Four best practices for success in a hybrid cloud world

NetApp

What's the best approach to the hybrid cloud?

A hybrid cloud strategy makes sense for most organizations, allowing IT to move workloads among private and public clouds as needs and costs fluctuate. Some need only a short-term hybrid strategy as a step toward moving to a cloud-only environment. Others, due to data privacy, regulatory, or security issues, pursue a long-term hybrid cloud strategy, keeping a combination of on-premises and cloud environments. Finally, a continuously optimized hybrid strategy is the right choice for organizations that want to allocate workloads based on ongoing cost and performance evaluations.

Regardless of which strategy is right for you, capturing all the benefits of the hybrid cloud takes quite a bit of planning, not to mention effective management of both public and private clouds and on-premises IT resources.
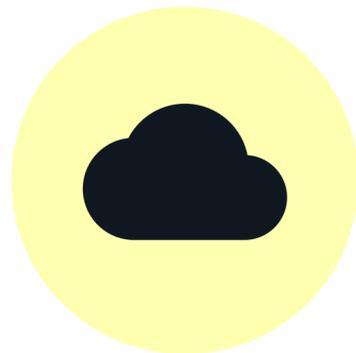
To succeed in a hybrid multicloud environment, you need to regularly evaluate requirements for speed, performance, innovation, and flexibility, while understanding the nuances of data needs, management options, and AIOps. With so many factors in play, it can help to keep your eye on the big picture. Read on to learn about four best practices that can help you optimize your hybrid cloud landscape for success:

- **Strike a balance** between innovation and performance
- **Flexibly manage workloads** with a targeted multicloud approach
- **Tame IT complexity** with AIOps
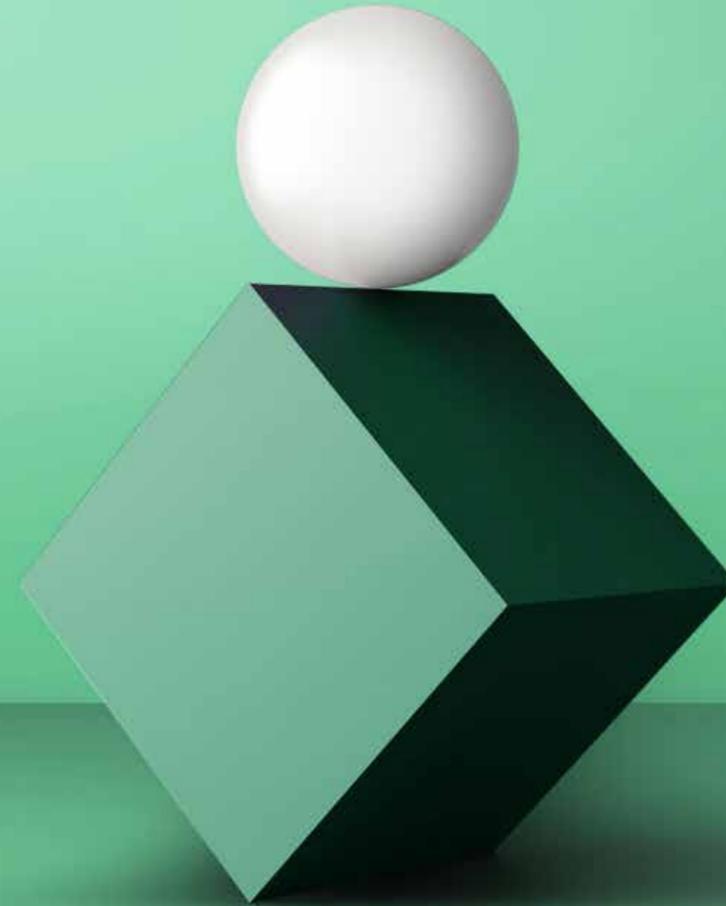- **Stay flexible** to maximize agility in uncertain times

Strike a balance between innovation and performance

There's no one-size-fits-all hybrid cloud solution. Most organizations will aim for a blend of on-premises and cloud workloads that balances cost, speed, security, and other considerations. A common long-term strategy is to rebalance and optimize this blend over time as organizational priorities change. When you're establishing or revising your own strategy, remember another balance—the one between addressing current operating performance needs and supporting rapid innovation, especially at times of heightened market disruption. Luckily, a hybrid cloud strategy can help you accomplish both goals.

