



Five Reasons You Can't Ignore OpenStack

You've heard about OpenStack, but you may not hear about many deployments in organizations like yours. The case studies you do read seem complex and highly unique. For these reasons, you might assume OpenStack isn't viable in the enterprise and decide it's not something you'll evaluate right now. But the options for deploying OpenStack are expanding, and it's a good time to reconsider your approach.

1. **It's growing dramatically.**

- OpenStack's growth trajectory is similar to that of Linux, and OpenStack use is on track to grow even faster. What started as an experimental technology for engineers has now become more stable and mainstream.
- Many larger enterprises are now using OpenStack, even in limited deployments, and as the advantages become apparent, use will increase.
- The code itself has matured dramatically since its introduction five years ago. Updates are now far more likely to be bug fixes and usability improvements rather than major new code releases.
- A huge number of technology and cloud vendors now offer OpenStack solutions and tools. Almost every major cloud vendor now has a presence in OpenStack. We are nearing critical mass.

2. **It provides the flexibility and agility that businesses need.**

- The biggest advantage of an open-source approach is that you can create a much more flexible and vendor-neutral cloud environment. As a result, you can lower your costs, avoid the risks of vendor lock-in, and add new capabilities and approaches much more quickly and easily.
- The cloud is still an incredibly dynamic, rapidly evolving marketplace. New features and approaches are being introduced all the time. If you lock yourself into a single vendor, you'll be on that vendor's timeline to bring those new capabilities to your business. How quickly will your competitors be able to adopt them?

3. **It can make a big difference in staffing and productivity.**

- OpenStack offers serious productivity benefits, because OpenStack is less a tool than a complete, preintegrated cloud operations and management platform. OpenStack already includes computing, networking, storage, and other essential cloud elements, already integrated and interoperable.
- Because OpenStack is a complete solution, your team doesn't have to spend potentially hundreds of hours piecing together all those elements themselves. Instead of focusing on cloud integration, they can focus on your applications. Almost everything needed to run them is already there.

- Using an open-source cloud platform can have a ripple effect on your staffing decisions. If you lock your cloud environment into a single vendor's approach, you're limited to staff who specialize in that vendor's technology—or to long ramp-up times to train those who don't.
 - But the best developers and engineers are already familiar with open-source technologies. So when you use an open-source platform like OpenStack, you'll have your pick of staff.
 - And again, among developers and engineers, OpenStack is growing rapidly. Even if you're not planning to begin implementing an open-source approach right away, it's critical to start building an OpenStack skill set now, so you won't be scrambling to catch up later.
4. **Do you think that using an open-source solution means a complex, long, do-it-yourself project? Not anymore.**
- Hardened, enterprise-class OpenStack solutions are now available from open-source leaders like Red Hat, often as part of preintegrated, ready-to-deploy solutions developed in partnership with vendors like Cisco.
 - Tools to take full advantage of OpenStack are growing too. Vendors now offer software-define networking (SDN) controllers, such as the Cisco® Application Policy Infrastructure Controller (APIC), that allow you to perform policy-based management of your OpenStack-based cloud environment. Cisco has made the code to use APIC with OpenStack freely available on StackForge, and people are using it.
 - Cloud providers like Cisco Metacloud can now offer hosted solutions, so you don't have to build and operate an OpenStack cloud yourself. You can get all the benefits of an open-source cloud environment in a managed solution, on- or off-premises that you can implement quickly while paying for only the services you consume.
5. **Are you ready for a hybrid-stack world?**
- For many businesses, the immediate priority is to create a private cloud environment to deliver IT as a service (ITaaS). But you want to be able to shift workloads to public cloud resources when it makes sense to do so, as well as meet growing demands from lines of business that want to use public cloud services in the enterprise.
 - OpenStack is an excellent platform for doing that, especially when it is combined with the Intercloud. With OpenStack, you can easily move workloads back and forth between private and public clouds.

OpenStack may have seemed like just a curiosity a couple years ago. But it's becoming a big part of the cloud landscape. If you want to capitalize on the benefits of open-source cloud environments before your competitors, start paying attention now—or be prepared to play catch-up later.

Find out more about Cisco OpenStack solutions by downloading the [white paper, Cisco and Red Hat Simplify the Journey to Cloud Computing](#).



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