



Why Hybrid? 5 Use Cases to Consider



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The advantages of cloud are clear: scale on demand, speed of deployment, and lower cost. The question facing IT today is how to make cloud relevant for their individual business. Most enterprises today have massive investments in existing datacenters, and those datacenters have served businesses well. Instead of thinking about cloud generically as a replacement for the on-premises datacenter, it's important to look at specific use cases where cloud resources might address existing pain points. We've highlighted five areas that offer significant benefits, along with customers who show that use case in action. See if any of these solve a problem for you.

1. Global Reach

One of the challenges that may face a growing business is delivering services in a new region. When you expand beyond your current customer base, can you guarantee a great user experience on your key applications? With a hybrid cloud infrastructure, you can take advantage of Microsoft Azure's worldwide network of datacenters. That helps you keep costs down while maintaining a single infrastructure view – as your datacenter seamlessly extends to Microsoft Azure with Infrastructure as a Service.

“Without Windows Azure, we would have had to use a third-party hosting provider in the UK or build a server infrastructure onsite at Heathrow.”

Andre Garcia
Assistant Vice President,
Global Infrastructure Services,
ABM

http://www.microsoft.com/casestudies/Case_Study_Detail.aspx?CaseStudyID=710000003963

Facilities Solutions Firm Automates Datacenter to Deliver Global IT Services

ABM is one of the largest facility solutions providers in the United States, with more than 350 offices and tens of thousands of customers. With the company growing rapidly and globally, the ABM IT staff was challenged to deliver and manage IT services everywhere they were needed, as quickly as they were needed. ABM upgraded to the Windows Server 2012 R2 operating system and Microsoft System Center 2012 R2 to gain more automation in managing its VMware virtualization infrastructure and to begin migrating VMware workloads to the Hyper-V technology in Windows Server 2012 R2. ABM is also using Windows Azure to increase its reach and deliver IT services globally. By using Microsoft cloud software, ABM is able to deliver IT services much faster to the rapidly growing business and manage the growing infrastructure without expanding its IT staff.

2. Disaster Recovery

Disaster recovery is an area where a hybrid approach offers clear benefits over traditional on-premises solutions. As IT becomes more and more critical to the business, companies need reliable business continuity strategies more than ever before. But implementing a reliable business continuity strategy can be time-consuming and expensive, requiring redundant infrastructure, complex planning, and expensive proprietary solutions. Because of this, many companies simply don't have actionable plans to protect their critical data and applications. Microsoft provides a variety of options for protecting both. For customers like United Airlines, Microsoft Azure Hyper-V Recovery Manager is a great solution that enables replication of virtual machines to Microsoft Azure, with flexible replication intervals. That means that mission-critical systems can be updated more frequently. And most importantly, disaster recovery can be initiated from anywhere with an internet connection.

“Now that we are more virtualized, we are looking at a whole new approach to DR, where flexibility and cloud computing combine to provide a resilient solution that we can tailor to meet our needs. ”

Richard Wilson
Principle Architect,
Microsoft Private Cloud and Windows Server
United Airlines

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United Airlines Boosts IT Efficiency, Business Resiliency with Private Cloud Solution

To reduce operating costs and find more effective ways to attract and retain customers in the hyper-competitive airline industry, United Airlines is working with Microsoft to expand private cloud computing to the enterprise. In 2012, the airline chose the Windows Server operating system and Microsoft System Center data center solutions to host and manage its United.com website, which generates US\$12 billion annually.

In 2013 and 2014, United Airlines is using Windows Server 2012 R2 Hyper-V Replica and Hyper-V Recovery Manager to expedite the migration and consolidation of virtual machines and mission critical services to its new data center in Chicago and provide high availability services when hardware fails.

3. Unpredictable loads

Every business experiences spikes in traffic, both to its website and in the usage of individual applications. A hybrid approach to infrastructure gives you two options for handling those spikes. Workloads with known traffic swings can be moved entirely to the cloud, where you pay only for what you use and can access the capacity to scale on demand. With access to cloud capacity, whether you're a pizza delivery company on a big day in sports, or an airline with a major fare sale in progress, you can be sure that you can handle the load. Alternatively, you can use infrastructure as a service to augment capacity as needed, while continuing to run primarily in your own datacenter. Customers are using hybrid infrastructure to take the guesswork out of datacenter provisioning.

“We plan to use Microsoft Azure for its bursting capability, to quickly scale applications that require additional compute and storage, and also as a cost-effective way to host applications that we know in advance will scale to hundreds of thousands of users.”

Gary Bent
Senior Infrastructure Architect,
Cushman & Wakefield

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4. High scale

For scale, nothing beats the cloud. Microsoft Azure gives customers an efficient and cost-effective way to get more capacity, more quickly than they could deploy in an on-premises datacenter – without sacrificing performance. Customers like blinkbox, with its incredible scale requirements for video encoding, will become more common as more and more companies consider what is possible with hybrid. What could you do if infrastructure scale was no longer an issue?

“With Microsoft Azure, we instantly have a scalable video encoding platform. We can spin up hundreds of encoding servers when needed and let them go when the job is done. ”

Jon Robinson
Group Head of IT,
blinkbox

http://www.microsoft.com/casestudies/Case_Study_Detail.aspx?CaseStudyID=710000004206

Movie Streaming Business Uses Cloud Service to Save Millions of Dollars, Scale Quickly

blinkbox is a UK movie and TV streaming service that is enjoying terrific growth. However, the company’s London datacenter loomed as a barrier to future growth. To quickly and cost-effectively gain access to the prodigious amounts of compute power and storage needed to perform video encoding, blinkbox moved to the cloud—specifically, Microsoft Azure. By moving its entire video workflow to Microsoft Azure and unplugging its datacenter, blinkbox will save millions of dollars, gain the ability to scale IT infrastructure on demand, and deliver a great customer experience on multiple consumer devices. The company is taking advantage of Microsoft Azure to expand its business and deliver more content to more customers, with outstanding reliability and quality.

5. Storage

When customers talk about the stresses on IT today, the cost of storage always comes to the top. As data becomes more and more essential to business operations and to competitive initiatives, storage costs continue to rise, by some estimates at 30% a year. With cloud storage, costs can be dramatically reduced. Microsoft StorSimple devices, combined with Microsoft Azure storage, provide cloud storage as an extended tier, automatically moving less accessed data to the cloud, while maintaining seamless integration for easy access. And that leads to cost reductions that give companies room to keep up with storage growth – without sacrificing security or ease of access.

“With StorSimple, our backups move offsite in half the time and can be brought back from Microsoft Azure in minutes instead of 24 hours.”

Kai Sookwongse
Group Manager,
Enterprise Infrastructure,
Mazda North American Operations

http://www.microsoft.com/casestudies/Case_Study_Detail.aspx?CaseStudyID=710000004265

Mazda Gains Faster Data Recovery, 20 Percent Savings Using Hybrid Cloud Backup

To improve disaster protection for applications that its dealers use to run their businesses, Mazda North American Operations (Mazda) revamped its backup processes using a Microsoft hybrid cloud storage solution based on Microsoft Azure. Mazda now has more reliable, faster backups and can restore data in minutes versus 24 hours. It has also reduced backup work by 20 percent and backup costs by 95 percent, and it anticipates using other Microsoft Azure services to gain agility.