IDC

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LEVERAGING CLOUD FOR BUSINESS GROWTH

MEASURE, IMPROVE, AND MAXIMIZE THE ROI

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Cloud conversation in the Middle East has matured from aversion to adoption, and organizations in the region now consider cloud as a foundational platform for driving their digital transformation and innovation agendas. IDC's research reveals that cloud adoption drives business growth and improves organizational reputation by enhancing agility, enabling rapid responses to market changes, and fostering innovation with reduced risk. **Confidence in cloud is rising as buyers swiftly transition business-critical workloads to third-party platforms.** Organizations across the Middle East are now going beyond infrastructure and looking at cloud to drive application transformation initiatives. Cloud-native apps are being developed and legacy applications are getting replaced, refactored, or rehosted on cloud.

Technologies such as AI, Generative AI (GenAI), robotic process automation, and edge computing are disrupting the traditional methods used to build and distribute products or render a service.

While businesses are accelerating cloud adoption based on their current initiatives and strategies, the potential complexity of cloud platforms can overwhelm many cloud adopters. Concerns related to data sovereignty, operational sovereignty, complex regulatory frameworks, and scarce skilled cloud professionals often hinder or pause the digital transformation agendas of organizations. While these challenges are not new, the responses to address these barriers are quite innovative. Once cloud buyers have a structured cloud adoption strategy in place, the next step should be to

work with a technology partner that has a comprehensive portfolio of cloud professional services. Most cloud adopters hire cloud providers or system integrators that can deliver end-to-end services that include advisory, cloud migration, implementation, and managed cloud services.

Over the years, **three types of cloud adopters have emerged — Standardized, Rationalized, and Dynamic.** Standardized cloud adopters focus on maintaining existing systems with an emphasis on stability and security. They are also more focused on running rather than transforming their business. Rationalized cloud adopters focus on cloud engineering opportunities and plan to transform their business. Dynamic cloud adopters engage in innovations, integrating AI and emerging technologies into their business processes and accelerating digital transformation initiatives.

IDC believes that **the success or failure of cloud adoption hinges on the selection of a competent and trustworthy cloud partner.** This partner can help the cloud buyer find balance between outsourcing cloud services and creating internal capabilities to drive a long-term modernization plan. A systematic approach to cloud adoption is crucial if organizations are to realize the full value of their cloud investments.

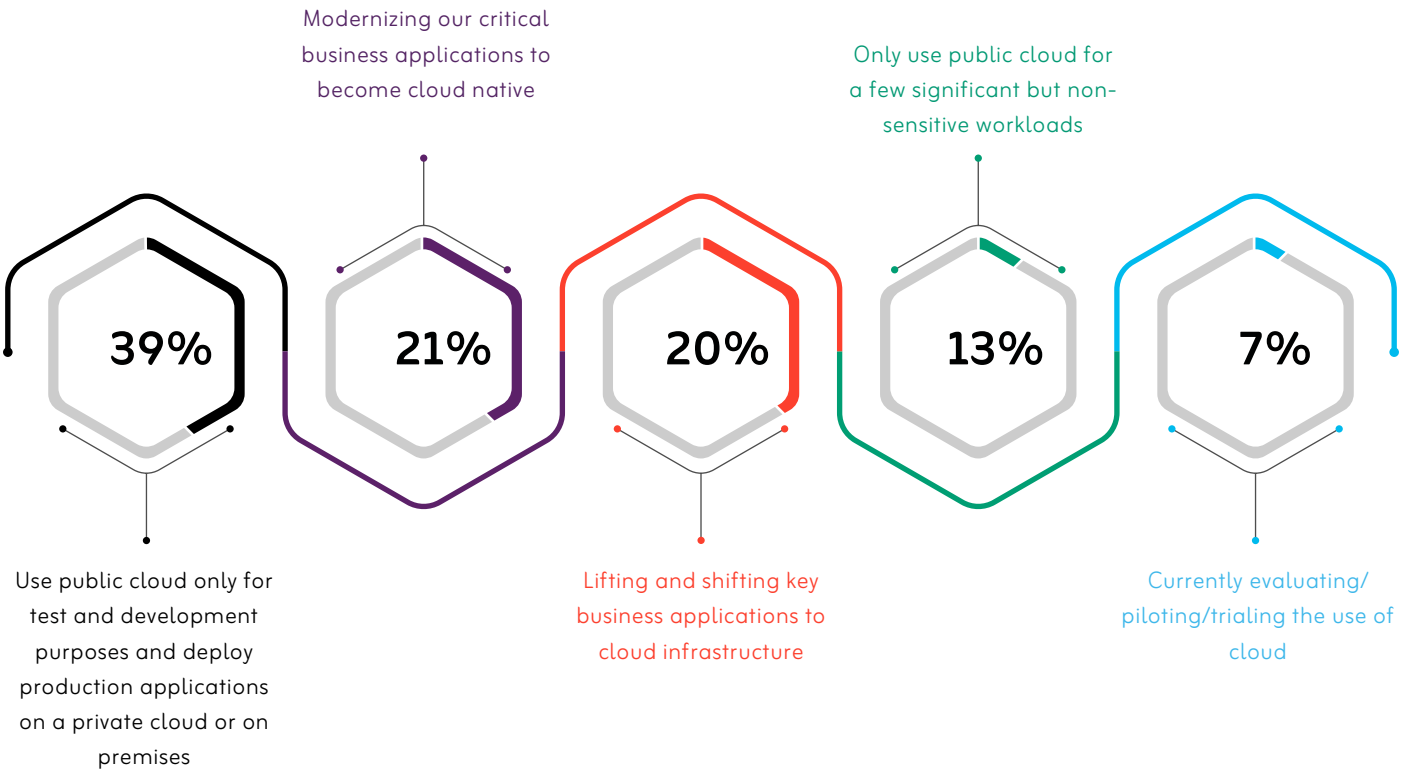
While cloud adoption in the Middle East is on the rise, organizations must navigate through the operational challenges to fully leverage the benefits of cloud. They must continuously track ROI as they progress through their cloud journeys and select the right partner to support them through the transition.

