Quest® STRATEGIC ADVISOR

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Help Meeting Cloud Adoption Challenges

Cloud. Everyone's talking about it. But what does it really mean?

If the way your business does IT has become problematic, cloud computing may offer a solution — but only if you know what you're doing.

"The big fallacy of cloud computing is that it can be everything to everyone," says Tim Burke, Quest President and CEO. "But it's not true. Each move to the cloud is unique — dependent on both the goals of the business and the particulars of its current infrastructure."

Asking the right questions

To figure out whether cloud computing will deliver what a customer needs, Quest begins every engagement with questions.

"Our first question is always, 'What do you want to accomplish?'," Tim says. "That leads right to the drill-down questions. These tell us whether cloud computing will provide you an effective solution, and, if so, how we can best configure cloud technologies to enable you to accomplish what you want."

Tim identifies four drilldowns that Quest's cloud experts pursue:

- Defining the capability you're seeking,
- Understanding your current environment (both strengths and weaknesses),
- Establishing why your current environment doesn't meet your requirements or can't deliver the capability you seek,
- Determining exactly how a cloud solution will deliver the capability you want and enable your business to achieve its goals.

"You have to be aware of the issue you're trying to address — and why you have the issue in the first place," Tim says. "Doing this means discussing technology in terms of the business — not the other way around. Technology can help you implement better business practices. But you won't necessarily get better business practices just because you've implemented some technology."

Which cloud model works best?

The answers Quest's experts elicit about each customer's goals and infrastructure forms the basis for recommendations about how to achieve those goals — and, when appropriate, the cloud computing model that will work best.

THE BOTTOM LINE

Cloud computing is a paradigm shift that can overcome the limits of traditional IT environments and streamline your business — but it takes planning, because each move to the cloud is unique.

IN THIS ISSUE

What kind of cloud computing may be right for you?

CLOUD ADOPTION CHALLENGES *(Cont. from p. 1)*

Going public. Sometimes a public/shared cloud solution is optimal. You pay for resources on a per-use basis without incurring any upfront costs for hardware or software, you can scale your use up or down as needed, and you enjoy some key built-ins: The enhanced security that's part of every Quest Service Delivery Center, Quest's automatic maintenance and updating

> **"Before you make any move, map out how you're going to get from where you are to where you want to go."**

of the hardware and software environments you're using, and quick access to Quest's extensive technical expertise.

These public/shared clouds are often the best choice for workloads that are not business-critical, such as email or customer relationship management.

Staying private. Cloud-enabling a traditional in-house data center maximizes infrastructure capabilities via virtualization and a simplified architecture that integrates computing, network, and storage infrastructures.

"Few organizations are ready to give up all of their in-house technology," says Quest Account Manager Justin Trammell. "Sometimes that's because their technology serves a unique aspect of their business. Sometimes it can be just too cost-prohibitive to walk away from recent technology investments."

But building a private cloud requires significant CapEx, even when you engage Quest's technical expertise to design, deploy, and/or maintain it.

The hybrid alternative. For many businesses, a third option provides the

FROM TIM BURKE...

The Road to IT Victory Starts with a Plan

What's the difference between a successful IT implementation and a disaster? A good plan.

To have any chance of success, you must understand what you're trying to accomplish, what resources you have on hand, what help you might need. And that's precisely what planning sessions are designed to uncover: The essential details describing the what and how of making it happen.

Think of any winning sports team. Yes, they need quality players, good equipment, adequate training. They also need a coaching staff with a plan.

We've all watched in horror as a beloved team goes down to defeat at the hands of a lesser rival because no one on our team's coaching staff had a clue — that is, a plan — to deal with the other team's strategy. Indeed, most of what a winning coach does is in the office, not on the field. And it happens way before the team starts playing.

The same is true for any IT project, be it cloud computing, disaster recovery, security, etc. Always start your journey with a good, solid plan. If you're unsure about how to craft one, don't wing it — get help from a trusted advisor.
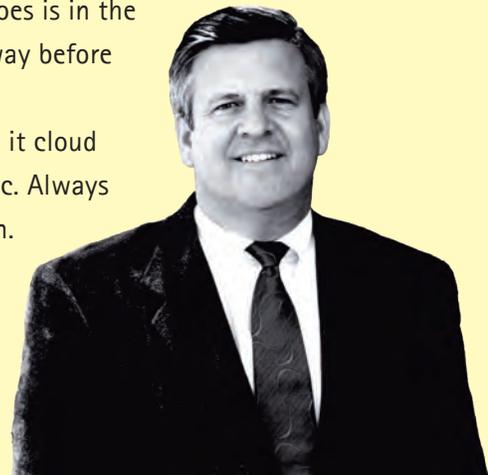
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best of public and private cloud computing — by combining them.

Typically in a hybrid cloud solution, non-business-critical workloads are handled via public cloud services, while workloads and databases that are critical or unique to the business are kept in a private-designed cloud. Quest can manage all aspects of customers' hybrid clouds, including those portions located on customer premises.

Starting with a Quest assessment
Cloud computing represents a new IT paradigm that can streamline IT envi-

ronments while reducing capital outlays and improving security, performance and manageability. The best way to find out whether cloud computing can help your business is to get an assessment from a trusted advisor.

"Most important of all," Tim says, "before you make any move, map out how you're going to get from where you are to where you want to go."

