

IBM Brings New Cloud Offerings, Research Projects and Pricing Plans to the Mainframe

New integrated system provides rapid foundation for trusted cloud deployments

South Africa – 14 April 2014: IBM (NYSE: IBM) announced a series of new enterprise cloud offerings for the mainframe which will help clients and service providers reduce the cost of operations and rapidly deploy trusted cloud services with mainframe technology. Today's announcement includes the first System z-based integrated system offering, the IBM Enterprise Cloud System.

The new IBM Enterprise Cloud System provides an integrated platform, built upon open standards, for clients and service providers looking to rapidly build out a trusted cloud environment capable of supporting mission-critical workloads. Additionally, a new flexible utility pricing model being announced today will provide service providers with the ability to pay for Linux based mainframe cloud infrastructure over time based on compute consumption, rather than system capacity.

With the ability to support up to 6,000 Virtual Machines in a single system, provide a secure multi-tenant environment and dynamically share resources across workloads, the mainframe is uniquely positioned to meet the enterprise cloud infrastructure needs of cloud service providers and dynamic private cloud deployments. Thanks to higher system efficiency and greater scalability, the total cost of Linux on System z cloud deployments can be up to 55 percent less than comparable x86-based cloud infrastructure.

Building upon these strengths, the IBM Enterprise Cloud System is factory built and configured with automated cloud orchestration and monitoring to allow clients to rapidly deploy enterprise-grade cloud services. Combining System z hardware, IBM storage and IBM cloud management software into a single IaaS solution, this offering will help IT organizations and cloud service providers deliver a differentiated level of service capable of supporting mission critical workloads. Bringing these mainframe qualities of service to the cloud will also allow providers to address many of the common concerns regarding security and downtime that have been associated with the cloud.

The new "IBM MSP Utility Pricing for System z" pricing model, delivered through IBM Global Financing, provides consumption-based pricing designed especially to make mainframe technologies more widely accessible to Managed Service Providers (MSPs). This consumption-based approach allows an MSP to focus on building their business rather than on the cost of their infrastructure.

As the cloud market evolves to service an ever-larger share and type of IT workloads, clients are increasingly turning to the mainframe to provide the basis for their cloud deployments. For example, Business Connexions (BCX), the largest enterprise cloud service provider in Africa, is developing an innovative "cloud-in-a-box" solution to help telcos provide Internet services to previously unreachable areas. These "pop-up" data centers will use about the same amount of energy as a clothes dryer, and help BCX bring internet cloud services to the 85 percent of Africans who are without connectivity.

"The mainframe allows us to put a single solution down that's low energy consumption and also allows us to use that system to deliver all of our cloud offerings," said Jacques Loubser, General Manager, Business Connexion. "This means we don't have to build exhaustive size of data centers, we can build smaller data centers, we can even use mobile data centers and

rapidly provide services to customers.”

The Mainframe as an engine for research

The analytic capabilities of the mainframe are also being applied to key research projects.

As part of today’s news, IBM unveiled three new projects that are either First of a Kind (FOAK) or provide the scientific community with new analytic capabilities to solve difficult challenges.

IBM Research is currently working with various municipalities and key business partners on a FOAK project that can bring data together and help state and local agencies migrate IT operations to a cloud environment running on System z. This new environment can help improve data sharing between departments, agencies, and municipalities to improve citizen services.

Additionally, IBM is working with healthcare scientists on two critical projects one to help alleviate the suffering of arthritis patients and the other to help eradicate the scourge of HIV in Africa.

Although there are treatments for Rheumatoid Arthritis, only 30 percent of Rheumatoid Arthritis patients respond to anti-TNF therapy. IBM Research and the Arthritis foundation are harnessing mainframe computing power to collect data and develop predictive models that will help doctors know which patients are most likely to respond to anti-TNF therapy.

Finally, the Government of Ghana recently announced that it is partnering with IBM and Yale to use the mainframe to help overcome the challenges facing researchers as it seeks to eradicate mother-to-child HIV. Healthcare workers in Ghana will use mobile devices to collect data that will then be uploaded and analyzed on an IBM mainframe to help provide key insights for proactive treatment and prevention programs.