5 Requirements for Converged Systems Readiness

You're expected to drive increased business value out of the applications you manage. It's assumed that you'll provide 100% uptime and availability to the business. And you're expected to accomplish this with minimal staffing, support, budget and equipment to get the job done properly. Welcome to the world of IT.

To meet these rapidly evolving business needs, many IT managers are turning to converged infrastructures. From improved application performance and higher uptime to quicker troubleshooting and faster deployments, converged systems offer a host of benefits that can quickly pay off your initial investment and translate into real value. In fact, IDC claims that IT decision-makers using converged systems cited fewer management tools and improved IT staff efficiency as the top benefits of convergence.[1]

Here are 5 requirements you look for in a converged infrastructure solution.

❑ REQUIREMENT #1: READY FOR USE

Every new piece of hardware or software added to your infrastructure eats up valuable time and resources. In fact, IDC states that IT organizations spend 23.3% of staff time and resources on presystem deployment.[2]

Your converged solution should come fully pretested, prevalidated and pre-integrated, with the flexibility to meet your needs. You need it ready for use so you can hit the ground running from the moment it arrives.

Advantage: Ready for use means your organization can serve customers immediately, without adding to your IT team. The right converged solution reduces your deployment phase for new applications by more than 25%. That can add up fast.

❑ REQUIREMENT #2: ONE PLATFORM FOR PHYSICAL AND VIRTUAL ENVIRONMENTS

Using different tools to manage physical and virtual environments can create inefficiencies as administrators have to jump from one management tool to another. Instead of managing one system, you're spending your resources acquiring skills for a variety of tools.

The converged solution should support both virtualized and nonvirtualized environments within a single converged stack, since you will likely have some applications that are nonvirtualized. Your system should integrate directly into the management tools IT already knows and uses. It will allow you to manage your converged infrastructure more quickly without having to learn 3rd-party orchestration tools.

According to ESG Research, IT pros cited ease of management (44%), faster deployment (37%) and improved TCO as the top 3 benefits of an integrated computing platform.[3]

Advantage: One platform monitors performance fluctuations and workloads across your entire IT environment. This gives you a deeper understanding of the business impact of your operations. It also gives you the information to make intelligent decisions about where you can have the biggest impact.

❑ REQUIREMENT #3: EXTENSIVE AUTOMATION

With today's increased infrastructure complexity, it's not uncommon for businesses to experience delays in rolling out new products and services. Without proper support and resources, your IT staff can't respond quickly enough to the needs of the business. With improved automation, your business can move much faster.

[1] IDC, Converged Systems Survey, July 2012.
[2] Villars, Richard L. and Jed Scaramella, IDC, Converging the Datacenter Infrastructure: Why, How, So What? May 2012.
[3] Bowker, Mark, Bill Lundell and John McKnight, ESG Research Brief, Integrated Computing Trends, March 2011.

Extensive automation across a wide range of functions and systems results in fewer manual, time-consuming and error-prone activities for your IT department. It also improves efficiency.

IDC states that moving to converged systems can help reduce operations and management costs over time by automating management, and centralizing and consolidating the overall infrastructure.[4]

Advantage: End-to-end automation lets you deploy applications faster and manage your environment easier. With an automated orchestration tool, you manage and administer both virtualized and nonvirtualized infrastructures from the same interface.

❑ REQUIREMENT #4: MISSION-CRITICAL SUPPORT

If the converged infrastructure doesn't support mission-critical applications, such as Oracle, SAP and Microsoft, it's not worth your investment. These applications continue to increase in complexity, and so does the technology and the support needed to run them.

Advantage: With mission-critical support from the right converged system, you get the performance and scalability for mission-critical applications like Oracle databases, SAP applications, and Microsoft® Exchange and SharePoint®.

❑ REQUIREMENT #5: OPEN ARCHITECTURE

Without open architecture, migration can be complex, time-consuming and error prone. Also, interoperability and scalability can suffer. Make sure your converged infrastructure supports the operating systems you need and the applications you use. According to Enterprise Strategy Group, because more companies are running multiple hypervisors, having the right converged infrastructure is going to be critical to advancements.

The ideal converged system should be designed to integrate with different hypervisors to avoid vendor lock-in and enable multi-hypervisor IT solutions. To support this, ESG Research claims that 65% of today's organizations are already running multiple hypervisors for both business and technical reasons.[5]

Advantage: This level of open architecture allows seamless integration with various hypervisors and 3rd-party orchestration frameworks, security partners and service delivery platforms. This gives you power and protection ... and important options. Future-proof your IT.

Like most IT teams, you're getting new demands from the business side every day, without additional funding or resources. The right converged system will save time, money and staffing. To get the right converged solution for you, choose a solution that is fully integrated and supported to ensure not only a seamless deployment but also a smooth post-deployment experience. This reduces your operational costs and drives increased business value out of your applications.

"Total worldwide spending on converged infrastructure will hit $14.3 billion in 2017."[6]

Download the full white paper, ***The Future of Convergence is Here***. See how moving to a converged system from a siloed IT architecture with disjointed server, storage and networking buying cycles can solve all your challenges.

One Platform. Zero Worry. Want to simply management and support, enable continuous availability and scale to meet mission-critical business needs? Find out how HDS converged solutions can help simplify your processes by providing single-pane visibility of physical, virtual and cloud infrastructures today.

[4] IDC Technology Assessment, The Adoption of Converged Systems and Their Impact on Enterprise Storage Purchasing, 2012.
[5] Bowker, Mark and Bill Lundell, ESG Research Brief, Multiple Hypervisor Usage Trends, December 2012.
[6] IDC, Worldwide Integrated Systems, 2014–2017 Forecast: March 2014.

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