87%
of enterprises have defined a hybrid cloud strategy[1]

"Hybrid empowers you to do exciting things. You can innovate on the cloud and execute on premises, where most of the data still is. You can innovate internally, then execute at scale in the cloud."

Ronen Schwartz
Senior VP and GM of Cloud Volumes Services, NetApp

Flexibly manage workloads with a targeted multicloud approach

A multicloud strategy avoids the heavy expenses of infrastructure purchase. It also lets you take advantage of innovations as they're introduced, regardless of vendor. But while a multicloud-and-on-premises environment offers a wide array of choices, 46% of technology leaders said it has also increased management complexity.

Solutions such as NetApp ONTAP make managing the multicloud hybrid environment much easier. ONTAP standardizes data architecture, making it easy to move applications at will, or automatically tier off old data to cheaper storage. Strong, consistent security protections surround your data wherever it goes, for quality control across your data landscape.

55%
of companies use at least two public clouds in addition to their own data centers[2]

"A single management console helps you do two things: It diagnoses problems and it gives you the tools to solve them."

Kim Stevenson
Senior VP and GM of Foundational Data Services, NetApp

Tame IT complexity with AIOps

Data is the lifeblood of today's organization, fueling insights that accelerate problem solving and improve decisions. But the deluge of information from marketing, sales, contact centers, and finance can overwhelm IT.

In a Statista survey, more than half of businesses said that exponential data growth had made application performance and latency major challenges. And 41% of respondents struggle to keep up with data storage demands.

Organizations can meet these problems head on with AIOps—using machine learning and AI algorithms to streamline IT operations. Advantages run the gamut from eliminating time-consuming drudge work to performing predictive maintenance and serving as a pilot light for planning decisions. Consider the benefits of using AIOps for:

- Robotic process automation
- Anomaly detection and alerts
- Diagnostics, predictive maintenance, and remediation
- Remote capabilities
- Capacity planning

62%
of IT executives see AI as the technology with the greatest potential to change how they do business[3]

"In a study we did, 90% of our customers said they saved a couple of hours a week with our AIOps system, NetApp Active IQ. They can now spend that time on higher-value tasks."

