

INDUSTRY PERSPECTIVES

Cloud Computing: Where Expectation Should Always Match Reality

BY INDUSTRY PERSPECTIVES ON SEPTEMBER 9, 2014



SCOTT AZZOLINA
Connectria Hosting

Scott Azzolina, VP of Marketing at Connectria Hosting, has more than 30 years of experience in technology with established Fortune 100 companies.

When it comes to cloud computing, hosting providers should always serve as a partner and true extension of your IT organization. The core of your relationship hinges upon trust – trust that the provider will host cloud-based technologies in a way that is secure and reliable for the customer.

Holding providers accountable

The four key pillars that data center managers and IT experts should expect from their hosting providers are unmatched reliability, security, flexibility and integrity.

Reliability In the midst of growing IT infrastructure demands and ever-changing compliance requirements, more companies are choosing to partner with outsourcing alternatives. It should be expected for a hosting provider to tout a clean record when it comes to data center outages. They should guarantee their services, such as 100 percent network uptime and 99 percent server/cloud uptime guarantees, and should architect the right solutions upfront to avoid future problems. Hosting providers should also offer extensive backups, working with each customer to ensure they're functioning properly. If you're not experiencing all of these components, you should look elsewhere.

Security With headlines continuously reporting massive data breaches or hacks, companies should demand that their hosting provider embrace security as their hallmark, and protect their customer data as if it were their own. A quality hosting provider should, at a minimum, always address the following security components: offer 100 percent secure guarantees, provide extensive, proactive security protection, operate "clean networks," and perform background checks before allowing customers to host.

Flexibility Virtualization, cloud computing, storage, legacy systems and new applications all add complexity to an organization. Hosting providers should be able to understand and make sense of this complexity by delivering hosting solutions that closely meet your requirements, are deployed to your timeline and track to your budget. A flexible hosting provider should be technology agnostic, boasting a wide range of technologies using dedicated servers, cloud and hybrid solutions, as well as offer flexible contracts, policies and procedures to fit your business needs.

Integrity When it comes to entrusting sensitive data outside your network, whichever hosting provider you select should have a proven track record of selling solutions that work as promised. Furthermore, they should only make realistic promises, always over deliver and use post-sales engineers during the sales process to ensure proposed solutions always go through implementation as planned. A quality hosting provider will offer "one neck in the noose" support, that solves complex problems at no extra cost, and who will place customers, vendors and partners above all else. A workplace environment that ensures a hosting experience customers expect and deserve doesn't hurt either.

Embracing a new mentality

No two clouds are alike. Just like the businesses they belong to, every cloud is highly tailored to the customer's specific needs, which is why data center managers and IT experts should expect a higher level of service from hosting providers. While this may seem like a fairly obvious statement, the fact remains that many cloud customers are unaware of the expectations and returns they should be getting from their hosting providers. So let's stop with the "expectation vs. reality" mentality, and start embracing a cloud hosting environment where expectation meets reality.

Industry Perspectives is a content channel at Data Center Knowledge highlighting thought leadership in the data center arena. See our [guidelines and submission process](#) for information on participating. View previously published Industry Perspectives in our [Knowledge Library](#).