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Moving SAP® Workloads to the Cloud? Three Dos and Don'ts to Guide Your Journey

Many organizations fast-tracked their timelines for moving SAP workloads to the cloud last year in response to the pandemic and the need to support the rapid adoption of remote workforces. Many IT organizations hoped their move to the cloud would be the last mile to better business continuity and improved IT efficiencies. However, there are many aspects to be explored to [ensure a smooth and secure journey to the cloud](#), including cloud expertise, proper advanced planning and system integration.

Don't Give in to the Lure of 'Lift-and-Shift' Migrations

It's easy for IT organizations to be lured by the comparatively fast results that a 'lift-and-shift' approach to cloud migration can offer. Taking a narrower approach, with only limited code or configuration changes, may help drive a quicker route to cloud, as well as potentially lower upfront costs compared to re-platforming and refactoring. However, what is often missed in this abbreviated approach is whether this path is best for an organization's long-term cloud performance, scalability, security, and cost requirements where legacy workloads can play a pivotal role in the planning process.

Many organizations have relied on the same legacy applications for years or even decades now, so much so that they have become mission-critical to their businesses. Through the years, unfortunately, a lack of proper evaluation of which applications should be

continued, consolidated, decommissioned or replaced can lead to higher costs and other inefficiencies in the cloud down the road. Not only this, but legacy applications may experience difficulties operating outside of their old infrastructure, causing an increased demand for broader IT support. It's important that organizations take the time to properly plan for their migrations and carefully consider their potential longer-term needs.

Do Have a Comprehensive Understanding of Your Applications in Cloud Environments

It's critical that organizations have a clear understanding of the relationship between their applications and environments during and after cloud migration. However, many organizations focus too much on some areas, like where their users or data centers are located, and not enough on other critical

questions, like identifying application dependencies. Applications that are reliant on each other may not function properly if migrated separately and could even be detrimental to the entire migration effort, causing severe performance issues for applications in the cloud or for other applications left outside of the cloud environment.

Keeping this in mind, some organizations decide not to move everything to the cloud and instead keep some workloads on-premises, integrating the environments in terms of applications and shared data. When first implemented, this workload separation may appear to be a sound solution, but as organizations move into day-to-day operations some struggle to get a good grasp of their workload volumes and where the data is flowing. As a result, many organizations find that they can't properly manage their data or predict the high fees caused by the data being passed between the cloud and on-premises environments. Careful planning, managing and monitoring is required to find a hybrid approach that is tailored specifically to an organization's IT needs.

Do Prioritize Fortifying Your Cloud Security Posture

It's important for organizations to secure their data and applications before, during and after migration. Without a deep appreciation that security is a continuous process, organizations can leave themselves open to serious cyber threats.

Securing cloud environments involves much more than working with cloud providers to implement security tools; it's also about defining clear objectives to achieve an agile and comprehensive security posture. Security should also be a shared responsibility between IT organizations and their cloud providers, with a clear understanding of who is responsible for the security and protection of the infrastructure that powers the cloud services as well as who is accountable for application updates and patches. Putting this into practice can be complex, which means organizations should seek a trusted and transparent relationship with their cloud partners to avoid making any dangerous assumptions about their comprehensive and integrated security measures.

Maximizing the Benefits of Cloud Moving Forward

This year is an opportunity for IT organizations to re-evaluate their migration approach. The key to success is often accelerated by working with the right cloud partner and leveraging the managed services from deeply experienced providers who understand their mission-critical requirements in the cloud.

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