Lease Your Private Cloud

Cloud computing- Is it the next big thing?

If you haven't heard of cloud computing, you are probably living under a fog covered rock. Let me share my thoughts with you about the cloud.

Can cloud computing be discussed without all the hype? Sure it can.

SCS recently installed a large ad tracking system that replaced a cloud-based solution at a customer site. Despite SCS's system being entirely local and significantly cheaper, it easily handles the management and construction of ads for 24 publications, with 400 registered users and over a hundred concurrent users. The site is delighted with their SCS solution. They even claim it has superior functionality.

There are those who have pitched the cloud as the solution to everyone's IT woes. Utilizing it allows you to jettison racks of in-house servers and the IT staff that comes along with taking care of them. Moving your applications to the cloud allows you to access them from nearly anywhere you can bring up a browser. It sounds so great and so simple. Why wouldn't everyone do this? Here's the secret: SCS does, but with a really big difference.

Cloud computing encompasses two basic types of clouds: public and private. Amazon, Google, Rackspace and others allow you to deploy in their public clouds. Salesforce uses this as the heart of their business model. So why was SCS able to replace a perfectly good public cloud-based ad tracking system? Let's figure it out by taking a look at what is done at some of the companies we serve.

Many of our customers, such as Gannett, tronc (Tribune), and Lee Enterprises have their own private clouds. These are composed of cloud technologies deployed at corporate data centers.

Why would they do this? They want a lower-cost, secure platform that they control. How do they do this? Similarly to the public cloud purveyors' method: fill a warehouse with cheap servers using commonly available basic components.

An overhead view of the server infrastructure in Google's data center in Council Bluffs, Iowa, where the company has invested more than $1 billion. (Photo: Connie Zhou for Google)

The rest is mostly based on the Linux operating system, the Apache HTTP Server, the MySQL relational database management system (RDBMS), and the PHP programming language. This is the so-called LAMP software bundle.

These tools are free open source software. If you have the expertise, you can just download them and build your own private cloud.

SCS has that expertise and then some. SCS knows how to build fast, reliable, highly-functional newspaper applications without expensive third-party licensed software. There's nothing really to be gained, though, by keeping your servers on racks thousands of miles away. The only difference might just be

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that you have to pay extra for accessing your data over the Internet. And with the virtualization software they use to slice and dice computing resources, you may get just a small piece of their processing power.

"But wait," you say, "My IT staff is expensive; can't I just farm their work out to the cloud providers?"

Unfortunately, it's not that easy. Cloud computing giants aren't going to be familiar with your infrastructure, so you'll need a vendor who understands the domain you're working in and the applications you're working with. You may need immediate and effective help when you're trying to push out today's edition and something's not working.

Fortunately, SCS is expert at what it takes to keep newspaper systems running. The customers happily pay for our support because they know SCS delivers on its promises. SCS builds trusted newspaper systems.

Intel NUC Kit.

So what exactly is the SCS solution?

Here's the interesting part: SCS prefers to provide leased appliances on which its applications run locally. Now, you might argue that that's not really what you have in mind

when you think of a cloud-based solution, and you'd be right- it's a private cloud-based solution, similar to what our biggest customers utilize.

That's what SCS provides- private local cloud solutions.

You get an entire solution - lease-based financing, local cloud appliances, proven, fully-redundant, highly-scaleable and configurable newspaper applications all supported by knowledgeable and experienced managed service providers.

That means that your on-site private cloud is deployed, monitored, and maintained entirely by SCS. It will run faster because of local data access. It will be more fault tolerant because of its simplicity and 100% redundancy. It will be more secure because it utilizes the highest level of Internet security for all communications. Everyone from traveling employees to your advertising customers will be given convenient, secure remote access.

Because SCS's solution is easily replicated for deployment across the newspaper industry, we can reduce our costs while providing support for numerous newspapers. Economies of scale save us money- and, as a result, you save too.

SCS's innovative engineering provides a win-win solution for both vendor and customer.

Our ad tracking solution deployed at Times-Shamrock Creative Services reduced monthly costs by more than 40%.

You can't always get what you want
But if you try sometimes you just might find
You get what you need.
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