



WHITE PAPER

CARBONITE 

ABSTRACT

How to drive business by becoming a trusted technology partner

CLOUD & HYBRID SERVICES AS BUSINESS DRIVERS FOR IT PROVIDERS

According to technology research firm Gartner, cloud computing will become the bulk of new IT spend by 2016.¹ By the end of 2017, Gartner predicts that nearly half of large enterprises will have hybrid cloud deployments.¹

For IT providers who are already leveraging cloud services, that statistic is unlikely to be a surprise. In addition to strengthening customer relationships, cloud and hybrid services can bring a range of benefits, including better time management, affordability for customers, and increasing revenue opportunities.

Here's a look at why cloud and hybrid services are driving business for IT providers:

1 Reputation builder

Customers are quickly becoming familiar with cloud computing services, thanks to consumer applications that use the strategy, as well as widespread media attention. Because of that growing level of familiarity, IT providers who offer cloud and hybrid services are seen as innovators that take advantage of best-of-breed technology.

The ability to develop a reputation as a thought leader who can turn technology trends into strategic deployments for customers can be invaluable for customer acquisition and loyalty. Customers come to IT providers because they trust their expertise and insight — providers who confirm this impression through their knowledge and use of cloud and hybrid services can benefit from that strengthened reputation.

2 Relationship development

Because cloud services are offered in a software-as-a-service (SaaS) model, they help to perpetuate continuous customer relationships. Rather than single implementations, cloud services enable an opportunity for ongoing management and monitoring.

Because of that arrangement, IT providers are finding that customer relationships can deepen over time. They are being asked to add insight as client technology needs evolve. One of the key insights provided by IT providers is often the recommendation of hybrid solutions like hybrid data backup. By protecting data on a local device for quick recovery and in the cloud for added security, customers get the best of both worlds. These kinds of insights lead IT providers to become trusted partners who are considered an integral part of a customer's technology and business development.

3 Time management

In the past, many IT providers built their businesses by selling hardware such as servers or local backup systems. Although this approach creates up-front revenue, it also requires IT providers to spend a considerable amount of time on implementation and deployment.

With cloud or interconnected hybrid services, IT providers can easily access customer systems remotely. This leads to continuous management and monitoring without all of the travel time, expense and management tasks, allowing more time to reach customers and grow business. A prime example of an interconnected hybrid service is Carbonite Server Backup. With Carbonite, IT providers can implement a hybrid solution in which both local and cloud backups can be managed through a web-based dashboard.

4 Ease of deployment

Because cloud and hybrid services are designed to be easily managed, they also save effort when it comes to deployment. Rather than going through the process of evaluating current customers technologies and developing a customized hardware and software plan, IT providers are able to move customers to cloud services without additional equipment. Or when deploying a hybrid solution, minimal additional equipment is required. Such an approach ensures that consumers and small businesses alike have access to the most effective technology available.

This cloud-enabled strategy significantly reduces the types of issues that are regularly seen in implementations that involve a technology stack. These issues can include interoperability problems, hardware failure, power and cooling demands, on-site technology support, and other considerations.

IT providers who move customers to cloud and hybrid services are able to quickly and easily access data from any location and troubleshoot remotely, even while the solutions are running automatically in the background. Those capabilities streamline the process for customers and serve to further strengthen customer relationships.

5 Ongoing revenue

One of the most compelling benefits for IT providers and their customers is the cost effectiveness of cloud and hybrid services. Not only is the strategy affordable in terms of implementation, but it also offers an opportunity to bundle multiple services within one package.

A recent IDC report noted that worldwide public IT cloud service revenue is expected to reach \$98.4 billion in 2016.² The report also states that while cloud adoption rates are dramatically increasing, a balance between local and cloud spending is the trend. Thus, a reseller's ability provide hybrid options results in optimal revenue capture opportunities.²

While the ongoing relationship with customers through cloud services grows, IT providers can bring in value-added services over time. They can also draw upon their continuous system monitoring capability to identify what additional services they may be able to offer in order to better meet their customers' needs. This transparency provides opportunities for renewals and ongoing revenue to help grow the reseller's business.

Backup as an entry point

Many IT providers have found that online data backup represents a strong entry point for offering cloud and hybrid services to customers. Data backup is one of the top considerations for companies when they contemplate new technology directions. Statistics on data loss abound in the media, yet a surprising number of companies still lack a solid backup plan.

In a recent Carbonite study on small business data backup usage, small businesses ranked the permanent loss of data as the top challenge to maintaining their operations in the event of a natural disaster — they state that such an event is even more devastating than the loss of the physical location or of products and materials.³ Yet many of those companies were challenged by keeping pace with backup tasks.³ Half of respondents noted that they used external hard drives, and 40% of them did not start backing up until they had already experienced a hard drive failure.

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The ability to offer a robust, secure, and easy way to back up data is compelling to customers, and helps to ease them into using cloud services. It addresses a major pain point, and gives them a glimpse of the power that the cloud might be able to offer for all of their technology needs. As determined by the Carbonite study on small business data backup usage, 81% of small businesses consider data to be their organization's most valuable asset.³ Giving them the power to protect that data creates a strong and long-term relationship between customers and IT providers.

Looking ahead

Analysts predict that cloud services will continue to become more robust and lead businesses and consumers to utilize the cloud-enabled strategy as they become more comfortable with the technology.

The growing demand for cloud and hybrid services will create more opportunities for IT providers, who can leverage their offerings to customers and bundle numerous services. Rather than take on time-consuming maintenance and upgrade tasks, IT providers will find that the cloud allows more freedom for relationship building, new customer acquisition, and strategic management.

The cloud is not a trend; it is how most new service technologies are being offered. IT providers who take advantage of the approach—and build upon it by offering hybrid solutions as well—are likely to find robust growth as a result.

Start offering cloud and hybrid services

When it comes to cloud and hybrid data backup, Carbonite has a suite of business-grade solutions that are easy to manage, easy to access, and affordable for customers.

To start providing Carbonite solutions to your customers, join the Carbonite Partner Program today.

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Sources referenced

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2. "Successful Cloud Partners: Higher, Faster, Stronger." 2013, completed by IDC, available from Microsoft, accessed January 20, 2015.
3. Small business data loss results: Carbonite Small Business Data Backup Usage Study, 2011.