Preserving Agility in the Cloud

Cost savings drove much of the initial cloud adoption and data center virtualization efforts. And, for the majority of businesses, it remains a significant driver. But as IT organizations build out private and hybrid clouds, agility has become a primary motivating factor.

THE PRICE OF AGILITY

The ability to respond to business needs in a flexible, efficient manner is becoming increasingly important. In fact, according to IDG, greater business agility/flexibility is amongst the top three expected benefits of a private cloud.[1]

This agility, unfortunately, comes at a price. As IT organizations combine clouds – be they private, community or public – the IT environment becomes more complex, and the risk of losing data, whether due to unplanned downtime or a catastrophic event, increases. Egress fees, time to recover and data complexity all make recovery an immense, unforeseen challenge. IDC estimates that 50% of organizations have inadequate DR plans and might not survive after a significant disaster because of the inability to recover IT systems.[2]

IT organizations require a means to protect their data, regardless of where it's stored, and maintain the agility benefits they've worked hard to achieve. A cloud-based data management solution can deliver that protection while not only preserving the organization's current agility but also extending it to backup and disaster recovery operations.

Cloud on Your Terms: Avoid Vendor Lock in and Take Control of Your Data[i]

Discover how a strong solution that enables you to move data from one cloud to another will help you avoid vendor lock in and stay in control of your data/workload portability.

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TODAY'S DATA RECOVERY CHALLENGES

Data recovery has never been as challenging or as critical as it is today. IT organizations are tasked with overseeing service-level agreements (SLAs) for a variety of IT services, over which they have no control. Downtime is an all-too common occurrence and can occur for any number of unforeseen reasons, all of which impact the bottom line. The average cost of downtime, according to IDC, is about $100,000 per hour. Cumulatively, IDC research indicates that most organizations experience between 10 and 20 hours of unplanned downtime per year, even without a disaster.[3]

The traditional approach to disaster recovery involves maintaining a secondary data center with the same systems and applications that run in the primary data center. Prior to the advent of data center virtualization, this was an expensive and complex endeavor that was viable for only the largest enterprises. Today, however, maintaining a secondary data center is nearly impossible given the dynamic nature of the IT environment. Even if it was a reasonable approach, it still does not address the need to recover data in third-party clouds.

According to IDC, more than 80% of organizations expect to use some sort of cloud service by 2018.[4] As confidence in public cloud services grows, more mainstream applications are either moved to the cloud or replaced with Software as a Service (SaaS) solutions. While getting data into the cloud is relatively easy, getting data out is a different story. Enterprises

[1] IDG Enterprise Cloud Computing Research, 2014

[2, 3, 4] IDC, "Leveraging the Public Cloud for Faster Disaster Recovery at Lower Cost," May 2015

simply can't afford the time, processing and cost associated with recovering everything from the cloud to on-premises, nor does it make sense to when cloud adoption is becoming mainstream.

In addition to SaaS solutions, IT organizations are increasingly using public Infrastructure as a Service (IaaS) and Platform as a Service (PaaS) to develop and test applications. While some of these applications go through an entire lifecycle in the cloud, others are brought back on premises to run in the private cloud. Still others "float" across resources that reside in both on-premise and off-premise clouds. This is what the agility of the cloud is all about. But this movement complicates backup and recovery efforts. IT organizations need a recovery strategy that takes this movement into account otherwise significant gaps leave data and applications at risk.

There is also the issue of "shadow IT." Business units often adopt SaaS and cloud storage solutions without the approval of the IT organization. As a result, data becomes fragmented across internal and external cloud services. IT organizations must know where all corporate data resides and have the capabilities to manage and monitor it, preferably from a central point of control.

Finally, addressing off-premise data separate from on-premise data is simply not an option. Agility is hampered if the cloud becomes a new silo with its own data protection and recovery mechanisms. To avoid the management headaches and operational overhead created by data silos, IT organizations require a holistic solution that enables them to easily manage data, regardless of where it resides, from a single console.

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IDC, "Leveraging the Public Cloud for Faster Disaster Recovery at Lower Cost," May 2015

THE CLOUD TO THE RESCUE

Many IT organizations have attempted to address their data backup and recovery challenges by implementing a cloud storage platform. Most of the time, however, IT organizations simply use cloud storage as an inexpensive, off-site storage target. Scripts must be written and manual administration and intervention are necessary to make data readily recoverable. This additional work impacts the IT organization's ability to meet recovery SLAs and be agile in the face of a disaster or downtime.

However, when the recovery process is automated from end-to-end, the cloud offers the best solution for addressing the data protection and recovery challenges IT organizations face today. With more options than ever before for "getting data into" the cloud and new orchestration tools that automate recovery workflows in the cloud, IT organizations can operationalize disaster recovery. And by integrating across both on-premises and public/hybrid cloud infrastructures, IT organizations can affordably bring disaster recovery to workloads of every type – regardless of the hypervisor or service provider in use, or whether the cloud is public, private or hybrid.

Furthermore, a cloud-based data management solution enables IT organizations to protect data without sacrificing agility. For example, IT organizations can continue to maintain a highly dynamic data center or private cloud with the confidence that it can be recovered at any time because the cloud-based data management solution eliminates the need to manually replicate the data center to a secondary site. Because a single platform simplifies recovery efforts, IT can also get systems back up and running quickly after a disaster or unplanned downtime. In fact, accelerated and streamlined disaster recovery was cited by 71% of respondents to a CIO Insight survey as a benefit of using a single, cloud-based data management platform.[5]

IDC confirms the agility the benefits cloud brings to DR: "Though cost savings is the factor that receives all of the attention with respect to cloud DR (and it is real enough), agility is the other major factor that makes cloud DR attractive. The ability to move data between on-premise and cloud repositories, establish multiple DR sites if needed, and change providers as needed gives organizations the options to optimize recovery, convenience, and cost."[6]

A cloud-based data management solution provides protection across a number of cloud service providers and hypervisors, providing companies the freedom to consume SaaS and other cloud services without concern for how data will be protected. IT organizations can make solution recommendations to business units based on business requirements, rather than the technical constraints dictated by a rigid backup and recovery solution.

Perhaps most importantly, IT organizations retain the ability to move data between on-premise and cloud repositories. Data is protected and recoverable regardless of where it lives. IT can also change service providers as needed to optimize convenience and cost. True portability between cloud providers means that regardless of where companies want to store their data now and into the future, they are not locked into a particular provider or architecture. Data can be migrated between clouds, or to a private cloud and back again with ease.

Ensure Business Continuity - with a Modern Disaster Recovery Approach[ii]

Read how a modern approach to DR, consisting of multiple facets united on a common platform, can hope to achieve true resiliency come what may.

READ NOW

PDF

Greater business agility/ flexibility is amongst the top three expected benefits of a private cloud.

IDG Enterprise Cloud Computing Research, 2014

[5] Datamation and CIO Insight Survey, "Data Management in the Cloud Era," 2014

[6] IDC, "Leveraging the Public Cloud for Faster Disaster Recovery at Lower Cost," May 2015

RESOURCES

i commvault.com/freedom

ii commvault.com/resource-library/55a90670a2588562a1000085/ensure-business-continuity-with-a-modern-disaster-recovery-approach.pdf

To learn more about how to avoid vendor lock in and take control of your data, visit **commvault.com/freedom**.

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