How open source is
expanding its
mission reach

Open source technologies enable agencies to control and
query their own data for faster insights and decisions

David
Erickson

Elastic

Ten years ago, government missions were starting to outgrow the databases that decades of wisdom had told us were the only ones agencies should ever use. At the time, we knew something was changing. Buzzwords like "big data" and "noSQL" started circulating, but they were just attempts to describe the next wave of innovation, which came with open source.

The real power of open source technologies was revealed when they cracked the code on being highly powered, mission-specific, distributed systems. That's how we are able to get insights out of data by being able to hold it and query it.

Today, open source innovation is being accelerated by the cloud, and the conversation is still changing, with people now demanding that their open source companies be cloud-first platforms. Along the way, the open source technologies that start in the community and then receive a boost of commercial innovation have matured. The most powerful ones are expanding their ability to address more of the government's mission needs. They are staying interoperable and keeping the data interchange non-proprietary, which is important for government agencies.

A team-based approach to data and services

Open source databases have gone beyond simply holding large amounts of data and allowing the IT team to query them without breaking. The latest technologies make it possible for even non-technical users to get the information they need.

For example, a cyber operator who is responding to a zero-day threat needs to ask questions and receive answers in seconds, even if it's his or her first day on the job. If an agency is facing mission downtime and using open source systems to observe what's going on, the whole team should be able to circle around a single 360-degree view of the system.

In addition, agencies shouldn't have to ask permission of anyone to query their own data. With open source, the power is back in the hands of government employees, and agencies have the ability to fail fast and move from walled ecosystems into a realm in which data and services can evolve at their own speeds without holding one another back.

Accelerating the time to mission

One powerful aspect of open source is its ability to be used quickly in the cloud because it has fewer dependencies. Open source technology has made a fast transition to a cloud that federal agencies are

Anton Maksimov

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excited about because they can avoid vendor lock-in. The government can inspect and scan 100% of the code, which means the time to mission is faster. Furthermore, Elastic's government customers appreciate having insight into the supply chain and not having to order hardware.

In the past, agencies had to do it all themselves if they wanted to have insight and control over the code, even if it was being held in escrow at a large company. Or they adopted a cloud service that was a black box and could not jump between cloud providers easily or at all. Now the major enterprise open source companies offer the best of both worlds.

At Elastic, we're proud to be part of the ecosystem of open source technologies that are non-proprietary and allow data to flow freely. Those technologies are built to work together so that agencies can innovate to meet their unique mission requirements. ■

David Erickson is senior director of solutions architecture at Elastic.

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