

## CLLOUD COMPUTING IN THE PUBLIC SECTOR

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Cloud computing in the public sector is a hot topic and a topic not without controversy. Of itself, cloud computing brings up issues for customers to consider, whether in the public or private sector. Particular issues are accentuated when viewed through the prism of public sector bodies.

There is no doubt that these rolling revelations have shaken confidence in the cloud computing industry and, in particular, by reference to the suspected ease with which certain large telecom and cloud based suppliers have facilitated national security agency mass interception of personal data.

A data centre consolidation exercise is a sensible exercise. Logically, this would require an element of external service delivery, whether by reference to the physical data centres within the public sector framework or the management of those data centres, which the strategy recognises.

It is stated that “it is anticipated that Cloud Computing will be a key part of the strategic future of ICT in the public sector, eventually becoming the default and primary delivery mode”. Use of private cloud solutions will be “limited to those that receive sanction based on solid business case and specific, unique requirements”.

Use of public cloud solutions are subject to a specified criteria-based test and in relation to hybrid-cloud solutions “the public sector will seek to develop a Public Service Community Cloud to negate the necessity for private clouds and to provide another Cloud option where the public cloud is deemed not suitable”.

It is likely that we will see an attempt to create the same type of cloud services catalogue which the UK Cabinet Office has championed. Essentially, suppliers would be asked to make their services available by way of a government cloud or, alternatively, using some form of hybrid cloud. Use of the public cloud would be reserved for particular instances, where it is felt appropriate from a security, policy and data protection compliance perspective.

The above forms the basis of a ‘cloud-first’ strategy. We are some way off achieving this strategy in reality, although it is in the nature of cloud computing that, once decisions are made, implementation can occur quickly.

There is no doubt that cloud computing is here to stay and will form an increasing part of the public sector landscape. The cost savings and efficiencies available through medium to large scale use of the cloud are simply too attractive for the public sector to ignore.

The issues for the public sector largely turn on migration to the cloud in a way

which does not, firstly, render some sunk costs as wasted costs and, secondly, in a manner which is both secure in terms of data integrity and, in addition, complies with data protection legislation obligations.

These are not insignificant requirements and, overall, the cloud industry is beginning to show an improved awareness of customer issues and, in particular, public sector issues. We are slowly moving from a position where the cloud suppliers adopted a very rigorous business model, often unattractive to potential public sector customers, to a position where there will likely be a meeting somewhere in the middle.

#### References:

1. Cloud computing in the public sector [Электронный ресурс].– Режим доступа : URL <https://www.eolasmagazine.ie/cloud-computing-in-the-public-sector>