent of the shadow solutions at use in their organizations.<sup>1</sup>



Cloud brokerage software and services can help. They provide an IT-as-a-Service (ITaaS) model for cloud and traditional IT resources by allowing employees to buy pre-vetted public, private and managed services from an IT-approved centralized service store. This process provides developers and others the agile, speedily deployed computing resources needed for business innovation. Concurrently, cloud brokerage solutions give IT the visibility and governance capabilities needed to safeguard data, applications and overall IT operations while better managing costs. This paper will examine how brokerage software and services work and discuss IBM offerings in this arena.

### **Hybrid cloud capabilities and challenges**

In an ideal world, symbiotic DevOps relationships would allow IT to quickly provision the type of computing power developers and line of business users need to speed time to market for new applications and services. In real life, traditional IT organizations often struggle to provide these computing capabilities with the same speed and agility as that offered by public clouds. Legacy workflows, the need for manual intervention and business procurement requirements often slow deployment of computing capabilities.

Implementation of a hybrid cloud environment is an obvious solution. However, a successful hybrid implementation is a challenge in itself. Picking and choosing from a marketplace jammed with cloud providers of widely varying quality, IT must:

- Determine a best cloud match for each application
- Perform cost/benefit analyses of cloud services from a host of vendors
- Determine which backup and security services and protocols to use for each application and dataset running on a public cloud
- Integrate public cloud offerings into the overall IT infrastructure
- Manage vendor relations, billing, technical support and other solution components
- Manage usage and consumption charges across providers

Many organizations turn to third-party cloud brokerage software and services to ease the complexity of hybrid cloud deployment and to improve IT's visibility into and governance over public cloud resources. Brokerage platforms offer pre-seeded catalogs of public cloud offerings, vetted at a high level by the platform provider. The platform provides insight into each cloud offering—typically including information on capabilities and cost—that can help IT determine which cloud services are right for the business. Often, IT can augment the catalog with cloud offerings of its own choosing, along with private cloud offerings, managed services and traditional IT resources.

Many of these platforms and services can also help IT discover public cloud resources currently in use by the business, helping to combat the problem of shadow IT. IT or its brokerage services provider can then vet these cloud providers in accordance with the organization's own standards. Approved cloud resources can be placed in the catalog for utilization in future application architectures.

Once IT has chosen which clouds it wants used in the organization, automated provisioning capabilities allow developers and other employees to buy cloud resources and services through a self-service store, then quickly deploy the cloud environments they need. IT can easily add or delete cloud offerings as business needs demand and tailor offerings to different business units. Brokerage platforms and services also often provide IT with tracking and billing capabilities. These capabilities allow IT to view use and charges across providers, business units and applications.

## Improve visibility and governance with IBM

IBM® Cloud Brokerage Solutions offers an enterprise ITaaS delivery model for hybrid cloud. Designed to provide IT divisions with significantly improved visibility and governance, it helps organizations plan, buy and manage services across cloud models, regardless of provider (see Figure 1). This solution provides insight into IT offerings from numerous providers, then supplies a single, holistic view of those offering to help IT professionals more easily vet and manage services, and track and control costs.

IBM Cloud Brokerage Solutions is powered by IBM Cloud Brokerage software. This software helps plan, buy and manage workloads across public cloud, private cloud and traditional IT. It offers automation and self-service portals to streamline provisioning of hybrid cloud environments.

The IBM Cloud Brokerage platform’s catalog comes pre-seeded with the offerings of several major cloud providers—SoftLayer®, VMware, Amazon, and Microsoft among them—along with an ecosystem of managed services. Click-and-go provisioning in the self-service store helps developers quickly and easily access the computing power they need from approved cloud options.

