

7 characteristics of successful hybrid cloud strategies

Hybrid cloud has become the infrastructure of choice for enterprises that want the benefits of public cloud, while still supporting and running on-premise and private cloud workloads. According to Gartner, by 2020, 75% of organizations will have deployed a multicloud or hybrid cloud model.¹ A hybrid cloud environment simplifies digital transformation by providing interoperability, workload portability, and strategic flexibility.

By keeping a few proven strategies in mind, you will increase the potential of your cloud solution. A well-planned implementation strategy will help you avoid potential pitfalls including incompatibilities, nonportable solutions, and increased IT security risks.

To make sure your enterprise is on the right path, consider the following seven areas when building your hybrid cloud strategy.

1 Choose a consistent architecture.

Businesses invest heavily in hardware, development work, and commercial software. Hybrid cloud architecture is unique in that it allows the use of existing investments while providing the foundation for modernization. To achieve this level of portability and flexibility, you must build consistency into your architecture as you adopt the public cloud. By standardizing on a common operating environment, you can reduce the complexity of your transition to the cloud while keeping your business running on your existing foundation.

2 Decide on an orchestration strategy.

Orchestration connects tasks across your infrastructure to create cohesive workflows, regardless of where they are running. If you lack effective orchestration between on-site and cloud systems, you risk not being able to connect to business-critical applications and data sources as your cloud solutions evolve. Consistent orchestration allows you to use cloud resources without introducing burdensome complexity. With a holistic orchestration strategy, including container orchestration, your applications and services become portable – so they can run in any cloud without introducing costly rework.

3 Simplify monitoring and management.

There are many benefits to using a variety of cloud platforms to suit the needs of your IT and business teams. However, every platform – including cloud and on-premise or private cloud systems – comes with its own monitoring and management tools. Using multiple tools across a heterogeneous environment causes unnecessary complexity and reduces the end-to-end visibility that your operations teams need. You need a single management solution that works across your infrastructure and application suite so that you can keep all your systems running smoothly.

4 Adhere to policy and governance.

IT policy compliance covers everything from adhering to laws, to following set business practices, to working in accordance with regulatory standards. As data and workloads move to the cloud, it is critically important to maintain compliance in a uniform and consistent manner – to reduce business and data risks. By integrating policy and governance into your hybrid cloud strategy, you will be better equipped to ensure that your systems, software, and people are in compliance as your architecture changes.

5 Implement comprehensive security.

According to the consulting firm McKinsey, using the public cloud disrupts traditional cybersecurity² – but that does not mean you cannot have a secure hybrid cloud solution. With the right set of tools and practices across your hybrid environment, you can implement security that is built-in, not bolted on. As you run, manage, and improve your workloads, security becomes a continuous and holistic aspect of design that is integrated throughout the entire IT life cycle.

6 Run your applications anywhere with APIs.

Hybrid cloud provides the foundation for flexible access to underlying storage and compute infrastructure, runtime container components, and connectivity between dependent workloads. However, it does not connect those systems for you. A uniform set of application programming interfaces (APIs) can help simplify the design, build, deployment, and scaling of applications – no matter where they run.

7 Automate your infrastructure.

Automation is critical to IT organizations, especially where hybrid cloud scalability is considered. Automated management across emerging and existing environments reduces the risk of human error, supports prescriptive policy enforcement, provides a foundation for predictive maintenance, and promotes cultural change toward time-saving, self-service practices.

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NORTH AMERICA
1 888 REDHAT1
www.redhat.com

**EUROPE, MIDDLE EAST,
AND AFRICA**
00800 7334 2835
europe@redhat.com

ASIA PACIFIC
+65 6490 4200
apac@redhat.com

LATIN AMERICA
+54 11 4329 7300
info-latam@redhat.com



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