Three key goals for
modern IT environments

Agility, flexibility and governance are crucial for balancing cloud innovations and mission-critical legacy IT

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One of the benefits of cloud is the agility that it brings to agency IT environments. Cloud technology shifts the responsibility for hardware, tools, services and in many cases the underlying network to cloud providers, freeing government employees to focus on how they can deliver better mission outcomes.

Cloud gives agencies the ability to respond more quickly and address challenges with citizen-facing and other mission-critical applications — and even pivot in response to developments outside the government's control. During the pandemic, for example, cloud technology enabled agencies to quickly adopt new services and capabilities.

Cloud also delivers the ability to gain deeper insights from data and make better decisions by facilitating the use of artificial intelligence and machine learning, which are quickly becoming just as important to embed in applications as security currently is.

The complex dependencies of legacy IT

To take full advantage of cloud-based technological advances, agencies must address their legacy IT. In fiscal 2022 to date, the federal government has spent roughly $83 billion on IT, as reported on ITDashboard.gov. A third, or roughly $34 billion, has been spent on the operation and maintenance of legacy IT systems. The rising cost of maintaining legacy IT crowds out investments in newer cloud-based systems that can better serve citizens and federal workers.

Mission-critical legacy applications, technologies and services also have many other dependencies that make modernization difficult. Those dependencies exist in the source code and runtime platforms, leveraging specific databases and using data in proprietary formats. Additionally, agencies have unique processes to manage these applications or services and specialized employees. Simply ripping and replacing mission-critical

legacy systems is not an option, so successfully modernizing legacy IT requires addressing those issues.

Meanwhile, the process of building, deploying, maintaining and deprovisioning services in a complex multi-cloud environment can be cumbersome and time-consuming. But it is crucial to avoiding having the entire organization get bogged down with inefficient end-user experiences, poor visibility into available services, and an overbearing and increasing IT budget.

The importance of visibility and governance

It is an understatement to say that managing cloud services at a large agency is challenging. Such agencies have many subagencies that are also managing IT, each having many projects and programs that are potentially spinning up cloud services and resources that need to be monitored.

Without knowing it, federal workers could be deploying cloud services that

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don't comply with the government's security controls. And without visibility into all the areas where cloud services are being used, IT leaders won't have the control they need to secure the environment or plan for the associated costs of those resources.

To avoid legacy IT dependencies and future-proof their IT landscapes, agencies should incorporate a strategy that embraces flexible system design, enables on-demand hybrid IT resources with built-in governance, and encompasses on-premises legacy systems, multiple public/private cloud infrastructures and new software-as-a-service offerings.

At Micro Focus, we strongly believe that agencies can take the complexity out of cloud management. A recent Forrester report ranked our Micro Focus Hybrid Cloud Management X product as a leader, stating that "HCMX is a good fit for large enterprises that require highly complex environment management." With HCMX's powerful orchestration, flexible automation, simple yet smart self-service and comprehensive governance, agencies can take control of their cloud assets and their digital transformation.

For more information about Micro Focus HCMX and how we simplify management of complex IT and cloud estates, please visit us at microfocus.com/hybridcloud. ■

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