

Cloud brokerage helps IT quickly deploy cloud capabilities in support of business needs



ITaaS model also improves management of hybrid cloud environments

Highlights

In today's highly competitive business environment, developers and line of business leaders need speedy, reliable access to a variety of cloud computing platforms. If IT divisions don't provide these capabilities, employees will buy them off the shelf. In providing an ITaaS model for the planning, purchase and management of IT resources, cloud brokerage platforms help provide the speedy deployment business users need. They can also help integrate legacy systems into hybrid environments and ease the management of those environments.

In today's highly competitive business environment, developers and line of business leaders need speedy, reliable access to a variety of cloud computing platforms. If IT divisions don't provide these capabilities, employees will buy them off the shelf.

Developers are a prime example. They use public clouds to quickly build, test, deploy and scale new applications. But employees working in marketing, finance, sales and other departments are equally likely to buy unapproved cloud capabilities. Just think of all the people who use commodity cloud services to back up and share their documents.

These autonomous purchases, often called "shadow IT," **clash with IT's need for control**—for computing platforms and services that align with established governance policies and procedures. With shadow platforms and services in use, IT doesn't know who is buying what, for what purpose, or at what cost. It doesn't know which public clouds house organizational data and what protocols, if any, secure it. To balance business and IT needs, IT should consider adopting an IT as a service (ITaaS) model for the procurement of cloud platforms and services.

ITaaS eases the implementation of hybrid cloud environments

Cloud brokerage platforms provide an ITaaS model for the planning, purchase and management of IT resources. They also help integrate legacy systems into hybrid environments. Cloud brokerage platforms offer pre-seeded service catalogs which are typically vetted at a high level by IT. These catalogs provide product and services information such as costs, capabilities and security protocols.



Many platforms also offer comparison features. In these cases, analytics provide “apples to apples” comparisons of various cloud capabilities and services. IT can define application requirements, then compare providers based on their ability to meet those requirements. This capability makes it easier for IT to compare large groups of cloud offerings, then choose which cloud platforms and services to provide its business users.

Once IT has decided which cloud platforms and services to offer, business users can access these capabilities directly via an online store. Built-in approval processes automate cloud deployment. Many platforms also offer fulfillment hubs that can help IT manage the ensuing hybrid cloud environment.

IT divisions can develop cloud brokerage catalogs and platforms on their own, but it’s a difficult process. It requires IT to assess cloud offerings and services from a wide pool of vendors to determine which to offer employees. IT must then create solution architectures that align with existing governance policies. It must also automate procurement and fulfillment processes. In addition, IT must develop ways to manage the hybrid cloud environment.

Rather than undertake this complicated, time consuming work in-house, many organizations prefer to work with a trusted vendor for the development and implementation of cloud brokerage solutions.

IBM Cloud Brokerage Solutions provide agility and control

IBM Cloud Brokerage Solutions facilitates unified planning, consumption, delivery and management of cloud platforms and services across cloud and traditional IT environments. The solution, consisting of both software and services, can:

- Provide an ITaaS catalog of cloud providers for self-service deployment by business users
- Automate the delivery of cloud computing capabilities
- Help IT create pre-approved solution architectures
- Improve management and billing processes

Scalable cloud solution reduces costs for legislative services organization

A business providing legislative services needed significant computing power when the legislature was in session, quite a bit less when it was out. The business wanted more computing capacity, but did not want to purchase resources that would be used only to accommodate spikes in demand. IBM Cloud Brokerage Solutions helped the organization to quickly compare and provision cloud services. The modular nature of this solution allowed the organization to pay for only the computing capacity it needed, and only when needed. As a result, the company was able to reduce projected infrastructure costs 90 percent, from USD11,000 to USD1,000.

The solution starts with the IBM Cloud Brokerage software catalog. This catalog comes pre-seeded with the offerings of several major cloud providers—IBM Bluemix® Infrastructure, VMware, Amazon and Microsoft among them—along with accompanying cloud services. IT can augment the catalog with cloud offerings of its own choosing. The platform’s cloud comparison capability provides side-by-side views of these offerings, normalizing costs and capabilities for improved decision making. Once IT has decided which cloud capabilities and services to retain in the catalog, developers, line of business users and others can access these capabilities via an online store.

