

# The Multicloud Business Promise

## The 451 Take

Businesses are banging the drum about IT transformation to enable new digital services. Many are taking advantage of both private and public cloud infrastructure, using multiple clouds from a variety of vendors as different parts of the business opt for different cloud platforms. While this approach may happen without much forethought, it can form the basis of a more considered multicloud strategy to distribute assets, redundancies, software and applications across several cloud environments. **The multicloud business promise of taking such a strategic approach is that you can use the speed and agility of the most appropriate cloud platforms to improve business performance and compliance.**

Moving your systems to the cloud enables you to interact in more flexible and engaging ways with your customers, and helps you take advantage of structured and unstructured data to help drive faster and more effective business decisions. It can also underpin the modernization of the application estate, making it possible to reimagine the way your organization operates and the types of new digital offerings it can bring to market. However, simply shifting applications and toolsets to a single public cloud does not create a more flexible, agile business. **Enterprises need to think about how they want to do business differently, making the ability to use different cloud providers to match your existing and anticipated range of business needs a sensible strategic approach to take.**

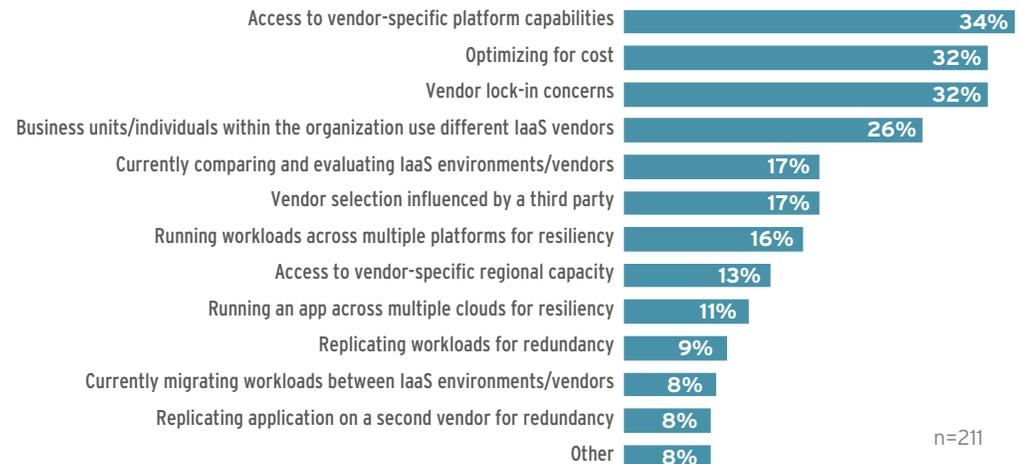
When enterprises pivot to a multicloud strategy, they are typically thinking beyond a hybrid cloud that embraces the use of private cloud (hosted or on-premises) alongside the services of a single public cloud provider. They are considering the merits of using two or more public cloud platforms in the overall mix of on-premises, hosted and public cloud options to create a holistic technical approach using both common and specialized tools and methods to develop and deploy applications as appropriate.

Multicloud environments use a combination of cloud offerings, dividing the workloads between them with cloud applications spread across service providers. The multicloud approach is primarily about developing apps that can be deployed anywhere. After all, different departments have different needs, and many organizations find that those needs can be better addressed on cloud platforms that take advantage of the best permutations of licensing and cost profiles for different applications and data.

For example, **one provider may offer the best-of-breed solution and TCO for your email service or data storage, while another provider may be more adept at providing the most cost-effective development and testing environments, and yet another cloud provider will offer the best flexibility in optimized data storage for serving applications in production.** Choosing a single cloud provider limits you to its offerings, and that one-size-fits-all approach may be difficult to adapt to all your organization's requirements. Below are some of the common enterprise drivers for a multicloud approach.

## Drivers of Multiple IaaS Vendor Usage

Source: 451 Research's Voice of the Enterprise: Cloud, Hosting & Managed Services, Vendor Evaluations 2018



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# Business Impact Brief

## Business Impact

### USE THE BEST OF EVERY PLATFORM TO HELP YOUR ORGANIZATION INNOVATE.

One of the main benefits of a multicloud strategy is that you can choose providers based on the features and functions that best suit various requirements and workloads by taking advantage of vendor-specific platform capabilities.