OVERVIEW OF THE CLOUD LANDSCAPE IN THE MIDDLE EAST

In the four years since the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic, there has been a notable surge in cloud adoption in the Middle East. On one hand, governments are adopting cloud technologies to drive their ambitious national visions; on the other hand, organizations are creating innovation agendas to contribute to those national visions. With an increasing number of organizations acknowledging the agility, scalability, and potential cost efficiencies offered by cloud solutions, adoption rates have soared across industries. Government initiatives in nations like the UAE and Saudi Arabia have actively promoted digital transformation, contributing to infrastructure investments and supportive policies for cloud migration.

Per an IDC cloud survey conducted in 2023, half of end-user organizations in the Middle East are either modernizing critical business applications to become cloud native or lifting and shifting key business applications to cloud infrastructure (as seen in Figure 1). Almost 40% of organizations only use public cloud platforms for test and development purposes (as they use private clouds to deploy production applications). These organizations prefer private clouds for their core business applications and critical workloads. In future, private clouds may remain these organizations' first choice due to privacy and regulatory requirements (per another IDC cloud survey published in January 2024).

Figure 1: Cloud Usage in the Middle East



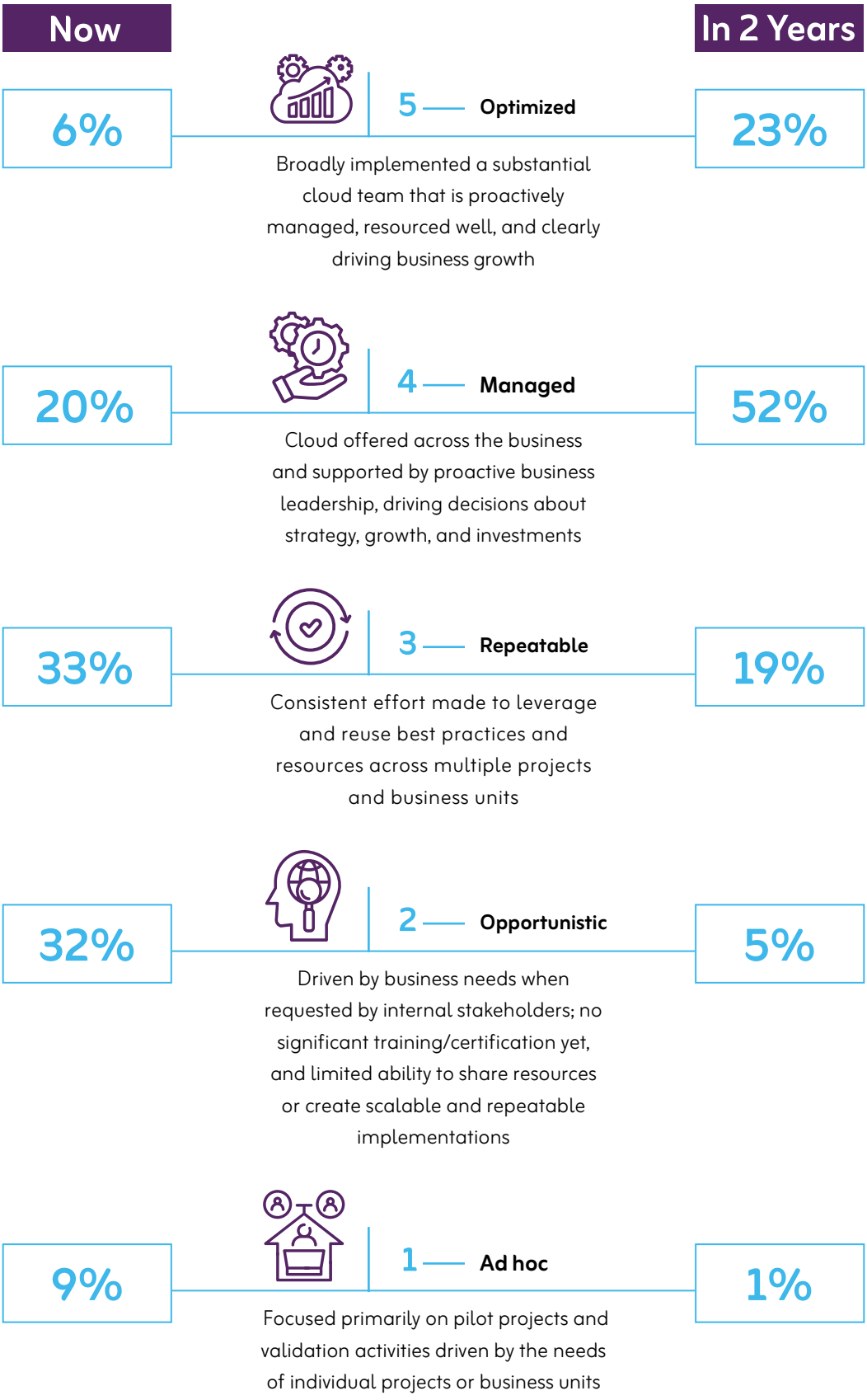
Source: IDC Cloud Survey 2023. N=367. Size: 100+ employees only