Quest's Cloud Assessment can help you refine your objectives, nail down your infrastructure issues, and develop an effective, workable cloud strategy.

Quest's Unified Data Center:
Investing in a New Architecture for a New IT Paradigm

In order to deliver the best in cloud services, Quest has invested in a new data center architecture — the Quest Unified Data Center, which is available via all 20 Quest Service Delivery Centers across the nation.

A radically simplified — and secure — data center architecture

Based on products from Cisco, VMware, NetApp, F5, and other leading IT vendors, the radically simplified design of Quest's Unified Data Center results in fewer switches, cables, adapters, and management points.

The limitations of traditional fixed I/O configurations are traded for an I/O architecture that uses software to make just-in-time changes on a per-server basis as individual customers require. And storage resources are integrated via high bandwidth, multi-purpose, industry-protocol connections.

Virtual machines in Quest's Unified Data Center are always securely partitioned. Once securely isolated, they're connected to secured storage systems through a segmented, secured network. So with Quest, your cloud-resident data is safe, its integrity is rigorously maintained, and both your data and your access to it are securely isolated without compromise to workload performance.

Built-in resilience and high availability

Quest's Unified Data Center design also tightly integrates various high availability technologies across the entire infrastructure, including redundant power supplies, network fabric interconnects, and the ability to dynamically migrate virtual machines and maintain their state with system profiles.

Several technologies — including active-active storage controllers, RAID-DP, and clustering technologies — support availability of resources and data and assure that no controller, disk, or system failure will result in unplanned downtime.

Increasing the velocity of your business

Quest's Unified Data Center engineers can rapidly deploy applications and even full environments using just the right resources — so you won't struggle with under-resourced workloads, nor will you pay more for just-in-case resources you won't use.

Whether you need shared or dedicated hosting or you prefer a public, private or hybrid cloud, Quest's Unified Data Center architecture and an expert staff work together to deliver the 21st-century operational IT efficiency your business needs.

DID-YOU-KNOW?

What to Ask Cloud Providers: 8 Questions

Check out a recent cio.com article* to get some recommendations about what questions to ask cloud providers. Bill Claybrook of New River Marketing Research suggests these eight queries are especially worthwhile:

1. Can I see your data center?
2. How do I move my apps to the cloud?
3. How are my apps and data protected from other users on the same cloud servers?
4. Can I speak with some of your customers?
5. Can I move an existing app from my private cloud to your public cloud without massive reconfiguration?
6. How do I get my data back?
7. How do you address government regulations?
8. What will I really pay?

Except for questions 1 and 4 (to which any reputable provider will reply with a resounding *yes*), there are no one-size-fits-all answers to these questions. The answers you get will depend on the specifics of your business, your infrastructure, and other considerations — and Quest professionals will happily field all these and many other questions about Quest's cloud services.

* http://www.cio.com/article/684927/8_Questions_to_Ask_Prospective_Cloud_Vendors

Coming in the next issue of *Quest Strategic Advisor:*
THE MEANING OF TRUST: CUSTOMER COMMITMENT

What's New...

From Tim Burke: 5 essential elements in IT SLAs

If you've heard about — or suffered from — the Amazon, Google, and Microsoft cloud outages over the last several months, then you may have given thought to the importance of cloud provider service level agreements (SLAs).

So has Quest President and CEO Tim Burke. His recent thought leadership piece on SLAs* can help you mitigate the risks inherent in depending on managed and cloud services. Tim points to five essential elements crucial to every SLA:

1. *Specification of each service to be provided,* including minimum performance levels (e.g., transaction throughput time, service availability/uptime, mean-time-to-respond to/resolve a trouble call, mean-time-to-restore should problems occur),
2. *Details about the system, network, and security infrastructure and standards to be maintained for your service by the provider* — so you understand what you're buying,
3. *SLA changes*, including a formal review process and tune-up options,
4. *SLA monitoring and enforcement*, including appropriate metrics and how to monitor them as well as an established escalation process, and
5. *Procedures for the safe and prompt return of your data upon service termination*, including specific timeframes and an assurance that the provider destroys your data upon service termination.

* IT Service-Level Agreements: Pay Attention to 5 Essential Elements, July 2011. For more information, please ask about QuestFlex® Quest's flexible service level agreement customized to your specifications.

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NEW VIDEO! Service Delivery Centers: Find out about Quest's nationwide Service Delivery Centers — and watch as we focus in particular on Quest's Business Resumption Center, strategically located at one of California's most seismically stable and secure locations. We'll show you why you can count on Quest when you're looking for the ultimate in disaster preparedness.

Who We Are: Colleagues describe achieving business systems success with Quest's help.

Data Security Video: Hear direct from the FBI, security experts, and your peers about the in-depth security issues and how Quest can help protect your company.

Business Continuity Planning/Disaster Recovery: More than 25% of businesses damaged from natural and/or man-made disasters never recover. Ensure your future.

Video overview of our Infrastructure Services: Wireless, Broadband, Fiber-optics, Fiber Splicing, Infrastructure Cabling, and more.

PODCASTS
QUEST ON THE RADIO: Download the podcast on Quest's Threat Review Process.

PCI Compliance podcast: Join (Co-Hosts) Scott Draughon (My Technology Lawyer) and Oliver Rist (InfoWorld) as they interview Mike Dillon (Quest CTO) and Jon Bolden (Quest Director of Professional Services) about PCI (Payment Card Industry) compliance.

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