Biren Fondekar
Head of Customer Experience Office, NetApp

Stay flexible to maximize agility in uncertain times

Most IT professionals understand the benefits of moving data workloads to the cloud, making data storage and processing more scalable, flexible, available—and often affordable. But exactly how to make the leap isn't always obvious, especially when complex structures and legacy systems are involved. An organization may need to rethink strategy or adjust operations to optimize data migration, availability, performance, cost, or security.
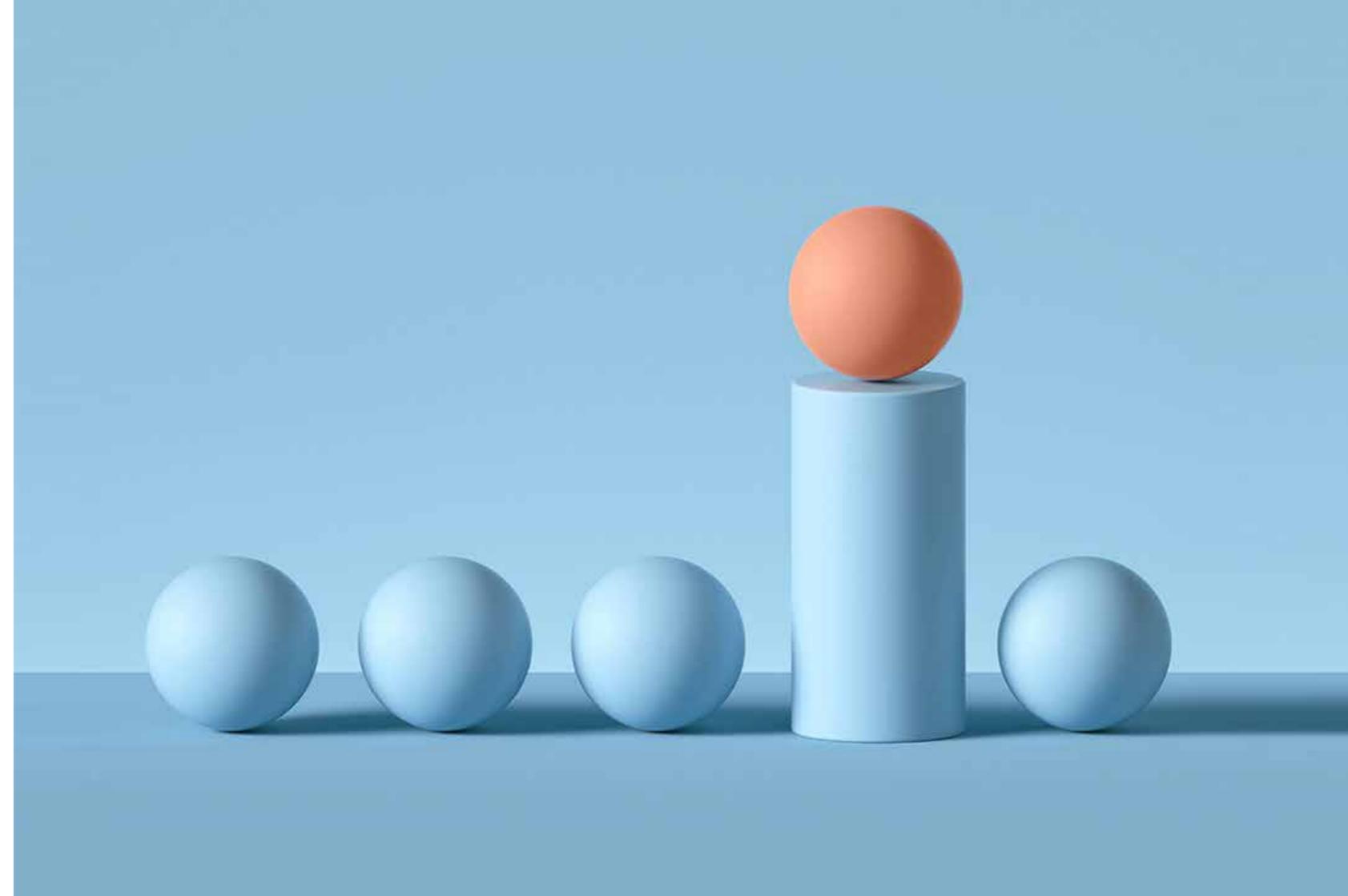
In these complex cases, the best choice is often a "bridge to the cloud." Customers move to the cloud at their own pace, supporting business outcomes and reducing risk along the way.

The bottom line: Whatever your industry, whether your organization is public or private, today's rapid changes in work and technology demand new levels of flexibility.

85%
of organizations include workload placement flexibility in their top five technology priorities—and a full 99% put it in their top 10[4]

"Solutions such as NetApp Keystone Flex Subscription let customers integrate cloud solutions and execute strategic initiatives at their own pace."

Sheila Rohra
Senior VP of Customer Success, NetApp

Looking for the ultimate flexibility in your hybrid cloud strategy?

NetApp Keystone Flex Subscription supports a hybrid cloud strategy with maximum operational and financial flexibility, for on-premises storage with the versatility of the cloud. Use it to:

- Unlock the best of both cloud and on-premises solutions
- Scale storage across clouds
- Reduce upfront capital expenses
- Align data storage costs with business activity
- Avoid overbuying and overprovisioning
- Free IT staff to focus on higher-value projects

→ **Learn more about [NetApp Keystone Flex Subscription](#).**

1 Flexera, *Flexera 2020 State of the Cloud Report*, April 28, 2020

2 IDG, *2020 Cloud Computing Study*, June 8, 2020.

3 IDG, *CIO Tech Poll: Tech Priorities 2020*, February 26, 2020.

4 NetApp research.

About NetApp
In a world full of generalists, NetApp is a specialist. We're focused on one thing, helping your business get the most out of your data. NetApp brings the enterprise-grade data services you rely on into the cloud, and the simple flexibility of cloud into the data center. Our industry-leading solutions work across diverse customer environments and the world's biggest public clouds.

As a cloud-led, data-centric software company, only NetApp can help build your unique data fabric; simplify and connect your cloud; and securely deliver the right data, services, and applications to the right people—any time, anywhere.

To learn more, visit www.netapp.com.

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