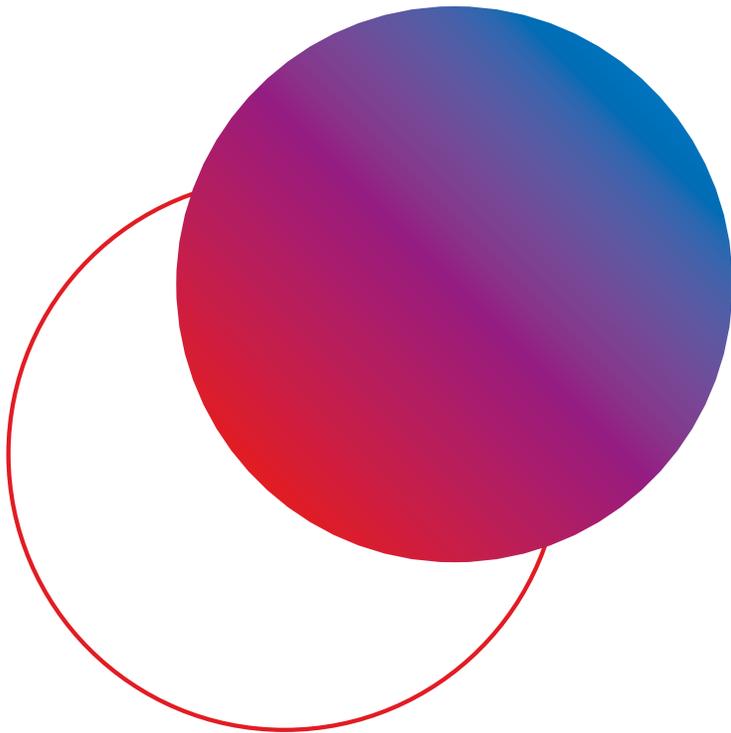


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Hybrid Cloud  
Connectivity:  
Evaluating VMware  
Cloud on AWS

# “Hybrid Cloud Connectivity: Evaluating VMware Cloud on AWS”

A Summary of CIO EDGE Roundtables, Melbourne & Sydney, August 2018

*The relatively high level and maturity of infrastructure virtualisation in the Australian market proved an interesting starting point for an engaging discussion around achieving cost and performance efficiencies for organisations moving towards hybrid-cloud. Discussion participants cited aging applications, the risk of moving inappropriate workloads to the cloud and the complexity of multi-cloud, hybrid cloud architectures as key issues to address.*

Sponsored by Rackspace and facilitated by technology analyst and consulting firm Tech Research Asia (TRA), attendees were drawn from organisations within the legal services, retail, professional services, financial services, utilities, real estate, media, online content and automotive sectors.

Held in August 2018 and attended by Rackspace’s General Manager of Australia and New Zealand and representatives of VMware and Amazon Web Services (AWS), the lunches provided a perfect forum to introduce the forthcoming VMware Cloud on AWS service managed by Rackspace.

The service will formally launch in Australia during the third quarter of 2018, providing a managed service that enables organisations to efficiently ‘bridge’ the hybrid world of workloads on-premise and in private and public clouds. The VMware Cloud on AWS solution is crafted through deep integration of VMware virtualisation and cloud management tools with the AWS cloud platform to deliver rapid migration capabilities eliminating the need for rework. It is focused, initially, on three core use-cases:

- Organisations migrating on-premise vSphere workloads to public cloud; Consolidation and extension of an organisation’s data centre capacities for on-demand capability and new footprints i.e. for Apps development and testing; and

- Modernisation and optimisation of disaster recovery solutions.

Whilst sold and delivered by VMware as an on-demand subscription service, Rackspace offers deep technical expertise across both VMware and AWS platforms to enable best-fit and true digital transformation :

- Multi-cloud expertise across private and public cloud infrastructure platforms to provide clarity around a customers’ migration of VMware workloads from on-premise technology to VMware Cloud on AWS;
- vSphere environments in which Rackspace is a significant VMware Cloud Provider Partner running one of the largest vSphere footprints in the world; and
- Managed services where Rackspace will provide architecture, build, optimisation and management services, as well as assist customers with capacity management and workload mobility between Rackspace data centres and AWS data centres.

**“I would say the average age of our applications is around 20 years old and we’re running out of the skills to keep things going. Right now I’m buying backup drives from EBay as I can’t get them anywhere else”. CTO Retail Group**

## **Key Discussion Points:**

There was wide variation in both Melbourne and Sydney audiences regarding the adoption of cloud services. Some, such as legal services and online media had made significant and beneficial progress with their cloud strategies resulting in improved agility, speed to production and overall operating efficiencies. Others were still very much at the start of their cloud journey and were keen to understand the paths trodden by

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those before them including moves to IaaS, PaaS and SaaS.

