

Multi-cloud business models will shape the future

 By [Simon McCullough](#)

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Architects of the future build optimal businesses. In an automated, security conscious world, organisations must rethink their cloud strategies, embed security into application development, and embrace new work practices to stay relevant. Now is the time to plan your journey.

Shaping the future

Experts agree that, over the next five years, the multi-cloud world will be the playground for innovation, allowing organisations to launch new services and enhance advanced technologies.



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A recent Foresight Factory report entitled, *The Future of the Multi-Cloud* (FOMC), sponsored by F5, reveals how the pace of digital transformation is already dramatically disrupting existing business models. It also details how organisations are forced to reassess their skills, existing infrastructure, and tools to manage the multi-cloud more effectively.

The EMEA-focused study captures insightful commentary from eminent cloud experts on how businesses will need to hasten their multi-cloud readiness in order to meet consumer demand for fast, seamless services.

Over the next five years, experts forecast that EMEA cloud-based business models will require substantial changes, if not a complete re-architecture of strategic procedures, policies, systems, and tools. While moving to the cloud can present some

security challenges, it also opens new opportunities to safeguard operations while simultaneously scaling and innovating in real-time.



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IT departments are under growing pressure to run a well-established security infrastructure and scale to meet customer demands. Moving apps to public and private cloud environments will enable enterprises to be dynamic with data management while also implementing app-centric services with strong security solutions to mitigate against cybercrime. Yet, achieving a consistent security posture, including user authentication and policy controls, is a complex task when amplified across multi-cloud platforms.

“The multi-cloud ramp up is one of the ultimate wake up calls in internal IT,” says Eric Marks, VP of cloud consulting at Cloud Spectator. “I think that one of the biggest transformative changes that it brings to an enterprise is the realisation of what a high performing IT organisation is and compares to what they have. Most of them are finding their IT organisations are sadly underperforming.”

Automation changes the game

The attack surface is broadening all the time. Increasing gateway services and application programming interfaces, as well as developments in fields like the Internet of Things, are shaking the status quo to its core. The threat landscape is more sophisticated than ever due to volumetric attacks, malicious bots, and other tools targeting apps and sensitive data. Many traditional practices are no longer effective because they are too labour intensive and time inefficient to protect what really matters. This is where automation comes in to streamline and standardise IT processes, as well as remove human error. It also helps IT staff focus on other priorities, such as analytics and problem-solving.

Against this backdrop, experts recognise that is not enough to just move applications to the cloud. It is imperative to address the business objectives in line with market needs and apply integrated tools sets that provide automated workflows, greater visibility, and analytical capabilities. It is also critical to establish new working methodologies for better collaboration and efficiency.



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Cloud skills of the future will also look different to those of today. To stay relevant, NetOps teams must embrace automation capabilities to reduce slow, manual traditional processes, whereas DevOps teams must embed security disciplines into the production phase. Siloed working is a thing of the past. Together, the path of optimisation and orchestration will lead to a more prosperous outcome and ensure customer-centricity and data compliance.

“Automation is key, governance is key, third-party security systems and identity access management are key. This is going to drive a lot of spending over the next five years,” predicts David Linthicum, chief cloud strategy officer at Deloitte Consulting, and other prominent FOMC contributors.

In fact, adopting a multi-cloud route does not have to mean compromising security. With advanced security solutions, businesses can safely move their applications to any cloud model that works best for their strategy without geographic or infrastructural constraints. Consumer demands and industry competitiveness continue to make the cloud an essential option. The right deployment strategy makes it a viable and safe one.

Clearly, skills need to swiftly evolve. Cloud architects must be empowered with comprehensive solutions to deliver panoramic visibility and analytics, highly intelligent and contextual awareness, and sophisticated policy controls.

Deal with disruption

With the future in mind, expect the unexpected. New serverless architecture will enable enterprises to cut time-to-market and enable simplification of processes. Intelligent automation and machine learning are already easing the path toward optimal multi-cloud deployments.

EMEA organisations need to be prepared to undergo significant change and boldly face disruption head-on. If you are not turning to the multi-cloud for flexibility, innovation, and being data compliant, then your customers will quickly shape your future by turning to some else they can trust.

ABOUT SIMON MCCULLOUGH

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