



BAE SYSTEMS TESTS SOFTWARE IN THE CLOUD

When BAE Systems wanted a new way to quickly evaluate a suite of office and communications tools, it chose CSC's CloudLab. The service offers the British multinational company, which specializes in defense, security and aerospace, the flexible, fast and low-cost environment it needs for testing tools that employees and clients use to communicate, create and manage data.

Despite the attractive promise of significant cost and time savings, not all companies can leap straight into the cloud. BAE Systems is typical of a global business that is obliged to keep data within national borders and is composed of multiple individual companies around the world with long-term IT infrastructure arrangements already in place.

Many enterprises find themselves in the same position as BAE Systems. Although global, these enterprises have individual territories that are run as separate businesses. Each has long-term IT infrastructure investments it needs to use before considering the time and cost savings available in the cloud.

Another pressing issue holding back full-scale cloud deployments at BAE Systems has been data security and management. For the defense contractor, this is not solely down to concerns over protection from cyber threats, but also legislation and contractual obligations. Many of the company's major clients are governments that insist data only be hosted — and made available — within its borders.

However, this is not holding back the CIO's office at BAE Systems from taking advantage of the fast setup and flexible billing offered by CSC CloudLab. Although full-scale deployment is not an immediate option, the service has been identified as a new means to test software before being launched to BAE Systems' staff, partners and clients.

CloudLab allows companies to set up and then decommission temporary cloud environments at great speed so new configurations of software can be developed and tested. The service is priced to be more competitive than setting up equipment internally, with the advantage that clients are charged only for the time they use the service. When they are finished, there are no issues over redundant equipment or decommissioning costs — the service is simply switched off.



Speed advantage

BAE Systems' corporate information architect, Ian Jackson, says the company wanted a way of evaluating a suite of office and communications tools through an IT infrastructure it could 'stand up' and then decommission at speed.

Jackson estimates that, internally, the three-month evaluation would have taken 30 days or more to set up. When he saw that CloudLab could be set up in a third of that time, and billing would be based on usage, rather than a set fee, the decision was easy.

"CSC was able to get us up and running on CloudLab in 10 days, which was obviously a lot quicker than waiting for a month or so to commission the work internally," he says. "We were particularly attracted to the ability to be handed a generic cloud environment which worked from day one, that we could then go on to customize, rather than starting from scratch."

"The billing structure was also very appealing because we were only paying for what we used and when we were done testing, we didn't have to decommission a bunch of machines ourselves. We just asked CSC to turn the service off. Shutting down the trial at speed with minimum fuss was as important to us as having it stood up and ready for use at great speed."

Ideal for testing

The trial was so successful that BAE Systems is taking the lessons it learned in CloudLab and applying them as it rolls out the new system in a project known internally as Olympia.

This new combination of Microsoft tools is being set up first in Australia before the work is replicated in BAE Systems' multiple businesses around the world. The cloud was never considered for the final Olympia service because the company needs to have data stored within each territory and wants to get the value out of existing IT infrastructure assets. However,

CloudLab has proven itself to be a cost-effective, fast and flexible testing environment that Jackson believes will feature in future plans.

"We will definitely use CloudLab again for evaluation because it was so simple to set up and far more cost-effective than commissioning new machines internally," he says. ■

Client: BAE Systems

Challenge: Find a faster and more cost-effective way to evaluate a suite of Microsoft Office applications and communications tools.

Solution: CSC CloudLab, the virtual equivalent of a physical environment on demand, provides a shared infrastructure for writing new applications in days, not months, and is consumed as a service.

Results: CloudLab was operational in 10 days and offered the customizable testing environment BAE needed to run a successful three-month trial of the applications. The new tools will be set up first in Australia and then replicated across the company's global business.

CSC CLOUDLAB

Agile businesses in competitive markets must build robust applications faster. Building or updating applications to meet aggressive business goals is tough enough, but the in-depth testing required can be even more challenging and costly.

Cloud computing offers a powerful alternative for application development and testing. CSC CloudLab, the virtual equivalent of a physical environment on demand, provides a shared infrastructure for writing new applications in days, not months, and is consumed as a service.

CloudLab eliminates the wait for a physical machine or the purchase of additional hardware. IT policies for usage controls and user access management are easily applied. The service's scalable infrastructure and automated lab functionality mean less time is needed setting up and tearing down test environments. This provides more time to develop and test applications.

Learn more at
www.csc.com/CloudLab.

