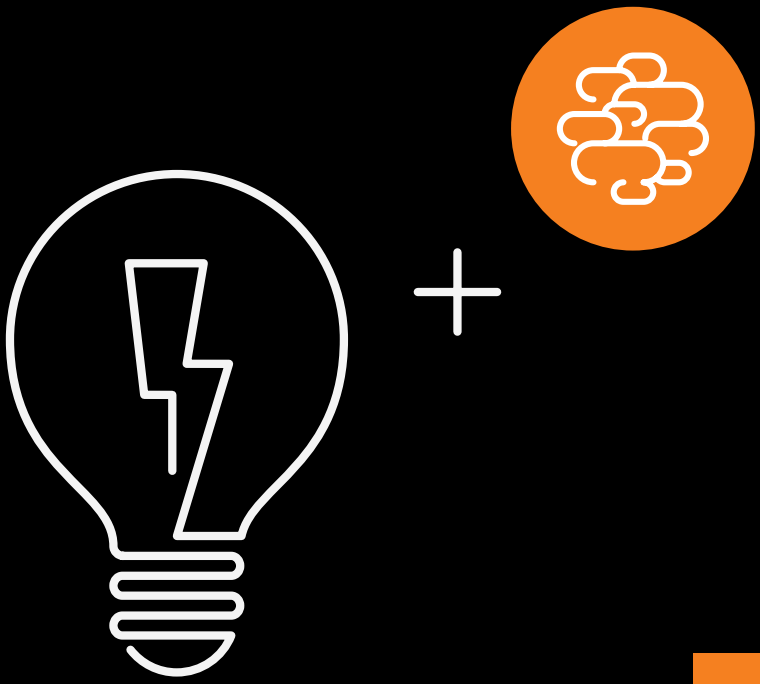
transforming business with the cloud in a flash



Business Services

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editorial

For the past two years, companies' IT divisions have devoted an increasing amount of time thinking about and planning a migration to cloud computing.
Whether they were early enthusiasts or latecomers to the Cloud, IT divisions view cloud computing as a powerful tool for transforming themselves into full-fledged internal service providers within their organizations. They see it as having the means to design and promote offers tailored to a variety of internal customers, while offering usage-based billing. However, IT divisions still have a lot of work left to do to bring about this profound transformation.

The question is no longer why, but how. And this blog book contains three articles that illustrate the importance of long-term support for a successful transformation:
• an example of how to manage this transformation, particularly when drafting a unified cloud-use policy
• a look at the impact of the Cloud on the IT value chain, ecosystem, IT sector and IT partners
• an overview of the new activities and new organizational models that IT divisions may need to anticipate when migrating to the Cloud

We hope you enjoy reading this!

Martine, Marie-Christine and Bernard

content

transforming businesses
with the Cloud in a flash

gaskets, clouds and grease

by Martine Garrivet

With the Cloud, small- and medium-sized businesses (SMBs) now have access to high-performance and reliable IT infrastructure that was once only available to large companies.

The Cloud's main advantage is its simplicity. Relieved of all the complexity and heavy investments required for setting up and operating IT infrastructure, SMBs can finally match their information systems to their business needs at affordable prices. But will this simplicity really spur on a mass migration to the Cloud?

Not for everyone. At least not for those who make money off of complexity. Some examples would be the channels that provide solutions to companies: IT consulting firms, systems integrators, VARs and other players in the IT world. This list includes all companies that continue to make a living off of knowing how to manage a complex system of networks, machines and applications.

one man's junk…

These companies didn't create the complexity: it was already there, and it may always be there. For example, we know that more than eight in ten IT projects fail to meet their budget, deadline or functionality requirements, and that's not counting projects that are never completed! In fact, almost a third of projects are aborted in the development phase (2009 Standish Group report)

In a world in need of a complete overhaul, it's always helpful to find analogies in other areas. For example, other industries have already undergone this kind of total revolution in their path to maturity. Take the automotive industry for one. For a good part of the 20th century, drivers needed to be pretty good mechanics just to cruise down the highway. And of course you couldn't get anywhere without your hand crank.

the Cloud: a distant cousin of the gasket?

Indeed there was a time when driving meant getting your hands dirty, literally! Mechanics were all over, building their empires on gaskets and platinum screws. Nowadays, most mechanics use their skills to improve vehicle performance. They prevent breakdowns instead of fixing them, and do more tune-ups than repair work. As the industry matured, progress in maintenance practices made the mechanic's new role both necessary and useful.

