

TRUE OR FALSE: HYBRID IT IS NOT HYBRID CLOUD

 **92%** of companies are implementing some form of hybrid IT¹

There is a great deal of conversation and interest about these two buzzwords in the IT community today and they do share some distinct commonalities with one another.

- **True** – They both involve cloud computing and multiple geographical disbursements of IT services and resources.
- **True** – They both work to help reduce costs and increase the flexibility and agility of enterprises today.
- **True** – Both of these approaches to IT are innovative and organizations are integrating them within their enterprises at an ever quickening pace today.
- **True** – Both of these concepts introduce new cost structures into the enterprise that attain budgetary advantages, and allows for greater control of costs as well.

In the end however, Hybrid IT is not the Hybrid Cloud, although it is easy to confuse the two. In this article, we will strive to add clarity to the similarities and differences of each of these innovative technology approaches.

DEFINING THE HYBRID CLOUD

While it is true that Hybrid Cloud is a facet of Hybrid IT, they are not one and the same. The hybrid cloud is a type of cloud deployment architecture that consists of at least two separate geographical locations. Typically, it involves an on-premises private cloud that is integrated with one

or more public clouds. These clouds then collectively host digital services, data and applications for users, all of them managed through a common management interface by the IT team.

Cloud bursting is a common example of this type of deployment model in which additional servers and services are automatically provisioned in the public cloud in order to handle peak usage or unforeseen demand. These can be decommissioned later once they are no longer required. An IT team that already manages a private VMware virtual farm using vSphere can integrate hosted services within



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vCloud Air into a united infrastructure using either VMware Air Hybrid Manager or vRealize. Another example would be integrating Azure-consistent services in the data center with existing services hosted in Azure public using HPE ProLiant for Microsoft Azure Stack. In this scenario, a company could either administer a test environment on-premises, migrating it to Azure public when ready for production. Another instance could be the allocation of frontend web services and applications hosted in Azure public while the backend database services reside within the secure confines of the on-prem data center.

The hybrid cloud offers the best of both worlds. It offers the flexibility provided by self-provisioning on-demand capabilities of the cloud while retaining full control and management of data and applications when desired. Yes, the Hybrid Cloud is a great place to be. But what if you are a mature organization with existing legacy applications and infrastructure that are not cloud ready? As Gartner states, "Not everything can or should be cloud."²

HOW DOES IT ATTAIN HYBRID CLOUD-LIKE PERFORMANCE ACROSS THE ENTERPRISE?

This is where Hybrid IT begins to enter the picture. What makes the cloud so alluringly powerful is its internal ability to service customers so effectively. It would be nice if established organizations could transition everything to the cloud, but that dream is not possible as of yet due to a number of reasons such as legacy implications, industry and government compliances, security, the lack of required skills.

For too long, organizations have approached IT in a piecemeal approach. Data centers were siloed into segmented areas according to function, specialty, location or department. Solutions were pursued in isolation of one another with little regard to an overarching vision or foresight. Proprietary appliances and infrastructure were implanted into the network, discounting the long term implications of vendor lock-in. IT became dependent on

highly trained specialists, which resulted in skill-set silos as these specialists worked in separation of one another.

The launch of virtualization demonstrated how standardization through software defined computing can transform the ability of IT to deploy and manage server infrastructure. Virtualization and the proliferation of the Internet Pipe led to cloud computing, which then began freeing enterprises from the rigid confines of the hardware-dominated data center. This newly found freedom delivered a degree of agility, responsiveness, and flexibility that sparked the digital transformation that is amending the way in which we do business today.

DEFINING HYBRID IT

Hybrid IT is not about any "one technology." Hybrid IT is an approach, a strategy, a blueprint, that governs the deployment and delivery of applications, digital services and information. Hybrid IT bridges the typically disparate worlds of legacy and cloud applications. The goal of Hybrid IT is to create cloud-like delivery models that provide users with the tools they need, when they need them. In other words, Hybrid IT is about attaining the identical service capabilities of the cloud for your entire infrastructure, whether it be traditional in-house data center technology, or public/private cloud services. Hybrid IT unifies both worlds of the enterprise.

Hybrid IT is not about one technology or one location. It is about one IT organization, one vision and one encompassing goal – to optimize the user experience by delivering workloads with simplicity and flexibility end-to-end across the enterprise. Hybrid IT is about attaining a level of composable infrastructure throughout the data center so that physical compute, storage and network fabric resources are delivered as services. This requires the modernization of some aspects of nearly everyone's enterprise, but now these processes are implemented with a sense of a predominant principle.



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Besides the application of a single unified plan for the enterprise, Hybrid IT will allow IT to align business objectives with IT solutions through the means of IT-as-a-Service. IT is no longer an auxiliary branch of the company. IT is now an inline branch of business centered on self-service, standardization and responsiveness. Today's IT must now engage business on a proactive services emphasized basis. Business will now drive technology decisions.

THE SIMILARITY IS IN THE RESULTS

The Hybrid Cloud is the North Star, and Hybrid IT is the compass that serves as the navigational beacon to help attain cloud-like performance for all enterprise resources. The end goal is what HPE describes as "build anywhere, deploy everywhere simplicity."³

While the Hybrid Cloud and Hybrid IT are not one and the same, the results that they are designed to achieve are identical. Though the eventual goal of every organization should be a cloud based self-provisioning deployment infrastructure, most organizations remain saddled with the decisions and undertakings from the past. Today's IT

landscape clearly shows us where business and IT need to collectively arrive in their collaborative journey. Hybrid IT is the roadmap, providing the system tools and concepts to get them there.



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WEI's IT experts have the knowledge and experience to help guide and implement your hybrid IT strategy. Contact WEI today to get your questions answered about hybrid IT.

Sources:

1. IDG Research commissioned by WEI, June 20, 2017.
2. <http://www.zdnet.com/article/hybrid-cloud-why-hybrid-it-may-be-the-better-choice>
3. <https://community.hpe.com/t5/Converged-Data-Center/HPE-announces-Project-New-Hybrid-IT-Stack-a-vision-for-build/ba-p/6966755>

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