The solution helps IT create pre-approved solution architectures that align with IT governance policies. This is accomplished through the use of “blueprints,” or virtual containers housing infrastructure specifications for certain categories of applications. IBM services experts are available to help in this effort, if needed.

When it comes time to design a new application, developers access the IBM Cloud Brokerage platform’s service store. There, developers choose an app-specific blueprint for the type of application they wish to design. While these blueprints have been defined by IT, they are customizable according to different development needs and can be used in conjunction with existing design tools. Choice of blueprint automatically triggers provisioning of infrastructure and middleware.

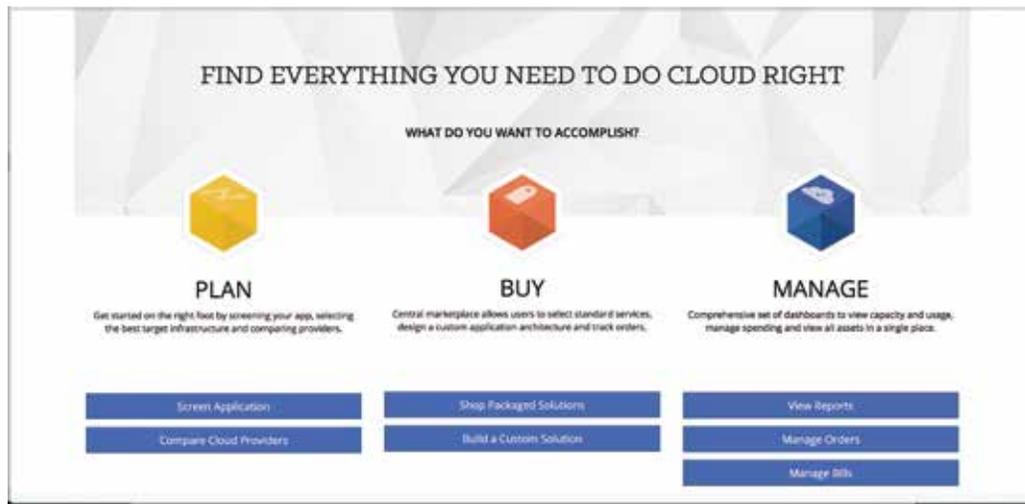


Figure 1. IBM Cloud Brokerage Solutions helps organizations plan, buy and manage services across cloud models and legacy systems.

The broker portal helps ease management processes. Through this single hub, IT can plan, buy and manage services (see Figure 1). The hub also provides IT divisions with significantly improved visibility and governance. Additional capabilities provide for cost tracking and control. Automated billing links directly to orders for cloud purchases, making it easy to see costs associated with an application or business unit.

Consulting and managed services help tailor solutions to business needs

The IBM Cloud Brokerage Solutions platform offers significant automation capabilities. But no cloud solution is completely automated and many organizations would prefer to spend their time focusing on technological innovation than on performing necessary cloud planning tasks. That's why the services component of IBM Cloud Brokerage Solutions is so important.

IBM Cloud Brokerage Services is an ongoing, managed service through which IBM acts as provider of both the brokerage platform and the services organizations need in order to integrate, optimize and manage hybrid cloud environments. Through this service, IBM consultants integrate multiple IT environments and various service providers to orchestrate a hybrid environment designed to suit the organization's IT and business needs.

IBM Cloud Brokerage Consulting Services are short-term offerings designed to help provide more predictable hybrid cloud outcomes. They help organizations to build, integrate and manage hybrid cloud environments for improved flexibility and control. Through these services, IBM calls upon its significant expertise in hybrid cloud computing, along with a worldwide network of computing consultants. These consults create businesses cases and transformation models for hybrid cloud deployment. In helping organizations select the IT services that cost-effectively meet business requirements—from a variety of cloud vendors—these engagements, like IBM Cloud Brokerage Services, can help organizations significantly reduce the cost of cloud computing.

Working with IBM, organizations often achieve:

- Significantly reduced time to cloud deployment
- Improved governance
- Better visibility and management of hybrid cloud environments
- Heightened ability to innovate, thanks to self-service fulfillment of cloud capabilities

Business users' demand for agile computing environments often clashes with IT's need for control. Fulfill both needs with IBM Cloud Brokerage Solutions. These solutions give developers and other business users the quickly deployable cloud capabilities they require, while helping IT better control and manage the hybrid cloud environment.

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



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