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CDW Report: Organizations Identify Migration and Integration as Top Challenge in Cloud Deployments

CDW's Cloud 401 Study Highlights the Value of IT Departments in Planning, Enabling and Securing Cloud Services; Architecting for Reliability is Key

VERNON HILLS, Ill.--(BUSINESS WIRE)-- CDW (NASDAQ: CDW), a leading provider of technology solutions to business, government, education and healthcare, today announced its release of the report "*Cloud 401: Navigating Advanced Topics in Cloud Computing*." The report measures the successes and struggles that organizations across multiple industries experienced as they deployed data, storage or application services in the cloud. A survey of more than 1,200 IT professionals across many industries offered revealing insights.

IT decision makers identified migration and integration as a top challenge, with 59 percent saying they would make more use of cloud services, but the complexity they perceive around enabling and integrating those workloads with legacy systems holds them back. That group also believes cloud services are inexpensive to buy, but can be expensive and difficult to integrate with traditional IT.

However, organizations are no longer simply testing the cloud services waters, according to the report. More than a third of IT services today are delivered partially or totally in the cloud. Looking ahead, the survey finds that organizations will continue to embrace the cloud, with respondents expecting that they will implement 35 percent of new IT services in the cloud.

"This study provides a clear understanding of where cloud computing is most widely adopted along with the hurdles organizations encounter in adding cloud to their IT mix," said Stephen Braat, vice president, cloud and managed solutions at CDW. "Cloud services have such great appeal that departments outside IT are often sourcing them independently, but rather than diminishing IT's role, the data suggests that IT has a more critical role than ever: integrating cloud with traditional services and architecting for reliability and continuity of service, regardless of delivery mode."

Among the wide range of cloud services available, organizations most frequently implement those that are simpler to transition. The survey identified storage, email and Web hosting services as the most widely delivered via cloud and easiest to transition. On the other end of the spectrum, organizations identified enterprise resource planning and customer relationship management/marketing automation services as more difficult to deploy and less frequently delivered via cloud.

The survey found that cloud implementation becomes easier with experience. Organizations reported that their initial cloud implementation took an average of 14 weeks to complete. Subsequent implementations took 10 weeks, on average, and more than half of the organizations responding said they now complete typical implementations in six weeks or less.

IT cloud professionals focus beyond the nuts and bolts of technical implementation, saying that reliability of service is key, as 43 percent of organizations ranked it the most important attribute in a provider, significantly ahead of lowest total cost (just 25 percent) and others. Still, more than three-fourths of cloud professionals said at least one of their cloud vendors has failed to meet a service level agreement (SLA).

Security of cloud services remains a top priority, although just 28 percent of respondents identified security as the largest source of problems for their current cloud services. "Security is always going to be a top concern for IT with any service," Braat said, "but securing IT assets in the cloud doesn't have to be a dramatic departure from securing assets locally. At CDW, we understand that security is not a point solution that you buy, implement and forget. It is an ongoing process."

Organizations also said that financial modeling of cloud costs and benefits can be tricky, as 53 percent of respondents said their financial models were off by more than 10 percent compared with actual experience.

"CDW and its customers realize the value of cloud computing and work together every day to make it succeed - addressing security, performance and integration along the way," Braat said. "Cloud has proven a viable and increasingly popular option for delivery of IT services, and CDW's broad portfolio of cloud solutions, management and orchestration capabilities make us uniquely qualified to support most cloud implementations."

About CDW

CDW is a leading provider of technology solutions to business, government, education and healthcare. A Fortune 500 company, CDW was founded in 1984 and employs approximately 7,200 coworkers. For the year ended December 31, 2014, the company generated net sales of more than $12.0 billion. For more information, visit www.CDW.com.

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