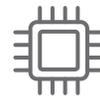
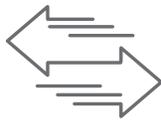


MODE: YOU

Piloting Your Business Toward A
Harmonious, Cloud-Native Existence



WHITE PAPER



Your Path is Unique

No two paths are the same. One company's roadmap to the cloud and a true virtualized existence differs greatly from another.

Too many factors – industry, regulations, budgets, market condition, channel structure, customers and products – require consideration for vendors to offer one-size-fits-all cloud strategies to each and every company.

You are unique. And so is your business.

In many cases, this is bimodal IT in action. As summarized by Gartner, “**Bimodal IT** is the practice of managing two separate but coherent styles of work: one focused on predictability; the other on exploration. Mode 1 is optimized for areas that are more predictable and well-understood. It focuses on exploiting what is known, while renovating the legacy environment into a state that is fit for a digital world. Mode 2 is exploratory, experimenting to solve new problems and optimized for areas of uncertainty.”*

In traditional scenarios, the former is achieved via standard hardware data centers; the latter is often cloud deployments. With the right strategy, partners and technology, agile organizations will leverage all modes simultaneously – and with great success.

For the foreseeable future, you'll rely on both on-premise infrastructure and modern cloud environments. For this reason, it's important that current and future technology partners either adapt to your specific infrastructure, performance and network plans (unlikely), or they provide end-to-end service and solutions that match your guideposts at every stop on the spectrum.

Are technology vendors and services ready to guide you along this path? Is your path to the cloud even defined? Thankfully, with a strategic and proactive partner, services may be delivered to your organization, regardless of the underlying infrastructure, without sacrificing support, features or service levels.

Evaluate and understand all sides of the spectrum to ensure your path to the cloud is agile, secure, safe and cost-effective. Once ready, you'll be able to guide your organization across the technology chasm and take advantage of existing investments and truly capitalize on future cloud opportunities.

*Gartner IT Glossary, Bimodal, <http://www.gartner.com/it-glossary/bimodal/>

Are technology vendors and services ready to guide you along this path?



Is your path to the cloud even defined?

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APP

The modern user needs access to applications and services — **anywhere and at any time.**

It's All about the Apps

The modern life is centered on access, enablement and communication. This movement is fueled by applications and services that interact with our hyper-connected landscape. Apps are the gateway between life and technology. They deliver the real and organic experiences that result from the intersection of these two paradigms.

While not every organization or business is 100 percent tied to application performance, your brand is absolutely coupled to your virtual livelihood. The modern user (e.g., customers, employees, partners, vendors) needs access to applications and services — anywhere and at any time.

To achieve that, organizations require agile and secure application solutions that span the entire data center-to-cloud spectrum. This may include a traditional enterprise application in a data center (e.g., Microsoft Exchange) or the service powering an application on a mobile device.

And while not all applications are mobile-based, we can leverage data from their usage to gain insight into user behavior. According to a recent Dimensional Research study, "**Mobile Application Usage and Abandonment**," sponsored by HP, 96 percent of respondents stated that app performance was important. Interestingly, 49 percent expect an app to respond in two seconds or less.

Will your solutions or app — not to mention your brand — get multiple chances to get it right? Not likely. The study found that 80 percent of respondents will attempt to use a problematic app three times or less. The technology decisions you make have ramifications.

When poor performance degrades the user experience, who do they blame? The network? The device? The coffee shop Wi-Fi? No. It's the app or service itself. And it's likely your last connection to that valuable user or customer. Consider these findings:

96%

of respondents stated that **mobile app performance** was important.

49%

expect an app to respond in **two seconds or less.**

48%

just **remove or uninstall the app** altogether.

32%

even stated they'd **seek an alternative** from the competition.

That's money lost.

Remember, users can be anyone from end customers to internal teams. And they require access that is fast, simple and secure. A new standard has been set in the blended life.

Listen to Your Stakeholders

The leadership teams, departments and individual employees within an organization all aim for the same objective: to be successful. Each, however, has unique challenges and drivers that affect their ability to deliver effective levels of service and access.

Building agility across these stakeholders requires the sound management of cost structures and risk assessment. In basic terms, technology leaders serve the needs of three primary stakeholders: Users, internal IT and the business in general.

The Users	The IT Teams	The Business
<p>Your ultimate customers, vendors and staff who want access and interactions to be fast, simple and secure.</p> <p>Primary Needs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Instant Access • Simplicity • Security 	<p>This group has a strong desire to be agile and support objectives that require high-performance infrastructure. They're being pulled in many directions at once, often without proper funding or support.</p> <p>Primary Needs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agility • Scalability • Security • Visibility • Operational Simplicity 	<p>The ultimate driver that requires a balance of customer satisfaction, technology, process, risk and profitability to be successful.</p> <p>Primary Needs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fast Growth • Low Risk • Affordability

The Users

As a business, end-users (e.g., customers, employees or partners) are a priority. In today's modern, hyper-connected landscape, users expect their experiences and interactions with a business to be fast, simple and secure.

As highlighted by the HP study, customers have extreme expectations of application performance – even compared to just five or 10 years ago. Don't deliver on these? A competitor will. There are no exceptions.

The IT Teams

Satisfying users requires the empowerment of your infrastructure, security and technology teams. These groups need agile and scalable resources, which may include anything from hardware and services to software and people. If implemented correctly, the above will deliver an experience that is not only simple and always available, but also completely secure.

