

Business expectations driving transformation of data centre

The data centre is under pressure to transform from a mere resource of hardware and software to a trusted partner helping business to compete in the digital marketplace, explains Sachin Bhardwaj, Director Marketing and Business Development, eHosting DataFort.

In the past, the on-premises, enterprise data centre was the heart of the IT organisation. Today its importance and role is increasingly diluted, if you use its legacy responsibilities as a benchmark. Similar to other operational functions of an organisation, the role of the data centre is rapidly transforming. But that does not mean its strategic importance for business is diminishing.

With the increasing migration of applications to the cloud through SaaS, PaaS and IaaS, the extent of workloads hosted on premises are also in decline. Gartner predicts that by 2025, 80% of enterprises will have scaled down their traditional data centres.

Data residency rules, an increasingly distributed global workforce, network latency, the Internet of Things and the emergence of Managed Service Providers are some of the drivers for migration of workloads out of the traditional, on-premises data centre to more suitable options. Historically, the enterprise data centre used to address challenges such as: How do we best build the required infrastructure, in terms of cost, time and performance?

Today the demand has transformed to: How do we best place the workload in terms of agility and business benefits?

The on-premises legacy data centre is increasingly shrinking and becoming centralised to manage mission critical workloads with a higher degree of oversight, control and responsibility than is available through externally placed options.

While expectations from the traditional data centre shrink in terms of size of operations and IT spending, the expectations from the modern and digital data centre are rapidly increasing. The primary role of the data centre head is changing from being a builder and manager of data centre functions to becoming an enabler and collaborator for the business to perform.

As business heads increasingly choose to find more agile application and service options outside the IT organisation, by remaining steadfast on their traditional roles, the legacy data centre faces extinction. By transforming to becoming an enabler of the business and playing the role of broker and trusted adviser,



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the function of the data centre has a purpose in tomorrow's digital organisations.

Transformation of the legacy data centre into tomorrow's multi-function diversified role requires working on numerous fronts. Firstly, the on-premises data centre needs to be highly agile and responsive to meet internal demands. It needs to build a hybrid cloud delivery model, bench-marked using the best industry standards.

Secondly, it needs to attract and retain the best skills to manage internal expectations of delivering on machine language, Artificial Intelligence, business analytics and insights, among others.

Finally, and most importantly, it needs to help businesses to compete and differentiate in the fast-emerging digital marketplace, taking on born-in-the-cloud, pure play start-ups and other digital juggernauts.

The story of the future data centre is no longer about empirical metrics of hardware and software. It is about delivering real services that help businesses to accomplish their expectations. The future of infrastructure is everywhere and anywhere and will be business-driven by nature. ■