As part of accompanying brokerage services, IBM experts examine, integrate, test and model interactions between your on-premises IT, private clouds and public clouds. This proven process includes identifying which workloads should remain in traditional data center infrastructures or private clouds, and which are suited to public cloud deployment. IBM services also help organizations to consolidate information on capacity planning, consumption and delivery. IBM can act as your representative with public cloud providers, handling billing, contract and services processes and disputes. The company negotiates for discounts when possible, and can even act as your cloud services help desk—providing user support as needed.

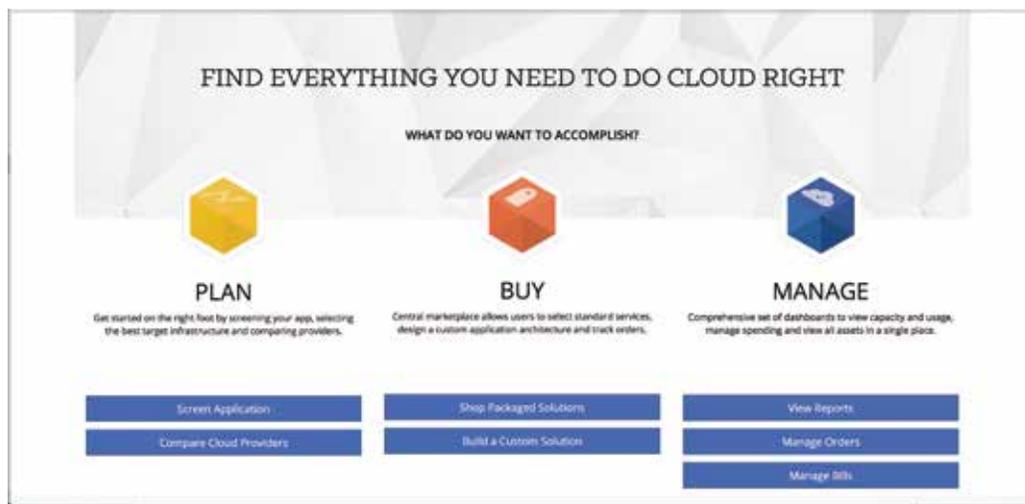


Figure 1. IBM Cloud Brokerage Solutions help organizations plan, buy and manage services across cloud models.

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### IT services company works with IBM to reduce public cloud costs by 71 percent

An IT services company was experiencing increasing costs for public cloud usage. The CIO was unable to determine where the money was being spent, and by whom. Consequently, the company was not achieving the savings expected from the implementation of cloud computing. Working with IBM Cloud Brokerage Solutions, the company was able to discover public cloud environments at use in the company, including all assets for 10 known accounts and 5 shadow accounts. It was able to clear sprawl from accounts and analyze cloud spend. As a result, the company was able to reduce public cloud spending by 71 percent—from \$24,000 to \$7,000. It also improved cost predictability and improved user support with IBM Brokerage Solutions 24x7 customer service.

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Together, the software and services components of IBM Cloud Brokerage Solutions:

- Give users a central self-service store to consume IT resources
- Provide analytics to aid organizations in comparing an array of cloud providers, helping you assess strengths and weaknesses in alignment with specified business needs
- Monitor spend and alert for potential overspending
- Provide visibility into usage and consumption charges across providers
- Quickly provision approved IT resources
- Scan for new cloud assets bought autonomously by employees, then help IT vet and approve or discontinue those services to manage risks

Shadow IT poses risks of security incursions and cost overruns to today's organizations. IBM Cloud Brokerage Solutions can significantly improve IT visibility and governance while concurrently reducing the time to market for new services—therefore helping IT support business innovation and embrace shadow IT.

### For more information

Talk to an [IBM expert](#) in detail about your hybrid journey, or contact an IBM sales advisor at 1-877-426-3287. For more information, visit the following website:

[ibm.biz/brokerageservices](http://ibm.biz/brokerageservices)



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<sup>1</sup> Saugatuck Technology, "Security Exposures of Shadow IT," May 2015. <http://insights.isg-one.com/security-exposures-of-shadow-it-4/>



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