Chapter 3
Community Cloud: Closing the Gap between Public and Private

Karolina Marzantowicz
IBM, Poland
Łukasz Paciorkowski
IBM, Poland

ABSTRACT

Should you turn to a public or private cloud solution? Discussions prizing the first or the second option are endless. Public cloud means flexibility, unlimited scalability, frictionless consumption and less worry for your CIO. On the other hand, private cloud gives you full control over the environment and keeps your data close to you, preferably under your nose—or at least within the borders of your country. Public cloud is relatively cheap, while a private cloud might get pricey. But what if neither of those two options fit your needs? You may not trust public cloud providers, but at the same time you are searching for the way to cut through complexity of the private cloud. The answer to your needs might be a community cloud.

BACKGROUND: WHY CLOUD DISCUSSION IS IMPORTANT

Cloud dominates IT related discussions. The promise of lower operational costs, flexibility and the access to the innovative capabilities attracts more and more organizations. There is a good reason for it. IT, once a competitive advantage for the firms, is gradually becoming a commodity. Challenging market situation forces organizations of all sizes to search for the cost reduction opportunities. At the same time rapid digitization requires more storage, computation power and new advanced software solutions. Virtually all major IT vendors are shifting their strategy towards cloud technologies. But they are not the only ones. Smaller but much more dynamic challengers are entering global IT market every day. Competition in the cloud market is taking part on multiple levels. Price wars are won be the biggest players – the
economy of scale works on their advantage. Smaller players can compete by using new, innovative solutions, platforms and tools. All of the cloud providers are trying to establish their position on the market.

This global trend of cloudification is not purely technology driven hype. Organizations around the world are searching for new business models based on the digitized offerings. Innovation cycles were drastically shortened during last decade. New versions of products and services are deployed every week. For the traditional IT addressing the business demand on time became increasingly difficult. Standard procedure-driven and mostly manual work of IT specialists is not enough for the new generation, internet-based businesses. Many of them turn towards cloud as enabler for growth and innovation.

More traditional organizations and institutions like banks and governments are lagging behind in the cloud adoption journey. The reason for this is that a lot of inhibitors exist for them. Companies from highly regulated industries require specific approach, which often cannot be accommodated by public cloud providers. As the cloud platforms work due to high level of standardization any major deviation from those standards does not make economic sense. As a result organizations like banks or governments are often left alone with the options of a standard outsourcing or private, on-premises cloud.

In this chapter we will look at the specific scenario for the cloud platform – a Community Cloud – which is closing the gap between public/private and on/off-premises scenarios. Before we will discuss the specifics, lets first have a quick look at the cloud ecosystem, its players and different models existing today on the market.

Figure 1. Public cloud
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