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Five reasons why migrating VMware to the cloud will help deliver your digital transformation goals

Achieve your digital transformation goals by migrating VMware to cloud

IBM Cloud for VMware Solutions Shared means the days of investing in large amounts of kit, much of which is never fully exploited, are over and enables a smooth journey to the cloud

Organisations are increasingly adopting cloud solutions to gain compelling business benefits, including efficiency, agility and reduced management costs.

According to TechTarget's annual IT priorities survey, IT leaders across Europe rate infrastructure modernisation, digital transformation, and cloud deployment and migration as their three top priorities for 2020. In addition, a third of IT executives are planning application modernisation – a challenge that asks important questions around the use of virtualisation and how that equates to cloud migration.

A critical consideration in this journey is migrating virtual machines to the cloud, and typically this involves VMware workloads. To enable a smooth path, IBM has launched IBM Cloud for VMware Solutions Shared which offers two consumption models – On-Demand and Reserved – to best suit specific workload requirements.

IBM Cloud for VMware Solutions has previously only been available in a dedicated model on a single-tenant infrastructure, but the new offering is in response to demand by customers that want the option of choosing a multi-tenant infrastructure with the associated economies of scale and flexibility.

The focus on VMware reflects its popularity as a virtualisation solution within enterprises. Now it is possible to access VMware functionality on IBM Cloud with the business benefits of flexibility, low start-up costs, self-service and minimal management overheads.

“When a customer wants to start migrating virtual machines, it is often about VMware migration, as the majority of virtualisation is on VMware. We are bringing VMware to a multi-tenancy architecture because it offers flexibility and cost-effectiveness for your steady-state capacity requirements, as well as for workloads with fluctuating capacity requirements,” says Rajeev Saxena, programme director at IBM Cloud.

1. Rapid access to compute resources

IBM Cloud VMware Solutions Shared brings obvious speed and efficiencies compared with having to order and buy servers and set them up ready for on-premise use of virtualisation.

“Clients do not have to buy big nodes or servers, but can get a slice of that capability from IBM Cloud and expand very quickly when needed,” says Saxena.

The days of investing in large amounts of kit, much of which is never fully exploited, are over with IBM's new self-service, enterprise-grade multi-tenant infrastructure-as-a-service (IaaS) platform.

Jim Robbins, senior technical lead at IBM Cloud, points out that implementation is simple because IT executives can order new capacity and it is immediately

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available. Additionally, enterprises can trust that IBM Cloud has the management expertise.

“The long cycles of getting hardware in place is already done for them. IBM Cloud is highly optimised and expert and the organisation does not have to worry,” says Robbins.

2. Pricing models to suit customer needs

Flexibility is at the heart of offering two consumption models tailored to the requirements of different workloads.

With On-Demand, compute resources are made available to users when required and billed hourly. With the Reserved model, organisations can reserve their compute capacity needs in a monthly, yearly or three-year billing model to guarantee resource availability. Outside compute, all other resources such as storage are charged for actual usage in both models.

The level of flexibility around consumption is unprecedented, with rapid deployment of virtual machines made simple and cost effective. An organisation can start its cloud journey by paying as little as \$25 per month and expand when required.

Low start-up fees are a major business benefit for businesses units just starting their cloud journey, says Saxena.

“There are no upfront costs. If you only use one virtual CPU and 1GB RAM, that is what you will be billed for, and you can scale in the future rapidly. Being able to start low and go from 1GB one day to 5,000GB RAM the next day gives you a lot of flexibility because you can quickly expand,” he says.

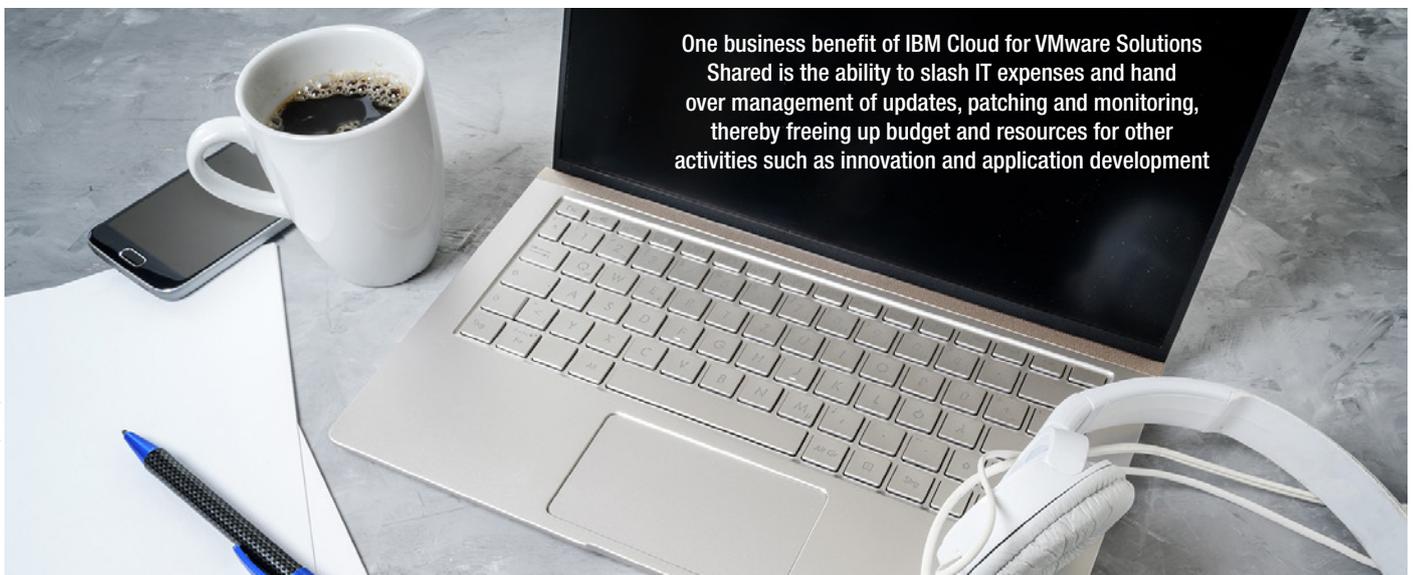
3. Flexibility and guaranteed capacity

Many customers have used some flavour of cloud as everyone is on a path of modernisation, but there is often a lack of uniformity and clear direction. This is where IBM Cloud for VMware Solutions Shared comes into its own.

