

Oracle sets sail for the cloud

For more than three and a half decades, Oracle has set the standard among top tier of database technology and enterprise applications; and as it has evolved and acquired best-in-class companies, that leadership has expanded into new areas. *iStart* talks to Oracle New Zealand's managing director, Robert Gosling, to find out more about some of the key new growth areas for Oracle – the cloud and engineered systems – what they mean to the New Zealand market, and why Oracle's channel partners are so important to the company, and its customers...

Is the cloud important for Oracle?

New Zealand is known for early adoption and innovation, so it's not surprising that the majority of businesses here are well versed in the cloud. In fact, an IDC survey from July this year found that 79 percent of New Zealand companies are already using between two to five cloud services, driven primarily by the desire to cut IT costs and avoid investment in owning their own infrastructure.

Another interesting finding from the IDC research highlighted what makes cloud take-up in New Zealand distinct from the rest of APAC: the alignment of people and processes to making the appropriate decisions regarding what cloud is best for what need. This matches with what we are seeing from the market in terms of the different departments within local businesses seeking out cloud solutions specific to their business requirement.

What is also worth noting is that the adoption of multiple cloud services does have implications around how they are bought and implemented. For example, if they are purchased from different providers and used

in isolation, what happens when the company seeks to innovate? How do they adopt initiatives around customer experience, multi-channel servicing, mobile, real-time analytics, activities around governance, risk and compliance (GRC), or establish cross-departmental processes? These projects require systems that work together so that processes such as serving information to business process workflows or websites, or gaining one view of customer information are seamless.

The good news for Oracle cloud customers is that they can get incredible benefits from Oracle's strategy of providing the broadest and deepest cloud portfolio in the industry – Oracle is the only cloud vendor offering a full range of software-as-a-service (SaaS), platform-as-a-service (PaaS), and infrastructure-as-a-service (IaaS) services globally.

What that means to companies looking to take advantage of the cloud is that Oracle has a comprehensive set of solutions in the cloud that meets pretty much all of an organisation's business, IT infrastructure and development needs – no one else in the industry can match





the breadth and depth of our cloud portfolio in the industry. Our cloud applications support all areas of the business: sales, marketing, HR, finance and operations, and are intrinsically flexible, offering customers a choice of cloud platforms – public, private and hybrid – to suit their specific business challenges.

In addition, because of the breadth of our portfolio, and the way we engineer all our software and hardware solutions to work together, we can solve the problem of cloud solutions being adopted in isolation. Our public Oracle cloud solutions integrate with existing applications, and our middleware portfolio allows companies to take advantage of existing IT investment and extend that to embrace cloud, plus social and mobile.

You mentioned ‘engineered systems’ as another key growth. What are they and why are they of benefit to customers?

Let me take a step back. What we are hearing from our customers is that they want to focus on their core business and their customers. They want to shift more of the day to day to the cloud, and what they consider essential and want to run themselves, they want to make simpler. Taking advantage of the cloud is easy, but what about the bit they want to run themselves? This is where engineered systems come in.

Oracle engineered systems are in-a-box data centre solutions, which provide everything you need – hardware, software, firmware, cables, and so on – architected, integrated, tested, and optimised to work

together before they ever reach a customer’s premises. They enable users to more easily and cost effectively set up their own clouds from their data centres; to make more of existing IT investments, as they are engineered to run other Oracle IP – Oracle Database, SaaS apps, or Oracle’s traditional apps – really, really well; and they massively simplify and modernise the data centre. For example, we have repeatedly seen the situation where one Oracle Exadata machine takes the place of 50 or more old, inefficient machines, most of which weren’t set up for modern applications or the cloud. Another key consideration is that typically most companies’ legacy IT was bought piecemeal, and so needed significant integration and tuning.

How do your channel partners fit in with the shift to cloud systems?

In addition to these stellar growth areas, our channel partners are a critical part of our go-to-market approach in New Zealand. Our Oracle Partner Network (OPN) members offer customers fantastic in-depth industry expertise and intellectual property as well as specialised knowledge of Oracle technology and applications. As a result, they can provide a broader range of solutions, maximise the value of our customers’ investments and achieve higher levels of customer satisfaction.

So what can we expect from Oracle in the future?

In summary, Oracle is evolving. We’ve successfully taken our product portfolio and moved it on, first for the age of the internet, then the cloud and now for the connected world/internet of things. We are bringing new products to market that can really help customers make a difference in their business, whether that is around more cloud solutions at both the front and back end of their business, or innovations in the data centre, mobile or in-memory technology. And our focus is totally on the customer, helping them to drive out complexity and cost from their IT systems, so they can transform and innovate. **f**