Storage lies at the heart of effective XaaS delivery

Today's digital businesses run on data, and persistent storage of that data is at the heart of most service offerings. Storage platforms need to deliver the availability, scalability, reliability, efficiency, and simplicity that service providers require, with consumption models that meet the financial needs of today's service providers.

Hayden Sadler,
Country Manager for South Africa at Infinidat.

Storage solutions are central to service providers' ability to deliver the 'Everything as a Service' (XaaS) model that has become ubiquitous. As such, storage is typically one of the largest categories of infrastructure costs for shared services offerings, and choosing the right solution is imperative. Furthermore, beyond the direct costs, the indirect costs of poor storage decisions can add up to major impacts on the ability to scale a service, operational manpower needs, OPEX costs, and drive new revenue and margin opportunities.

Key for service providers is the ability to leverage the performance scalability that allows them to bring together many diverse applications and workloads; storage consolidation or dense storage workload consolidation is essential for reducing costs. These lower costs are realised through increased infrastructure densities, ease of management, lower energy and floor space consumption, as well as many secondary benefits.

Importantly, service providers need a solution that can leverage the benefits of storage consolidation without compromising availability and performance. This requires an architecture that is built around this notion of scale, multi-tenant, high-performance platforms, together with intelligent software and a 100% data availability guarantee to ensure no compromise on performance, availability, manageability, cyber resilience, or cost.

Simplicity and flexibility

When operating at petabyte scale, as service providers typically do, manual administration tasks such as performance-tuning are simply not feasible. It's important for the storage platform to offer a 'set it and forget it' approach, where the system itself handles these types of tasks automatically and autonomously via intelligent software with algorithms that consistently deliver the performance required by the applications without any administrative effort.

Furthermore, service providers cannot afford to wait for additional capacity to be delivered and installed when they need to scale rapidly. It is necessary for the storage platform to have all the anticipated storage capacity installed on the datacentre floor, ready to be consumed when required. However, instead of the traditional CAPEX model where they are required to purchase and pay for all this capacity upfront, there are different consumption models available that are more aligned with service provider business models.

In today's increasingly complex and competitive business landscape, service providers should be focussing on business innovation and growth, rather than worrying about infrastructure. An elastic pricing purchasing model that allows them to pay for storage with a combination of CAPEX (base capacity) and OPEX (burst capacity) assists in uncertain market conditions by providing flexibility and predictable costs. This means that service providers can, depending upon budget constraints and business needs, self-provision additional base capacity or burst capacity, and convert burst capacity to base capacity at any time without fees or penalties.

Service providers that want to do away entirely with having to acquire or configure storage infrastructure up to multi-petabyte scale can benefit from a pure OPEX-based consumption model. This will encompass an all-inclusive subscription and pay-as-you-go scalability (up or down), hardware included for life, a 100% data availability guarantee, built-in cyber resilience, and an end to the risks and costs associated with data migrations.

A competitive market

Service providers that are trying to compete effectively against hyperscale vendors face strategic questions about how they will sustainably drive profit and revenue.

Storage platforms should be uniquely designed to maximise key values relevant to the service provider community, including efficiency, scalability, availability, cyber resilience, and comprehensive integration. When those technical advantages are paired with flexible business models, the result is a compelling value that enables service providers to align investment models with client revenue and reach new clients. ■

Sapna Capoor
Director of Global Communications at Infinidat
scapoor@infinidat.com

INFINIDAT