

Cloud computing: evolutionary not revolutionary

The uptake of cloud computing will gather momentum but many people do not realise they are already using it.

That's according to Gen-I Australasian chief executive Chris Quin who said cloud computing, a model of computing where services and applications were hosted securely and accessed through the internet, was an evolutionary change to the way technology was deployed, not a revolution.

He said most people used cloud computing already without realising it, via such services as Hotmail, Gmail and Xero.

Cloud computing's appeal was based on a perception that it was an enabler of business agility, flexibility and innovation, Mr Quin said, which for many was a new concept, with many definitions.

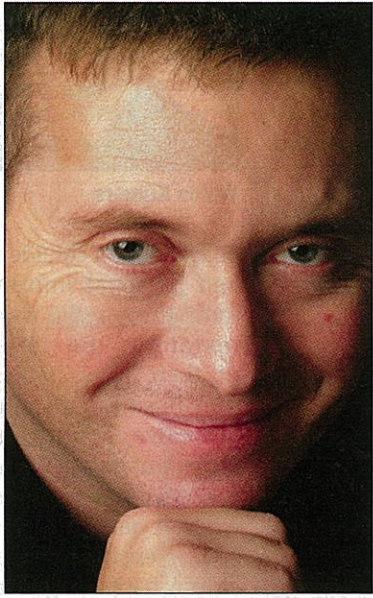
"Cloud computing will continue to gather momentum

The main barriers to the adoption of cloud computing were performance, cost, security and control, and many clients were looking to develop business cases that addressed these

Chris Quin

as more companies look to move IT functions such as server, storage, desktop, email and security to the cloud."

Mr Quin said the rollout of Ultra Fast Broadband across New Zealand would increase the



Chris Quin

cloud services' uptake as businesses looked for ICT solutions that used fibre speeds to increase productivity, improve flexibility and robustness and cut costs.

"Most corporate locations will be covered by fibre by 2014 and we believe 50% of our clients will migrate to fibre connections in the next two years."

Business continuity and disaster recovery was also a driver in cloud computing uptake, Mr Quin said, as businesses sought to increase their ICT reliability and availability through cloud services.

Mr Quin said a common misunderstanding about cloud computing was that it would remove the complexity from ICT.

In reality, he said, it removed

Consumerisation of IT: one of telco execs' biggest preoccupations

The spread of and support for mobile devices has become one of the biggest preoccupations of IT and telco executives.

Gen-I Australasian chief executive Chris Quin said a recent global survey suggested mobility had a big payback, "with three-quarters of respondents saying mobile applications made them more productive and two-thirds also reporting increased responsiveness and faster decision-making by mobile app-using employees."

Mr Quin said the trend toward BYOT, or bringing your own technology, was driven by technologically aware employees who expected the same experience at home and work.

"BYOT describes how people are connecting their own personal devices to the corporate network. As their owners carry them between home and work, they're bringing some risks with them."

This trend raised issues for businesses, such as who should have the devices in the workplace, how to ensure corporate apps worked with them, who supported the software and services running on them and what upgrade options should be provided,

the complexity from the business and its end users, at best.

Most organisations would move their ICT into the cloud one piece at a time, Mr Quin said, since this was not always a simple operation, involving as it did critical data and systems, many of which would not be suitable for moving to the cloud.

"Hybrid IT infrastructure and

Mr Quin said.

But social networking services such as Facebook were increasing rapidly, with 72% of Kiwis regularly using them, leading to a fundamental shift in the way people interacted and collaborated, Mr Quin said. At Gen-i, people brought their iPads into the office to fill the gap between their desktop and PDA, he said, as personal tools used to boost productivity.

"These new communications, aided by mobile and fast broadband connectivity, will change the way we all interact. There will be no impediments to doing business and people will work from anywhere."

Business would be expected to accommodate diversity in the consumption and deployment of IT and to make sure their networks looked and felt more like social networking services, he said.

With BYOT, Mr Quin said, businesses would have to provide end-user support and device maintenance, as well as security and integration with business applications. This created new challenges for IT managers, he said.

"The size of the headache is

considerable – end-user support accounts for more than a third of the total cost of ownership (TCO) of a mobile device. There are market opportunities for organisations who can take away the headache through a mobility-as-a-service model (MaaS), for instance."

Mr Quin said managed mobility services could mean gains in productivity by relieving businesses of the device maintenance and end-user support burden.

"That leaves them to focus on optimising how devices are used, applications that give the best outcomes and the plans that make most sense for their users."

The convergence between work and personal lives would only intensify in the future, Mr Quin said. Both cloud computing and the consumerisation of IT presented businesses with opportunities to improve flexibility and agility, and to innovate to reduce costs and boost efficiency, he said.

"This offers the biggest potential for delivering value and enabling economic growth for New Zealand."

operations will be the norm for some years to come."

The main barriers to the adoption of cloud computing were performance, cost, security and control, Mr Quin said, and many clients were looking to develop business cases that addressed these.

"They are also looking for help to move parts of their IT

to the cloud and temper their concerns over where their data is located and whether there is local support and accountability."

Mr Quin said a robust network and consultancy services were key to cloud computing, such as Gen-I's "Pathway to Cloud," which matched clients' business needs with the best ICT foundation.



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