JDR Solutions

Press Release

Computing forecast: Mostly 'cloudy' in the year ahead

INDIANAPOLIS – Data storage and server locations are likely to change for many in the equipment leasing industry in 2016. Instead of storing data and running applications on their own dedicated servers down the hall, files and other information will be housed on off-site hardware owned and maintained by someone else.

The so-called "public" cloud, provisioned as "private" cloud, will move into the business mainstream in the year ahead as companies look to improve efficiency and stability, predicted Doug Williams, chief information officer for JDR Solutions Inc. (www.jdrsolutions.com), an Indianapolis-based provider of equipment lease finance portfolio management software and support.

"From our viewpoint it definitely looks like everything is going to the cloud," Williams said. "People are getting more comfortable that off-site cloud provisioning is secure. The whole concept of 'I've got to own my own servers and physically reach out and touch them' is going away. We think off-site cloud provisioning will continue to be more prevalent in the coming year."

Unlike a private server room where a company operates servers within its corporate brick and mortar under the supervision of an IT department, in a private cloud environment a company leases space on servers belonging to a data center facility.

Often these cloud service firms serve multiple customers from warehouse-size centers containing row upon row of servers. Cloud service providers are responsible for provisioning redundancy, repairing and replacing hardware, and building facility security, while their customers are responsible for securing the data they store on the provider's servers.

"Data centers originally were environments where the data center operators managed the electricity, the Internet feeds coming in, the air conditioning and the server racks, and I as a customer owned the hardware – the servers, switches, routers, firewalls, infrastructure – and I leased space on those racks," Williams said. "If the hardware failed it was up to me and my team to fix and replace the equipment. Data centers now have taken on those responsibilities and also make sure everything is mirrored and backed up."

When JDR Solutions began in 2001 it offered a cloud service called "hosting" for customers' lease portfolios on JDR-owned servers. Today, JDR manages client accounts on servers in multiple U.S. locations, and maintains relationships with several international cloud service companies.

Williams offered these tips for businesses considering moving their data to the public cloud:

- Ask a provider how many sets of hardware comprise the server and infrastructure solution – a practice known as "redundancy." "In our case we have what is called '6+2,' meaning every device is hot redundant six times, plus two cold state redundancies that are off line and not connected to the same power source," Williams said.

- Check if the provider offers intrusion detection and protection service, to guard against hackers. Also, provider firewalls should be set at maximum security levels.

- Confirm the provider meets Service Organization Control SOC 1 and SOC 2 requirements for internal financial integrity and operations procedure controls. Ideally, the firm also should comply with Payment Card Industry (PCI) standards for companies that process, store or transmit credit card information.

One thing is certain, Williams said: Cloud computing is here to stay.

"You'll notice firms like Microsoft and Intuit are going away from having you purchase their software and load it onto your computer," he said. "They are going to a system where you go to their cloud, pay a subscription fee and use their software on an as-needed basis."

NOTE TO MEDIA: For additional information and interviews, contact Steve Leer, JDR's director of marketing, at (317) 863-7676 ext. 664, or Steve.Leer@jdrsolutions.com.

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