

JULY/AUGUST 2019

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With so many options now available, clients are becoming blind to what can be done, or needs to be, and so have a tendency to leave it as it is

Cloud complexity

NICK HAYNE, THE DATA MASTER

There is little doubt that cloud environments are getting more complex and for most organisations the use of multi-clouds has increased.

The adoption of multiple types of technology, security layers, vendors and so on, has added to concerns around costs and the fact that there's a general belief that organisations are spending around 30% too much on their usage. And this problem is only likely to get worse.

A recent report by Flexera on the state of the cloud further underpins these concerns by stating, "managing cloud spend and cloud governance are the top challenges for enterprises" and "the number one priority in 2019 is cloud cost optimisation".

Another standout comment from the report was that "39% of cloud instance spend is on virtual machines that are running at below 40% of CPU and memory utilisation, with the majority of those running at under 20%", which highlights how just one area is burning through cash.

Finally, the report highlights that "within the enterprise, most of the responsibility for governing and optimising cloud costs is falling on the central cloud team and the infrastructure and operations team, while business units frequently own the cloud budget".

So how can a managed services provider support the whole issue around usage, costs and optimisation? Well, the new kids on the block are companies and technology providers that address these issues. I can hear the sighs: another technology solution, more costs, more complexity.

But unfortunately, unless you have the skills in-house you will eventually be using these kinds of service.

For those organisations that outsource their cloud to a managed services provider, cost optimisation should be one of the first questions that you raise with them.

The best service providers will continually look at how the estates they have installed and manage can be improved, considering issues like idle instances, underutilised instances, unused accounts, old snapshots and so on, to try to drive as much cost optimisation as possible.

Previously, you never needed to consider some of these issues; your hardware and associated applications were operational and did what they did.

With so many options now available, clients are becoming blind to what can be done, or needs to be, and so have a tendency to leave it as it is, compounding any issues and increasing the overall spend, sometimes simply forgetting that they have services running until a bill arrives that is not factored into the budget.

Couple these issues with the ability for any user on your network to spin up machines or rent solutions without the prior knowledge of IT and guess what, you now have some problems you don't even know you have.

The whole issue around cloud complexity is a particularly difficult situation and for many organisations it is simply getting out of hand, with every chance it is going to get worse before it gets better, unless steps are taken now to take back control. **LPM**

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