But why would IT professionals give up their daily bread? For the same reasons old-style mechanics changed the services they offered (at least we hope mechanics have adjusted both for their livelihoods and their customers!): quite simply because this daily bread is shrinking smaller and smaller every day.

“ shift added value to business applications, prefer consulting to maintenance, configure instead of install, and guarantee quality of service above all ”

focus

According to a recent study by KPMG, by 2016, only 16% of European companies plan to continue using “on-premise” infrastructure.

keywords: value added

To conclude, users will determine the fate of complexity. And all signs indicate that they will opt to eliminate it. IT consulting firms, systems integrators and VARs can bid adieu to the cash cow of managing complex infrastructure. At best, IT providers may only be able to slow down the migration to the Cloud.

More than eight in ten IT projects fail to meet their budget, deadline or functionality requirements

In this time of transformation, the companies that will survive and flourish are the ones that will take advantage of the cloud revolution by following these simple rules: shift added value to business applications, prefer consulting to maintenance, configure instead of install, and guarantee quality of service above all. Hey! That’s exactly what cloud computing promises to offer…

worth knowing

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http://oran.ge/18vHuBZ

#cloud computing, #infrastructure as a service, #IT, #value added

the need for a cloud policy

by Bernard Blimont

The last few months have seen a cloud washing wave in the service provider market.

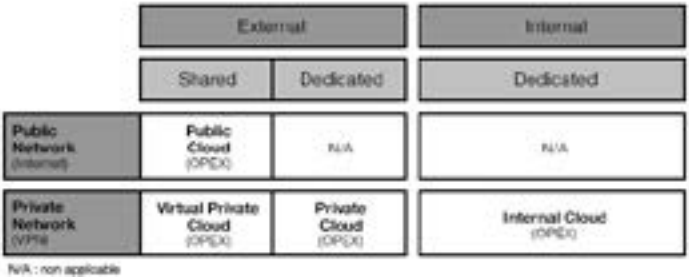
The phenomenon has used fascination with the word “cloud” and a curiously vague definition of the corresponding service models to repackage classic services under the cloud banner.

Even though the market has generally grasped the broad outlines of cloud models (market segmentation between IaaS, PaaS and SaaS offers), it has yet to master the different models that make up each of these segments.

despite the hype, the Cloud remains foggy

Take IaaS (Infrastructure as a Service) for example. In this segment we find terms like “Internal Cloud,” “Private Cloud,” “Virtual Private Cloud” and “Public Cloud.” Not too clear at first glance.

Making matters more complicated is the fact that there is no standard vocabulary for these services, even though the terms suggested by some major players in the market are gaining more and more currency, due to their pertinence.



This chart covers most of the models currently available on the market, while new models are likely to be developed in the near future by altering or combining these four basic models (such as Community Cloud or Hybrid Cloud).

The paradoxical gap between an abundance of communication and a vague imprecision in terms is exacerbated by the lack of any shared vision between IT and business divisions, some of which even
subscribe to cloud services without coordinating with their IT divisions.

“ adopting a cloud policy will promote a common approach between IT and business divisions ”

focus

With all the confusion surrounding service models, selection criteria and conflicting initiatives, companies are increasingly coming to the following realization.

migrating to the Cloud requires a common policy

IT divisions ensure that consistent solutions are offered to their internal customers.

worth knowing

Since reducing costs is one of the main benefits to expect from the Cloud, massification and the scale effect naturally tend to promote the idea of unifying infrastructures. However, independent cloud subscriptions outside any unified IT strategy only serve to hinder any efforts at consolidation.

Furthermore, one of the conditions for an IT division turning to cloud services – as demonstrated by major technological revolutions in the past – is to ensure the convergence of the infrastructure powering the information system throughout the migration to the Cloud. This avoids creating an independent silo within the information system.

In order to succeed, this convergence needs a cloud policy that effectively promotes a common, unified approach within the company, particularly between the IT and business divisions, while also including other divisions involved in these decisions (financial, security/compliance divisions).

Now that we've grasped this concept, the question is: who's in the best position to define, promote and oversee this cloud policy?

IT divisions oversee this policy to ensure the success of the information system transformation

There are many reasons why IT divisions should handle this responsibility.

First of all, since IT divisions guarantee the performance of the information system and enforce the security policy, they are in the best position to handle any cloud policy.