“So many departments within an organisation are still thinking about what to do with cloud, so this is a good choice for them. They don’t have to start by making massive investment in multiple bare metal servers and end up with a lot

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of unused capacity without knowing their capacity requirements. Instead, they can pay less than \$25 per month for one virtual CPU, 2GB RAM and 100GB storage. They can play and experiment and scale up to \$100 to \$150 to \$1,000 per month to make the right choice post-experimentation,” says Saxena.

Organisations may choose the On-Demand model for its flexibility in circumstances where they do not need to plan ahead. It is a best fit for virtual machines which are consumed for a short period of time, or fluctuating capacity needs such as cloud bursting and non-critical disaster recovery workloads.

The Reserve model is attractive for scenarios where guaranteed capacity is needed for a particular workload. CPU and RAM are ordered upfront, but additional resources such as storage and bandwidth are based on consumption.

By opting for the Reserved model, prices are more competitive than the On-Demand model with the reassurance that predicted capacity is assured. Saxena points out that no cloud provider can help an organisation with a sudden exponential explosion of required capacity. The Reserve model is suited to such trends, but is not unlimited.

“Organisations can experience problems if they suddenly want extra CPU. With the Reserve model there is better pricing compared with On-Demand, which is at a slightly higher premium – it is guaranteed that whatever you reserve, that capacity is always available to you, no matter how many other customers are buying workloads,” says Saxena.

“But with On-Demand, it might be a customer wants ‘x’ capacity, but they can only have ‘y’ where ‘y’ is less than ‘x’. That scenario would not last long because behind the scenes there is automation in the back end that would ensure the extra capacity can be brought in when it becomes available.”

Production workloads with stable demand that require guaranteed capacity can opt for the Reserve model, while development, test loads and agile projects that require testing capacity for a short time period can opt for the On-Demand model as it is more cost-effective for ad hoc development.

4. Disaster recovery at reduced cost

Disaster recovery is essential in today’s digital economy where organisations cannot tolerate outages or downtime as they risk losing business and damaging their reputation. Now, it can be achieved at a competitive rate.

Business benefits of IBM Cloud for VMware Solutions Shared

Migrating to IBM Cloud for VMware Solutions Shared makes IBM Cloud the most cost-effective and optimum way to continue an organisation’s cloud journey because:

- The speed and agility of this new offering from IBM Cloud compared with on-premise is especially attractive because organisations can get up and running in minutes with minimal risk.
- Uptake will relieve organisations of management burdens associated with updates, patching and monitoring.
- Users will only pay for what they consume using On-Demand, but they can also reserve resources in advance for predictable workloads.
- The flexibility of the two consumption models offered allows organisations to tailor the service to their specific workload requirements and get the best value for money.
- Enterprises can have low start-up costs and rapid deployment of virtual machines with seamless automation and self-service on an enterprise grade multi-tenant IaaS platform.

Saxena points out that a key use case for the On-Demand model includes an economical landing zone for disaster recovery workloads where compute is used in two scenarios – an actual disaster occurs; or testing of a disaster recovery system.

Organisations have the benefit that they are not paying for compute all the time – instead, they are billed for storage ordered up front, but additional resources are based on consumption. If they don't use compute, they don't pay for it.

As organisations come to better understand their needs, they can exploit both models.

“Customers will mix and match and choose from both models to suit different workloads,” says Saxena.

5. Focus on application modernisation not system administration

A further business benefit comes through slashing IT expenses and freeing up budget for other activities. Management costs and headaches are reduced as IBM manages the infrastructure up to the hypervisor. Complexity and risk are therefore minimised as organisations can focus on innovation and application development without having to divert resources into management of updates, patching and monitoring.

“There is a category of customers who do not want to deploy their IT workforce in these management services, because they want to deploy them to focus on application development deployment. They don't have to worry about bare metal servers,” says Saxena.

For any business on a path of digital modernisation, the advantages of the IBM Cloud offering make economic sense when they are going through a period of modernising applications. They can provision workload as applications are being updated or transformed. They can access a temporary multi-tenant infrastructure quickly.

“Organisations can create in less than 10 minutes a landing zone for a temporary migration. They can transfer their workloads and then return to the original place once the transformation is complete,” says Saxena.

The migration path to IBM Cloud is smooth with seamless automation of backup and disaster recovery add-on solutions such as Veeam. All this is taken care of by IBM which offers Veeam on IBM Cloud for VMware Solutions Shared. Interoperability with on-premises IT infrastructure remains assured.

“When organisations start their journey, workloads are backed up and Veeam is widely recognised in the industry as a backup application tool. It is pre-installed and configured with a single click,” says Saxena.

This reduces the stress and cost of management as the IBM Cloud offering has an Automation Team that specialises in such system administration tasks.

“We have the expertise to manage things at scale and we can pass on these economies of scale to the customer,” says Saxena.

A self-service administration user interface allows enterprises to access this cost-effective scalability rapidly and easily. ■

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