Is DMaaS the future?

Why data centre management is the next as-a-Service offering. By Jeff Klaus, GM of Intel Data Center Management Solutions.

As our society becomes more interconnected, access to data has quickly been recognized as a key competitive advantage in every industry forcing organizations to churn out more data with every day. In order to deal with this massive data influx, new infrastructure solutions are becoming more important as data management becomes more complex. In fact, Gartner predicts 90 percent of organizations will adopt hybrid infrastructure management capabilities by 2020. This begs the question: how will data management solutions mature? The answer: Data center management as a service – or DMaaS for short.

DMaaS is an easy-to-use, low-cost cloud-based solution that gives IT professionals the ability to monitor their data center infrastructure incrementally, receive real-time insights, and prevent potential failures. Interested in the industry's perspective on this new solution, our team recently surveyed over 200 IT directors, managers and system administrators. Their responses highlight the lack of knowledge about DMaaS solutions, its potential benefits and how it can strengthen a business' data management strategy. Below are a few of the key findings every IT professional should keep in mind when evaluating their current action plan.

Addressing Cost Savings

When asked to identify the most important feature in a data management solution, nearly half of respondents (45%) cited cost savings as a critical factor. Whether this applies to an on-premise, cloud, or hybrid solution, this same sentiment was reflected by one-third of respondents who noted cost as the factor that attracted them to their current SaaS solution. Since DMaaS taps into an organization's current equipment and device data from each of their data centers and then anonymizes, pools and analyzes it at scale, companies are able to easily boost their strategy with a low-cost alternative that only requires the creation of an account with the option of paid additional services.

In addition to cost savings, other important features that were deemed vital for IT professionals when deciding on a data management platform technology included security (70%) and performance (61%). While keeping on-premise data management capabilities might be a smart security decision for some companies, utilizing a DMaaS solution for day-to-day operations provides these organizations with a secure and encrypted option that integrates traditional data management with other IT workloads. The latter will also increase data center performance as DMaaS integrates several services like network connectivity, business systems, and customer relationship management amongst others.

Gaining 360 Degree Visibility

Most organizations are currently deploying some mix of a data management platforms including on-premise tools (83%) or a cloud solution (86%) to gain a holistic view of its data center performance. However, over half of the respondents (59%) signaled they still struggle with varied technologies that are hindering their current strategy. DMaaS offers a comprehensive solution that provides the necessary analytics to meet the needs of today's fast-paced IT environment, allows flexibility to tolerate any customization and supports varied processes enabling faster rollout of new features.

Additionally, a majority of medium to large organizations already implement three to five SaaS solutions alongside an on-premise data center solution (58%) showing the high-level of comfortability enterprises have with this business model. By tapping into the cloud, companies can have access to tools that provide the automation, analytics and intelligence needed to meet the demand created by the data boom. Bringing together the best hardware and software into a holistic solution like DMaaS not only simplifies data management processes but provides real-time operational visibility with faster response time than ever before.

Merging the IT Environment

Along with providing a 360-view of your data center operations, DMaaS supports the standardization of data across the IT environment giving organizations easier access and analysis capabilities. A successful data management strategy does not only involve the data center itself but encompasses different aspects that originate from several divisions of the organization. There's the DevOps team, cloud architecture team, IT team and facilities managers – all of which play a critical role. With over half of survey respondents (59%) struggling with varied technologies that curb their strategy, implementing a DMaaS solution aligns both the IT and data center facilities teams to effectively boost data integrations and insights.

The Future of DMaaS Adoption

Even with the emergence of DMaaS, data management solutions will continue to exist for companies who are starting to dip their toe in receiving real-time data center insights. However, we will begin to see an increase in DMaaS implementation over the next 12 months for organizations looking to begin their journey to operational efficiency and receive the insights, metrics, and views data management alone cannot achieve. Some providers are

already offering this next-generation data center solution in their product suite – including Schneider ExoStructure™ – allowing organizations to analyze their data at scale. Along with its current availability, this potential market growth is echoed by 451 Research's Rhonda Ascierto who believes, "DMaaS takes the data-center world beyond DCIM, and beyond single-site, proprietary management."

Although a majority of survey respondents (87%) stated their current solution gives them visibility across all aspects of their organization's IT environment, the need for a holistic, real-time infrastructure solution is evident due to the growth in every company's data center needs. DMaaS is still in its infancy and has a while to go before it's mature but the promise of a platform that pools data and performs statistical analysis to reduce downtime and increase performance is substantial.