

Top 10 Mistakes Businesses Make in IT Infrastructure

It is important to hire the right talent who can put the investments in IT-Infra to its best use, not only for routine tasks but to also collaborate seamlessly across the organization, driving value and enabling synergies

Borrowed from the game of Poker, business ‘table stakes’ are the minimum entry requirement for a market or business arrangement. There can be price, cost model, technology, or any other capability that represents a minimum requirement to have a credible competitive starting position in a market or other business arrangement.

Bearing this metaphor in mind, IT Infra architecture and spend thereof are meant to enable your organization’s core business. Visionaries in the IT Infra space have a strong understanding of their organization’s business and find solutions with maximum ROI. It’s key to understand that supremely technically powerful solutions may not always find a place in your IT Infra space - what is necessary though is to find solutions that first and foremost support and blend in with your organization’s business goals.

Having said that, let us look at some other common mistakes:

#1. Choosing the right Licensing Model

It is absolutely essential to use Licensed Software for business needs. A good Licensing model is a by-product of a clear understanding of business needs intertwined with IT-Infra solutions. Once in place, it is also important to leverage the licensing agreement to derive maximum benefit from it. For instance, many organizations sign an elaborate Enterprise Agreement with OEMs/Software Owners with the hope that it would cover all products and solutions. However, in reality, they end



up using only one or two products from the entire suite.

#2. Open Source software is not free

There is a misconception that everything is free when on Open Source Software. Unfortunately, that is not the case! Software Subscription is an integral part of Open Source. A software without support from its principal service provider is always at risk.

Any production system running on an open source platform should have a support subscription, to receive up-to-date patches and avoid potential vulnerabilities. For example, Red Hat Subscription comes with the latest upgrades and expertise of engineers

making the open source secure, stable and reliable.

#3. Trust Your Tools – Frequently changing them does not help

Organizations spend a considerable amount of time and resources shortlisting a tool for managing their environment, and once in place, some of the output from these might be alarming. However, it is critical not to shy away, instead, continue analyzing them to improve your infrastructure efficiency - Treat them like constructive feedback from well-wishers. Similarly, frequently changing the monitoring tools leads to lack of understanding for those tracking and reporting them. Unless you trust your

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tools, there will be no significant impact on your IT Infrastructure.

#4. Failing to invest in Information Security and Vulnerability Analysis tools

If you thought hackers were external to your organization, re-think! Managing and mitigating the risk from any 3rd party or from internal sources who could get more access to your infrastructure than required is equally important. Therefore, vulnerability testing should be a significant part of the proof of concept and buying decision for all product purchases.

#5. Trying to do all In-house

In comparison to the expertise available globally and easily, those who don't leverage it could end up spending more in assembling all the required skills in-house. The trick is to have key resources (people and/or equipment) in-house and engage reliable partners to manage the operations and complement the in-house skill sets. With the inevitable rates at which competition is growing, market demand-supply dynamics and deepening skill sets play a pivotal role in such decisions.

#6. Shutting down the Data Centers and moving everything to Cloud

Cloud, no doubt is a very well rounded alternative to physical infrastructure, yet thriving without data centers may not be wise. Especially for global organizations, bandwidth costs at various remote locations are a critical consideration to

access a cloud-only solution. Therefore, certain cases may demand a locally managed data center, well integrated to organization's network, basis a good cost-benefit analysis.

#7. Placing Backup & DR on to a back seat

As the saying goes backups are 'worthless' but re-stores are 'priceless'. Organizations sometimes fall prey to lower investments in backup strategy – Software/Tapes/Offsite-Storage. Business critical information should always have sufficient quantity and frequency of back-up schedule followed to the letter. However, what and how to back up varies from organization to organization across industries.

#8. Running Production Systems on Hardware that's out of Warranty

The highest risk that could cause any IT-infra manager sleepless nights is running production systems on hardware that is not in warranty. A well-laid out asset management system with proactive alerts and implementation strategy is essential to the success in this area. For example, organizations running Dell Hardware could consider implementing Dell OME.

#9. Failing to invest on ITSM (IT Service Management) tools

Incident, change or problem management and service request fulfillment strategy are mandatory for infrastructure deliveries. This means a strongly integrated

configuration management system should be at the base of tracking, resolving and mitigating the IT-Infra issues. Additionally, it also opens a realm of possibilities such as providing a platform for automation, operational excellence, lower lead times and reduced compliance risks.

#10. Predictive Analytics - Need of the hour

All of the above creates a valuable data repository – predictive analytics helps derive insights, capture trends and themes, potential risks and spends that are required for the future. Investment in at least a small-scale analytics tool will go a long way in understanding and presenting the data, not only to IT-Infra leaders but also to business and functional leads who can use the insights in their area. For example, a CFO is happy to get a spending forecast for say Bandwidth, Server Infra, and Tapes with data-driven granularity, to ensure the right level of working capital to manage these. In addition, Regional Business VPs may find it intuitive to have proactive critical server maintenance schedule that could influence production parameters.

In conclusion, all organizations are as good as its employees. Hence, it is important to hire the right talent who can put the investments in IT-Infra to its best use, not only for routine tasks but to also collaborate seamlessly across the organization, driving value and enabling synergies. 🧠

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