As one IT Director observed, “...we’re in the process of swallowing an acquisition. One half of the new company is almost all cloud, the other very traditionally on-premise. Knowing the pitfalls and outcomes is hugely beneficial to our approach.”

Regardless of the maturity level, there was almost uniform agreement on a number of issues that participants considered critical to cloud success including:

- Communication of the strategy, process and outcomes of any cloud adoption. It is not enough to simply work within the boundaries of IT. Expectations, impacts, security benefits, performance improvements and general progress of any cloud migration (regardless of IaaS, PaaS or SaaS) need to be routinely provided and updated to the entire organisation...in plain English, not ‘tech speak’.
- Careful assessment of the suitability of workloads for migration to cloud. There was much discussion on what makes for a ‘good’ or ‘bad’ workload for cloud. For many contemplating a move to cloud there was general reluctance to migrate due to concerns around workload and application portability/compatibility. The additional aspect of shifting from a virtualised environment within their own datacentre to a third-party cloud environment such as AWS, whilst appealing, was considered problematic due to a lack of in-house skills and ongoing management complexity. (Especially so given potential inconsistencies between virtual machines/hypervisors on-premise and those in a cloud infrastructure).
- Strive to establish clear expectations around cloud economics for the business. Those firms that had a mature and well-established cloud strategy tended to exhibit stronger financial governance around cloud solutions.

Financial expectations were clearly communicated to the board and then down throughout their organisations. There was clear transparency regarding both ‘retiring of technical on-premise debt’ approaches as well as establishing the ability to allocate the costs of cloud back to business units within a managed and agreed framework.

- Despite the effectiveness of cloud-based security, there is still work to be done to educate companies that view security concerns as a reason not to move to the cloud. This is especially so for some organisations that are reluctant to move workloads from test and dev to production in the cloud. This was an even more significant issue for larger organisations that have deployed PaaS solutions that require intensive management of security of various layers (such as IBM, Dell, etc) across the stack. Whilst there was not 100% agreement across both groups, there was a majority view in each session that adopting the philosophy of SecDevOps plus company-wide security training is a key, and effective, component of any cloud security strategy.

**“Our first time around with cloud (migration to IaaS), we really had no idea. We didn’t really know what was where, we had no visibility into our costs and we’d moved some workloads but hadn’t upskilled our team to run them properly in cloud. The second time we moved some infrastructure, we did things a little differently. Now we have a clear combined business and technology roadmap, we charge back (costs of cloud to the business), we have clear visibility into what sits where ...” . CIO Online Media Group**

## RACKSPACE OBSERVATIONS

Complexity, financial transparency and applications performance are issues

that Rackspace is well versed in helping its customers manage. These skills, combined with the VMware Cloud on AWS, offer a compelling hybrid platform where IT organisations have access to both public and private environments whilst retaining the ability to shift workloads seamlessly between them. Being able to live migrate and extend into a virtual machine without having to reconfigure an application provides a much more flexible environment for our customers as well as creating an effective cost management capability.

VMware Cloud on AWS allows access to the range of AWS services as an extension of an existing VMware solution. IT organisations can rent a VMware SDDC using some of the latest technologies with the flexibility of the pay as you go model. Companies can quickly add capacity to a new project or move workloads hosted on dedicated hardware to the cloud.

Rackspace sees clear benefits for its customers with the new VMware on AWS solution that address many of the concerns raised during discussions including:

- Supporting efficiencies in costs and operational investments in existing VMware environments whereby existing VMware software licenses can be used to run VMware in the cloud. The hybrid cloud solution does not require either additional hardware or licenses;
- The ability to locate the right workloads and applications in the right place based on business requirements (and not just those of IT) that extends across both private and public clouds as well as on-premise environments;
- Ensuring operational consistency across hybrid and multi-cloud environments; and
- The native integration with AWS services enables companies to run applications on the cloud with no additional (and expensive) code refactoring.

### About Rackspace

At Rackspace, we accelerate the value of the cloud during every phase of digital transformation. By managing apps, data, security and multiple clouds, we are the best choice to help customers get to the cloud, innovate with new technologies and maximize their IT investments. As a recognized Gartner Magic Quadrant leader, we are uniquely positioned to close the gap between the complex reality of today and the promise of tomorrow. Passionate about customer success, we provide unbiased expertise, based on proven results, across all the leading technologies. And across every interaction worldwide, we deliver Fanatical Experience™ — the best customer service experience in the industry. Rackspace has been honoured in the top 20 Great Places to Work Australia for the past 6 years. Learn more at [www.rackspace.com.au](http://www.rackspace.com.au).

### About Tech Research Asia

Tech Research Asia is a consulting and industry analyst house that specialises in helping technology companies create independent, trusted relationships with the enterprise and government sectors in the Asia Pacific technology markets. More information can be found at: <http://techresearch.asia/> or follow us on Twitter @techresearchap.

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