Opinion Article

The always-on economy gives cloud data management trends a seat at the boardroom table

JOHANNESBURG – 10 May, 2019 – The digital transformation of today's enterprises requires being able to operate in an 'always on' economy; offering instant service delivery for today's modern consumers with their expectations of immediate fulfilment.

With regards to both data centre and cloud offerings, data management provides an important tool to facilitate an infrastructure that needs to operate in a round-the-clock application availability. At the same time, data must be protected, and compliant with legislation that globally is becoming increasingly stringent and aware of the consumer's needs.

Anton Jacobsz, CEO at Networks Unlimited Africa, says, "Companies need to be able to streamline and automate their processes in order for data management systems to operate at maximum capacity and meet business goals. This means reducing IT management while still improving workload delivery. With this thinking as a central concept, we have seen the development of some interesting trends recently, with enormous significance at the top echelons of the business' thinking. Cloud data management trends today are under the spotlight from a business imperative and not simply as only a technology function."

Important trends going forward include artificial intelligence (AI) powered data management, accelerated cloud adoption and GDPR compliance[1].

AI-powered data management: According to multinational professional services firm Ernst & Young[2], disruptive technologies like artificial intelligence (AI)will unsettle not just corporate business models, but also society as a whole. But while these challenges are certainly palpable, how a company responds to disruption will ultimately determine its success.

According to Gartner[3], data and analytics leaders must examine the potential business impact of trends such as augmented analytics, continuous intelligence and explainable AI, and adjust business models and operations accordingly – or risk losing competitive advantage to those who do.

Jacobsz says, "Gartner has also noted previously[4] that AI will be a major digital driver for reinventing business models and the customer experience in years to come, projected until at least 2025. These projections include a focus on event-driven IT, a machine-learning (ML) model that involves constantly sensing and responding to business events (which range from completed transactions to threat detection). The focus is on seeking solutions that can centralise data management across all environments."

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[1] https://www.rubrik.com/blog/cloud-data-management-trends-2018/
[2] https://www.ey.com/Publication/vwLUAssets/ey-eight-megatrends-driving-disruption/%24File/ey-eight-megatrends-driving-disruption.pdf
[3] https://www.gartner.com/en/newsroom/press-releases/2019-02-18-gartner-identifies-top-10-data-and-analytics-technolo
[4] https://www.gartner.com/en/newsroom/press-releases/2017-10-04-gartner-identifies-the-top-10-strategic-technology-trends-for-2018

Accelerated cloud adoption: A study by Spiceworks[5], a professional network for the IT industry, found that organisations are looking at cloud adoption for a number of reasons, including data accessibility, disaster recovery and improved flexibility.

GDPR compliance: Jacobsz notes, "The General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) in the European Union (EU) were definitely a top focus around the business world during 2018 and this continues as we move forward. This legal framework, which came into effect on 25 May 2018, sets guidelines for the collection and processing of identifiable personal information of individuals within the EU, while also imposing fines where necessary. These fines can be revenue-based, of up to four percent of their annual global revenue.

The GDPR is a critical regulation for banks, insurers and other financial companies, as well as IT companies that could be involved in the processing of the data of EU citizens for these businesses. Companies around the world have been forced to look at – and where necessary restructure – their data management strategy to comply with the GDPR. This includes looking for solutions that support compliance with automation, searching and customisable reporting, as well as security solutions."

Jacobsz concludes, "The benefits of cloud data management include the consolidation of processes such as backup, disaster recovery, archiving and analytics, as well as security solutions. This all speaks to cost savings and

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[5] https://www.spiceworks.com/marketing/state-of-it/report/

compliance, showing why data management is increasingly being recognised as a strategic business imperative at the boardroom table."

About Networks Unlimited Africa

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