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cloud services

Before you embark on any journey you need to know two things, where you are, and where you are going. Only then will you know whether you are going in the right direction.

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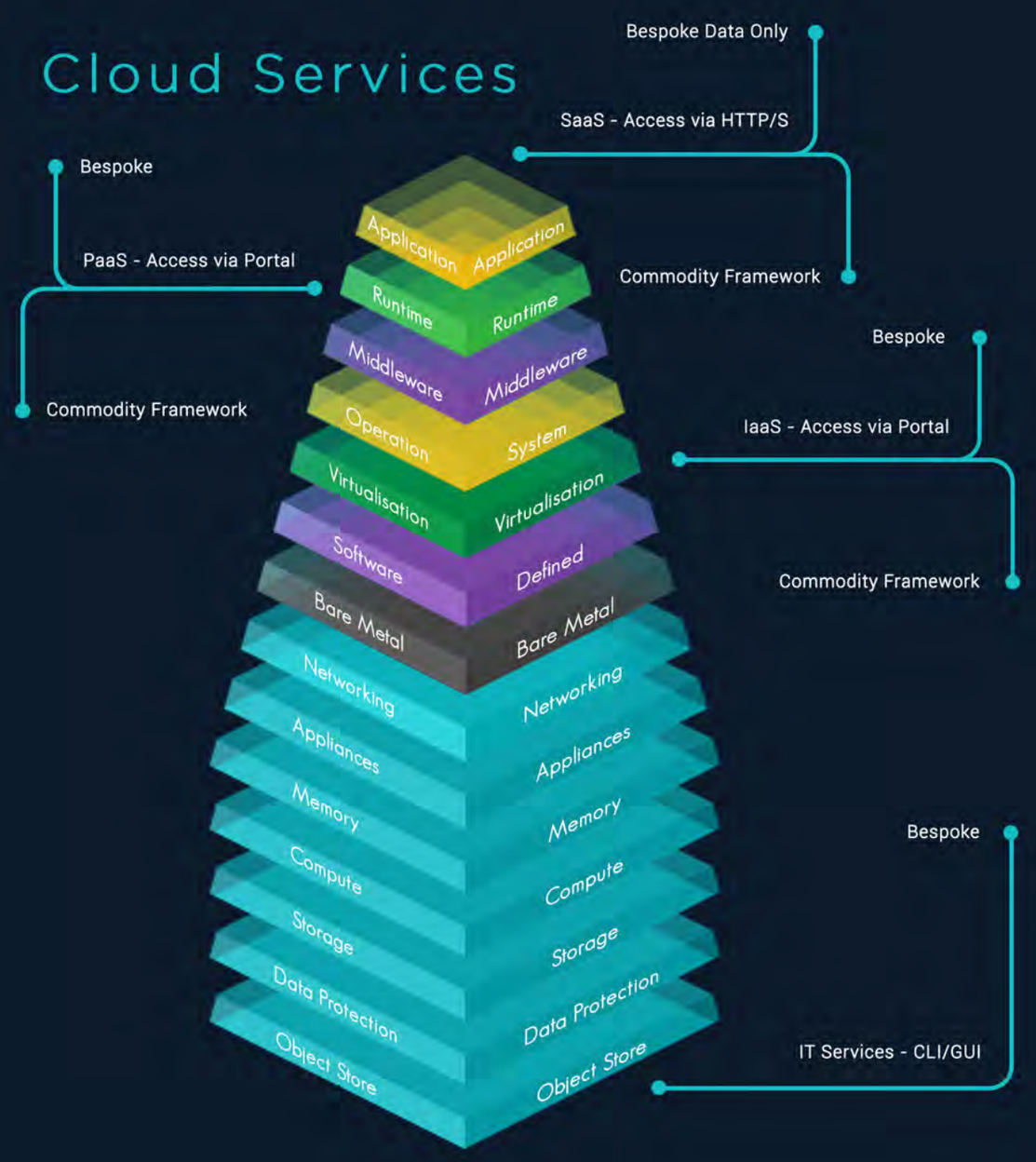
Ask five people to define "cloud" and there is a strong likelihood that you will get five different answers. Whenever there is a concept you quickly have a misconception, and unfortunately "cloud" has quickly fallen victim to this.

The first thing to realise is that cloud in not a place, it is methodology, and it is the desire to adopt this new methodology which should be the primary reason that will set you on your cloud journey.

> Work out how much of your estate you are happy to commoditise, as you may not know and ought not to care what is below that demarcationpoint.



Technical

In an appliance architecture, IT departments built bespoke environments from the ground up in an effort to meet the needs of their lines of business (LOB). Therefore, the likelihood of two companies infrastructure having all the same appliances with the same policies was slim to none.

These bespoke environments served to do three things; keep the IT subject matter experts gainfully employed, create a static environment that was very difficult to deliver agile service and increase difficulty in moving away.

info@illapa.cloud
+44 (0) 203 917 1110

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Because of the meteoric rise of the public cloud, and the necessity of the LOB to consume services not delivered through traditional IT department (shadow or stealth IT), we know that in general traditional appliance based methodology is no longer capable of meeting the dynamic needs of the business.

So technically what is the difference between the two methods? Fundamentally a cloud architecture uses commodity resource pools as opposed to dedicated appliances. The function of the appliance is created when the (templated) application is deployed and an element of the resource pool is allocated to it.

This function is either going to be performed by the end user or the service integrator, but it will be a "field integration" not a vendor integration.

We can break down cloud methodology into two distinct areas; technical and commercial, and you need to be very clear that there are advantages and disadvantages with both over a traditional appliance based architecture.

Commercial

Cloud is typically delivered as-a-service on a monthly subscription basis (OpExonly), as opposed to the traditional transfer of title (CapEx/OpEx) model

Obvious advantages to the end user of this is model is no upfront cost, and varying commitment from rolling monthly to multi-year. Obvious disadvantage for the end user is that the incumbent vendor and the channel partner have a vested interest in seeing CapExpurchases continue so will do their best to slow adoption.

We believe that it is this last sentence which is contributing to the prolonging of the traditional appliance model.

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Public/Private –Commit/Burst

Unfortunately this is not a one size fits all answer, and it is likely that you will need different services at different times to meet different requirements. The ONLY way to be able to make informed decisions is with visibility through deployment of a "multi-cloud management platform" since without this you are likely to be making assumptions.

> Cloud is a methodology, not a place, it is not one fits all so stop looking for this nirvana. Make granular informed decisions on a workload by workload basis.

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