

Tony Palmer:

I hate to use buzzwords but I'm going to. I think about it in kind of a DevOps lens, the idea that it's all interconnected. If you are not thinking about security, when you're developing your apps and when you're designing your infrastructure, it's gonna be trouble for you. It really needs to be something that's baked in and that's integrated. And that's thought about from the outset, that's really what it comes down to.

Jason Lopez:

Tony Palmer is an analyst at the Enterprise Strategy Group, known as ESG. Specifically, as it says in his bio, he's a senior engineer providing independent, hands-on validation and analysis of emerging IT hardware and software products. In another podcast we chatted in more detail with Palmer about a validation he did with Nutanix clusters running on AWS. In our interview with him we thought his comments about a data driven world were worth sharing so we produced this podcast to touch on his background, his thoughts about the Nutanix clusters test, and digital adoption. This is the Tech Barometer Podcast, I'm Jason Lopez. Tony Palmer is from Oyster Bay in Long Island and he started his tech career as a bench tech in New York building PCs and servers as well as architecting networks. He continued working across many different segments of the computer industry from small companies to large ones like Dell EMC. But for the last 15 years he's been at ESG.

Tony Palmer:

Lately, I've been spending a lot of time thinking about security and thinking about application security in particular and, and how security works in the cloud as compared to in the physical data center. It still does come back to having consistent tools that you can use to both visualize your environment and to act on issues. Right? So it's the same philosophy you'd apply to really anything. When you're trying to migrate apps to the cloud, you need to be able to know what's going on so that, you know, what's going on.

Jason Lopez:

And so, is cloud security just computer security with another name?

Tony Palmer:

Considering that there has been an ongoing shortage of cybersecurity skills in the industry at large, it's at least as challenging as security anywhere else, because organizations can't find enough of the kind of smart people that they need. There's not enough talent to go around is what I'm saying. I mean, it can certainly offer enhanced challenges when you've got a different tool set. You've got, you know, a different networking paradigm and methodology that you're working with. There are some very interesting companies out there that are providing solutions that are unifying that approach.

Jason Lopez:

What's going on, in a more philosophical light, as cloud adoption increases in the world, is it no longer merely a fancy name for remote computing? Or is it, arguably, a sort of OS?

Tony Palmer:

In one form or another, this kind of stuff has been around for a very long time. They said the same thing about virtualization, right? Oh, mainframes have been able to do that forever. When air was first bouncing around. However, like what happened with virtualization what's happening to the cloud is it's maturing and that maturation is rapidly accelerating. Now, what we're finding is it's really becoming a viable place for your business to live. And smart organizations are working toward a true hybrid cloud environment, right? Where they have complete app mobility and complete mobility of their data, or rather avoiding mobility of their data at all, by keeping it in both places so that their business can run anywhere. Anytime you can get access to them anywhere, anytime that's one of the major promises of the cloud. And I think that we've made a tremendous amount of progress to get us there

Jason Lopez:

Enterprise Strategy Group does research and validation, and provides advisory services in the tech world on a broad range of segments from cybersecurity to converged infrastructure. When Palmer started 15 years ago it was known as ESG Lab. But because there was no physical laboratory, "lab" was eventually dropped.

Tony Palmer:

Our lab is virtual.

Jason Lopez:

Palmer's virtual lab looked at how a typical organization would fare running Nutanix Cloud Clusters, and showed some dramatic improvements in deployment times and lowering costs.

Tony Palmer:

What is lovely about a cloud solution was, do done remotely. So there were clusters deployed in Amazon test that from anywhere. And also what that means is anyone can duplicate the results that we found here. Anyone can set up exactly the same cluster and run it and really validate almost everything that's in the report.

Jason Lopez:

The ESG report is entitled Evaluating Clusters for Hybrid Multicloud Environments. Palmer says it shows major performance gains with IT installs of Nutanix clusters. And that is a reflection of a digital transformation happening in many verticals where data is becoming a business driver. Some of those verticals are massive and have yet to fully make a digital transition, such as health care.

Tony Palmer:

What's going to be possible when these behemoths actually start really working with their data. What is that going to open up? What is that going to unlock in terms of research opportunities and it's really kind of mind blowing, the potential that's there. The main thing they have to be really careful of, of course, is security and compliance with how they manage that data, dealing with HIPAA and GDPR. Being able to find useful applications for that data while making sure that it's in fact secure is going to be key. And so not to compromise their own agility as it were.

Jason Lopez:

Another interesting case where an industry seems to be flying under the radar when it comes to IT adoption is agriculture. But the reality is ag tech has been a thing since the late 1800s. The dance agriculture and information technology does has much to do with the fact that farms aren't in the business of innovation, or put another way, failing fast isn't a viable business model. They need innovations to be proven before being put into the field. Still, ag tech is one of the most active industries of data driven technology innovation and adoption.

Tony Palmer:

There are a lot of really big problems to be solved. Harnessing all that data and actually applying some intelligence to it is going to be hugely important, as far as increasing crop yields without doing more damage to the soil, and also hopefully not harming the ecosystem while you do it, which is a much more complicated problem. It's all huge.

Jason Lopez:

Palmer points out that no matter what industries you look at, data is becoming the force that drives business.

Tony Palmer:

So we asked companies across industries about their business. What is your business? And to what extent is data a part of your business? So what we found was there's a little more than one in five, say data is completely our business. It's a digital product or service, right? And then there was a bigger chunk of that who said, well, data is a major part of our business, but we

offer both tangible goods and information based products and services. And then there's another solid chunk. So altogether we're talking about 80% said that data was either was their entire business was a major part of their business or a helped their business. And they were planning on digital information based products and services. And so for me, again, agility efficiency, being able to deal with this data and to deal with this data, you need to be able to house it and host it and process it. And that's exactly what Nutanix is focused on and has been for a very, very long time.

Jason Lopez:

Tony Palmer is a senior engineer and analyst at ESG where he does validation and analysis of emerging IT hardware and software products. If you're interested in Palmer's report, "Evaluating Clusters for Hybrid Multicloud Environments," you can find it in a great article by Tom Mangan on The Forecast page. Go to theforecastbynutanix.com to see it. And if you want to hear more from Tony Palmer about the tests he did, look for that companion piece on the Forecast podcast page. This is the Tech Barometer podcast, I'm Jason Lopez. Thanks for listening.