In addition, IT divisions are further equipped to ensure this task due to their transformation to a new role as full-fledged internal service providers, whether these services are developed by their teams or not. By taking on this role, IT divisions improve their ability to promote and market their service offers for internal customers.

Finally, by drafting a cloud policy, IT divisions ensure that consistent solutions are offered to their internal customers, while they also acquire the means to manage transformation plans that gradually implement their target systems.

the first step in this policy involves an information campaign on user features

This policy can be drafted using several steps and refined using feedback from IT and business divisions. In fact, this recommendation was offered in a recent study on the topic "Write An Effective Cloud Use Policy", which provides several best practices that IT divisions can use to reach this goal.

Among other goals, undertaking an internal information campaign is one of the most critical steps since there is still so much confusion in this developing market.

For this reason, compiling a clear presentation of these different offers can prove extremely useful for information campaigns concerning a clear cloud policy that aims to unify all efforts both inside and outside the IT division.

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#private cloud, #public cloud , #IT division, #cloud policy

catching the cloud computing wave

by Marie-Christine Finas

Here's a short article to **touch on the different activities that IT divisions will have to anticipate** in order to lay and maintain a foundation for the growing use of cloud computing models.

Whether talking about technology choices, risk management, skills and responsibilities reorganization, or supplier relations, one thing is certain: these numerous activities are currently handled by different teams within a company.

when I say cloud computing, you think…

• security and performance, of course

It's a good bet that **security and risk management** are among the top three things that come to mind. That's precisely why we have a Cloud Security Advisor – and Master Blogger – to guide us along the right path!
Defining a cloud policy, ensuring its proper execution, outlining

the responsibilities of your service providers, ensuring compliance with your country's or industry's standard practices and laws (through audits) – the importance of these topics amplifies with cloud technology, or when outsourcing of all or part of your IS to one or more cloud service providers.

• constant performance monitoring, undoubtedly

One of your first goals – if not the first goal – will be to set up a permanent system to **monitor performance over the entire service chain** (applications, user terminals, platforms, networks), in increasingly complex circumstances, with a lot of suppliers and service environments (BYOD, new terminals, multi-tenant environments, etc.). Network capabilities will become more and more important, since they will be necessary to ensure permanent access to a company's critical resources (data, applications), even if they are off-site.

It's important to define the right metrics for measuring performance and user experience, improve visibility for all new services, and optimize close collaboration with suppliers to monitor, diagnose, and resolve issues.

after that, it's all a matter of good relationships

• first, between various internal technical skill centers

To manage this complex delivery chain, you will need collaboration from research to operations. Everyone will have to build up the skills necessary to best tackle these new areas. Before, IT departments handled the system architecture and operations on their own (installing, configuring, and managing machines).

“ a strong change management approach is required ”

focus

Now, application management is the central focus. IT will mainly decide which resources and applications will be hosted on the Cloud and how to manage them (resource management, integration, capacity planning, etc.).

- next, between IT and business divisions

one of your first goals will be to set up a permanent system to monitor performance over the entire service chain.

IT and businesses will have to coordinate to ensure good return on investment and benefits from all of the Cloud's advantages. It's nothing new, but this holds even truer for Software as a Service (SaaS) applications, which are more and more in demand among end users.

worth knowing

- lastly, between a company and its service providers

They have to agree on responsibility parameters, service-level agreements, and daily service upkeep.

to conclude: how should you catch the wave?

Some say you have to **create a new position** within a company (a Chief Cloud Officer). Others are skeptical. They think these activities are already managed by IT departments, so there's no need to come up with new organizational models.

In any case, it's pretty clear that there's such a **deep cultural rift between traditional IT and new cloud models** that a transformation phase will take place, requiring strong change management.

In the end, maybe we'll need a Mr or Ms Cloud. But only during the transition phase, so he or she can make sure everyone has caught the wave.

What about you? What do you think? How did you prepare to surf the new wave of cloud computing?

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#BYOD, #cloud security, #risk management, #performance

about the authors

Bernard Blimont

My mission at Orange Business Services is to provide customers with high-value IT & cloud computing solutions that combine financial performance, business alignment and limited risk to ensure a successful transformation.
read his bio online

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I'm currently working on the cloud computing program at Orange Business Services, where we develop cloud support services for the business market.
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Martine Garrivet

I specialize in high-value indirect channels. For much of my career, I worked with VARs, retailers, systems integrators and distributors on behalf of designers and developers.
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