The hard truth? All of that costs money. Proactive technology leadership – whether the CTO, CSO, system architect or IT directors – will balance and optimize both capital and operational expenditures. Optimizing CapEx and OpEx necessitates an understanding of resources, business objectives, budget and time.

What resources do you migrate to the cloud? What do you keep on-premise? Which solutions do you need? Which can you cut? And, most importantly, which vendors and partners can you really trust? It's a balancing act between patience, process and precision that ultimately serves your third stakeholder: the business.

The Business

This is where it all aligns. The organization optimizes the business to support growth, minimize risk and reduce total cost of ownership (TCO).

The business's goal is to achieve the speed, simplicity and security the users demand. Increasingly, this is achieved by delivering always-on access to remote employees and customer bases from multiple on-premise locations and various types of clouds.

Thankfully, a proactive technology partner can help map, prioritize and manage this journey to the cloud – satisfying the key requirements for all stakeholders.

Bridging Two Worlds

So, who do you choose to guide you along this path? Many technology providers – networking giants, application delivery controller (ADC) companies and security vendors – have proven the worth of their solutions. This path is trusted, but organizations now require even greater versatility.

In contrast, vendors with solely virtualized solutions – mainly smaller bootstrap organizations and startups – are too small to service global enterprises and are waiting on the mass market to reach them at the cloud finish line.

Unfortunately, we don't yet know how long it will take for cloud services to dominate. Ten years? Fifteen? Organizations need a flexible strategy that will adapt and evolve at each step on the way to a fully integrated on-premise and multi-cloud reality.

A Bimodal Existence

Vendors and technology providers aren't the only ones struggling with the leap to virtualization and advanced cloud deployments. Organizations of all sizes, and in every market, are living a bimodal IT existence.

"By 2017, 75 percent of IT organizations will have a bimodal capability," said Gartner research vice president Nikos Drakos in a [2016 webinar](#). "Half of those will make a mess of it. Bimodal IT is not just 'nice to have.'"

Bimodal IT Defined



"Use a Bimodal Digital Workplace Strategy to Move Both Fast and Slow"
Nikos Drakos
Gartner

IT leaders believe in the cloud – but not all are yet 100 percent committed. Still hesitant (e.g., concerns about privacy and security), organizations use traditional infrastructures or networks for priority or critical initiatives (e.g., global product launches, high-traffic events, etc.) that have zero room for error. For experimental projects or programs that require agility, they'll leverage the power and scalability of the cloud.

“Cloud users are running applications in an average of 1.5 public clouds and 1.7 private clouds,” found RightScale's latest study, [Cloud Computing Trends: 2016 State of the Cloud Survey](#). “They are experimenting with an additional 1.5 public clouds and 1.3 private clouds.”

Each organization is plotted somewhere in this paradigm. They rely on existing technology investments but require scalable and agile technology to meet expanding demands. To exceed these new requirements, each mode must include centralized management from a single view regardless of infrastructure or geographic dispersion.

Reducing Friction

No matter the number or type of commoditized IT infrastructure – private, public, hybrid, on-premise, co-location, etc. – an organization needs for its business, it ultimately requires visibility, security and management that scales and spans the entire environment.

But organizations don't want to wait for giant technology vendors to evolve from traditional hardware deployments into a virtualized utopia. But they also can't trust valuable business objectives to small, unknown or perceived risky infrastructures. So, what do they do?

Organizations and enterprises require easy, friction-less methods to deploy their solutions, regardless of the underlying infrastructure.

In a June 2016 note, [“How I&O Teams Can Survive the Return of the Zombie Load Balancers,”](#) Gartner delivered even more telling evidence of this journey. The paper predicted: “By the end of 2017, three of the top six ADC vendors will offer support for heterogeneous ADC instances including open-source, up from none today.”

“It's imperative that organizations pair themselves with proactive technology vendors that offer solutions at every stop on the path. This bridged approach is critical to ensure consistent policy and services across different infrastructure and clouds.”

The majority of the market is not close to being where they want to be in the cloud; a pace that fits the needs of one organization may not work for another.



Building an agile and strategic business relies on the **precise blend of technology, partners and processes.**

Genuine Cloud Harmony

Building an agile and strategic business relies on the precise blend of technology, partners and processes. The demands on IT for dynamic, cloud-centric solutions – fully integrated with singular management controls – grow by the day.

“Networks should work for applications, not the other way around.”

Many organizations, however, must maintain existing on-premise infrastructure and applications while modernizing for a cloud-native world. Thankfully, a true partner will deliver modern, future-facing solutions that empower organizations through this transition. These include:

- **Multi-cloud capabilities, with data center offerings, for infrastructure-agnostic flexibility**
- **Broad range of application and security services with the same functionality regardless of on-premise or type of cloud deployment (e.g., physical data center, public cloud)**
- **Automation and orchestration to eliminate tedious, expensive, and manual process and management**
- **Flexible pricing, elite partnerships and proven integrations make the vendor easy to do business**

Reflecting on the app-centric life, the vision has always been to build businesses on the idea that networks should work for applications, not the other way around.

Your path is being defined. It's the crossroads between agility, ambition and collaboration. Walk it with application networking and security solutions where automation and management are harmoniously in sync. This is our destination.

About A10 Networks

A10 Networks is a leader in application networking, providing a range of high-performance application networking solutions that help organizations ensure that their data center applications and networks remain highly available, accelerated and secure. Founded in 2004, A10 Networks is based in San Jose, California, and serves customers globally with offices worldwide. For more information, visit: www.a10networks.com

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Part Number: A10-WP-21132-EN-01
July 2016

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