**REDUCE DEPENDENCY ON A SINGLE CLOUD PLATFORM.** A multicloud strategy enables organizations to take more control in deciding where workloads should be deployed based on performance, security and productivity needs. This approach also enables more effective management of SLAs. You are not under the thumb of a single provider telling you that its cloud platform is the best fit for everything.

**IMPROVE CONFIDENCE IN YOUR CHOICES FOR DATA SECURITY COMPLIANCE.** For example, an enterprise that uses cloud services based outside of the EU might find it easier to comply with GDPR if it uses an EU-based provider for the storage and processing of data pertaining to EU citizens. Or a cloud provider with a datacenter in a particular location could improve service performance within that region simply because of its proximity to users. These choices are easier for organizations that have taken a multicloud approach.

**PUT THE APPLICATION AT THE CENTER OF THE STRATEGY.** When it's clear up front that your workloads may end up transferring between providers, development teams can build apps that work across providers. This approach makes it easier to transfer between cloud service providers when pricing or differing capabilities make an alternate route more appealing.

**FORMULATE A DEVOPS POLICY FOR THESE NEW APPLICATION DEPLOYMENTS AND COLLABORATION PROCESSES.** Multicloud means building a complex cloud architecture that can provision any platform, database or storage system in seconds. If you are still building applications in the same way that you have for the last 20 years, you are not benefiting from the multicloud approach. The DevOps tools must have the capability to reliably deploy code to public, private and hybrid clouds to deliver the speed and flexibility that business transformation requires.

## Looking Ahead

As continual change becomes business as usual, your technology choices need to provide you with confidence that you can support a range of business outcomes and shift direction quickly and securely. Cloud delivery is an important strategic foundation for building this confidence.

However, clouds are built differently so require application tools and services designed to support this heterogeneity. These differences not only cover physical infrastructure components but encompass diverse characteristics, functionality, pricing models and policies, etc. **Lack of transparency around the underlying functionality and rapid changes in the dynamic enterprise IT landscape make it almost impossible to predict which cloud will be the right fit for your future apps and business needs.**

**This is why it is important to take an application-centric approach to multicloud.** You need to consider the application architecture because a multicloud approach is not about homogenizing clouds but about leveraging the various environments available. By maintaining a clear understanding of which proprietary services are being consumed, you will make it easier to re-host elsewhere using a combination of microservices and containerization. You will need to have access to tools and services that can support the full technology stack for each cloud platform being used for applications.

The multicloud approach enables organizations to mix and match platforms and vendors such that their workloads are not locked in to individual cloud providers. Empowered by planning for vendor choice, you get the autonomy to address changing business needs for performance, security and ROI. You get to march to your own drumbeat.



Every enterprise needs a trusted partner who will bring in rich suite of services, domain leadership, method & tooling, rich assets and accelerators, experience, skills and successful history of executing complex transformation programs. Enterprises also need guidance in establishing a target operating model aligned with cloud journey, consortium formulation and leadership support in executing the transformation programs. Last but not the least, they need a strong suite of industry solutions and associated partnerships.

IBM Services has the ability to help enterprises in their multicloud transformation journey. Through Cloud Innovate, IBM services offers a systematic, experience driven end to end cloud transformation method starting from advisory to migrate, modernize, cloud native development to operate. IBM's Cloud Innovate toolkit offers "multicloud" suite of homegrown and partner tools that's designed for multicloud scenarios. The toolkit helps not only migrate efficiently, but also modernize, and operate apps in a true "cloud" way.

IBM Services offers industry leading DevOps services through which it bundles hybrid and multicloud toolchain and associated services including MVP to Scale models that helps adopt DevOps quickly and scale this across the enterprise.

IBM Services has a strong multicloud practice that has significant expertise and delivery credentials across popular cloud providers (Red Hat OpenShift, AWS, Azure, Google Cloud, and IBM Cloud).

[www.ibm.com/services/cloud/multicloud](http://www.ibm.com/services/cloud/multicloud)