4 questions on where you are today

Cloud-based environments and technologies like AI, containers, edge, and serverless computing are prevalent in IT strategies. However, the importance of the operating environment for these projects is often overlooked. Because the cloud abstracts many basic infrastructure considerations, organizations approach projects lacking a clear strategy for their operating environment.

There are 4 areas IT leaders can start designing an IT strategy for success in a way that is consistent, straightforward, and designed to achieve their specific priorities.

1 Is your cloud adoption stalled?

Frequently, the plan for adopting new technologies does not fully represent the situation.

Organizations often integrate new technologies slower than anticipated or differently than planned. Causes can include insufficient stakeholder involvement, unrealistic expectations, and stalling when trying to adopt DevOps and related technologies.

To see if your organization's current cloud strategy is successful, access how your teams prepare for project implementation:

- **How do you move workloads to the cloud?** Migrating to the public cloud via lift and shift are common methods, with replatforming more common globally.
- **Are you multicloud or hybrid cloud?** A cloud report states, "70% of organizations embrace hybrid cloud strategies, using at least 1 public and 1 private cloud."[1]
- **Are you using containers (and how)?** Containers are used for microservices development, presumably. Using containers as virtual machines (VMs) that host monolithic applications is also prevalent.
- **What criteria do you use to select an OS?** Standardization is the preferred method in hybrid environments. Using different systems for different environments, such as development versus production can cause operational challenges.

2 Are your current cloud projects successful?

Managing cloud spend and security remain top of mind when it comes to cloud challenges.

A successful project means that it accomplished all defined objectives. Yet, projects usually miss some or all of their targets for the very reasons that cloud computing was adopted.

IT teams commonly begin cloud projects to improve performance in these key operational areas:

- Speed of deployment
- Cost management
- Improved access

Cloud project failures are frequently missed because of distinct cloud resources and feedback compared with traditional projects. For example, costs might be lowered for physical hardware, but cloud costs can go unmanaged. A Flexera report states, "59% of companies now have a FinOps team for cost-optimization strategies in the cloud."[1]

- Examine the historical performance of your projects in those 3 areas (not just initial outlays) to assess your recent cloud project successes.
- Look for potential reasons they were less successful than expected, including manual configuration time and missed opportunities for cost management.

1 *Flexera. "2025 state of the cloud report." March 2025.*

3 What are your business requirements?

Be clear on your objectives.

A frequent reason new projects fail is because of a lack of alignment about what matters, especially between business and technical teams.

Your first goal should be to clarify what your business priorities are and how they relate to your strategic goals.

- What metrics matter for this specific project, and how will they be tracked?
- Do you have to maintain compliance with government or industry standards?
- Who are the end users for this project, and what experience do you want them to have?
- How does this project fit into your business strategy?
- How frequently will the applications for this project need to be changed or updated?

If you have clearly defined business objectives, it becomes easier to keep alignment between business and technical teams as the project is launched and evolves.

4 What is your technical starting point?

A platform defines your infrastructure capabilities.

The OS—whether in a datacenter or a public cloud—is the foundation that brings in crucial capabilities like security and development tools. Standardization in the operating environment influences how you automate processes, deploy new systems, manage application lifecycles, and share resources across teams.

Assessing your current (not idealized) technical landscape will help you understand what your technical teams can accomplish. This can help avoid implementation or maintenance challenges and keep cloud projects on track.

- Do you need to maintain existing systems in parallel with new projects?
- Do you have defined and well-understood workflows?
- Do you have a data management or data security strategy? How are cloud workloads storing or accessing data sources?
- Do you use multiple clouds or a mix of cloud and datacenter environments? How are these environments integrated?
- Is your OS optimized for performance on your cloud provider's infrastructure?
- Who are your stakeholders? What kind of communication or collaboration do you have between teams?
- Do you have consistent tools that you can use to manage instances in any environment?

Why the OS matters

Your OS can be the foundation that unifies your IT infrastructure and landscape. Read the e-book for more.

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