



Secrets of storage success for hybrid cloud:

Service providers winning at hybrid cloud share their storage experiences

Introduction

Service providers (SPs) helping customers realise the benefits of hybrid cloud are in a unique position to give insights into hybrid cloud storage and the opportunities it presents.

Recently, a group of executives from leading SPs who are capitalising on these new opportunities convened on a panel to answer questions around their experiences strategising and architecting storage infrastructure for today's — and tomorrow's — growing data demands.

“For us, everything is hybrid cloud. It’s about where customers are today on the hybrid continuum... and making it seamless to adjust the deployment.”

Richard Spurlock, Cobalt Iron

Key secrets from SPs with successful hybrid clouds

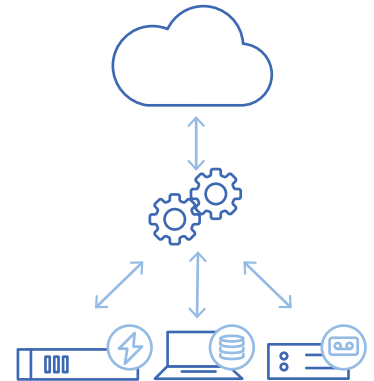
Three key secrets to hybrid cloud storage success emerged from the discussions:

- **Architect** with the right building blocks to connect on-premises and off-premises environments, secure data across the enterprise, and ensure alignment among data value, storage location and medium.
- **Build** with simplicity to meet performance levels as data scales, while simultaneously keeping storage deployments secure.
- **Deliver** infrastructure designed for big data and analytics to ensure storage solutions have the ability to understand, reason and learn the value of data as enterprises move into the cognitive era.

#1 key to SP storage success: Architect with the right building blocks

The SPs on the panel concurred that storage vendors who are able to provide all the pieces to create robust hybrid clouds gain a significant competitive advantage.

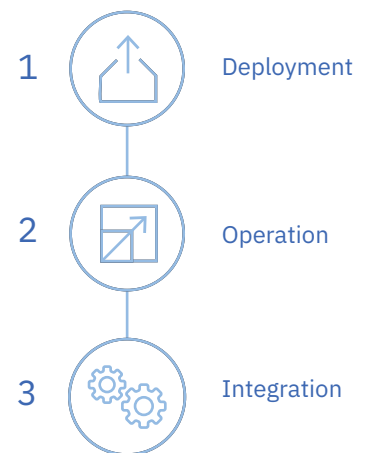
- **Storage solutions and systems:** Whether an SP is building its own cloud or serving customers that require or prefer on-premises infrastructure, it needs an arsenal of flash, disk and hybrid arrays, as well as tape solutions. These solutions must be cloud-ready and include security features such as multi-tenancy and encryption.
- **Software-defined storage (SDS):** SDS enables SPs to easily connect their own clouds to customers' on-premises storage and to deploy storage rapidly and affordably.
- **Public cloud options:** Even though many SPs are building their own clouds, the ability to tap into public cloud offerings such as those from IBM Cloud, Amazon Web Services and Google Cloud Platform is a requirement.



#2 key to SP storage success: Build with simplicity

To fully reap the benefits of hybrid cloud for their customers, SPs need storage solutions that start simple and stay simple.

- **Simple deployment:** Storage solutions must be easy to deploy. SPs don't have the luxury of tinkering and tweaking; they must get up and running quickly to meet customer SLA needs 24/7.
- **Simple operation:** Storage must scale simply as very different workloads and types of data come and go — especially in cloud environments. SP storage infrastructures must ensure predictable performance with little or no tuning and low operational overhead to drive down TCO.
- **Simple integration, open approach:** Storage must feature simple API integration with key cloud technologies such as those from VMware, Microsoft and OpenStack, as well as those used by public clouds.

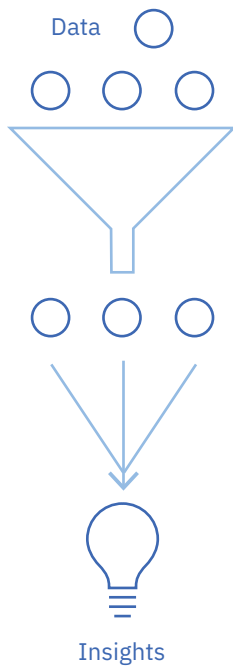


“We don't know what workloads will come tomorrow. You have to have a very scalable and systematic approach of building a reference architecture — and you've got to pick the right partners.”

Keith Dobbins, Charter/Navisite

“We're able to take what was a big third-party data centre design, completely cloudify it — storage included — and drop it in wherever clouds are available.”

Paul Rafferty, IBM Market Cloud



#3 key to SP storage success: Deliver storage infrastructure designed for big data and analytics

To fully realise the true value of big data, SPs need cognitive storage solutions that can support workloads and continuously understand, reason and learn, helping businesses match the cost of storage to the value of the data and enabling them to make faster and smarter decisions.

- **Make real-time data-driven decisions:** Flash storage solutions enable SPs to manage data more efficiently, allow SP customers to glean more insights and empower customers to act at the speed of thought by making smarter decisions based on those insights in real time.
- **Optimise storage costs and performance:** By moving from traditional storage to SDS, SPs can increase the capacity of existing systems, meet new needs as they emerge and place data in the right tier, at the right cost and with the right protection.
- **Access data with seamless scaling:** An optimal big data platform should provide scalability for huge volumes, while supporting multiple data sources and data types to enable organisations to extract meaning from unstructured and dark data.

“It’s really the analytics components around understanding the value of data; where should data be and why should it be there.”

Richard Spurlock, Cobalt Iron

“There’s that mix of IBM Spectrum Protect, Spectrum Scale and Storwize for on-premises locations. And for our large scaling data centres, it’s FlashSystem. IBM rocks our universe with that.”

Richard Spurlock, Cobalt Iron

Cloud storage: Choose right and win

The recognised leader in both flash and SDS, IBM is uniquely capable of enabling SPs and enterprises to successfully architect, build and deliver hybrid cloud storage solutions given its:

- Comprehensive storage portfolio of cloud-ready, on-premises, SDS and Storage-as-a-Service offerings.
- Wide range of complementary offerings from across the IBM ecosystem, including systems, cloud, analytics and Internet of Things, among others.

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