Most organizations that IDC studied mentioned plans to move their workloads from on-premises environments to cloud platforms. They prefer a combination of public or private clouds depending on the merit of a workload. Sometimes, private clouds are considered due to their performance, fixed costs, low latencies, strong data security, and compliance with data residency requirements. Conversely, organizations may opt for public clouds when migrating on-premises workloads due to their low costs, elasticity, and new and exclusive features. Approximately 50% of organizations surveyed by IDC prefer spending their IT budgets on multicloud services (i.e., combinations of various public clouds). In effect, these organizations are comfortable with the existence of hybrid/multicloud ecosystems within their IT estates. They can deploy workloads based on their techno-commercial fitment, allocate resources efficiently, and choose the most cost-effective cloud services.

of organizations in the Middle East region spend all their IT budgets on hybrid clouds, reveals an IDC survey.

Per the 2024 IDC cloud survey, cloud maturity in the Midde East has evolved from ad hoc, opportunistic, and repeatable to managed and optimized over the years. As shown in Figure 2, 52% of cloud services will be managed over the next two years, while 23% will be optimized. To keep up with the needs of today's digital business programs, enterprises need to revisit their multicloud management strategies and mature from the 'ad hoc' stage to the most ideal 'optimized' stage. While there is no single approach to this transition, they can take a series or measured steps toward cloud adoption and achieve operational excellence using intelligent cloud operations (CloudOps).

Figure 2: Cloud Maturity



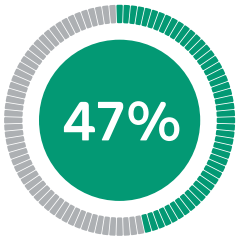
Source: IDC Cloud Survey 2024. N=525. Middle East Region, Size: 100+ employees only

Navigating the Cloud Journey to Maximize the Value of IT Investments

Organizations of various sizes have been actively integrating digital strategies into their operations, aligning themselves with innovation agendas to stay competitive and future ready. **This concerted effort toward digital transformation reflects a broader recognition of the transformative power of technology.** It signifies a fundamental change in how businesses are leveraging technology these days. Cloud is not just as an enabler but a strategic lever for sustained growth and resilience in an increasingly digital landscape.

More than half of the organizations interviewed in the IDC cloud survey indicated that they had lowered costs by leveraging cloud. The organizations also highlighted improved employee productivity and more efficient or optimized operations following the use of cloud.

of organizations in the Middle East region achieved cost reductions from cloud use.



of organizations had improved employee productivity, satisfaction, and retention, raeveals IDC's survey

Given the above survey results, organizations in the Middle East should use the prospect of sustained cost optimization to convince business leaders to continue the cloud journey and move more business-critical workloads to the cloud. Secondly, all organizations should embrace modernized cloud-native applications to maintain a competitive edge. Indeed, enterprises are shifting from workload migration to workload modernization on the cloud. Cloud-native technologies, such as containers, microservices, and low-code/ -code development platforms, are sought to support digital transformation initiatives across the region. Organizations in the region seem to be striking a balance between the need for customization and the risks associated with vendor lock-in when selecting a cloud provider for application migration and modernization. The survey results show that 62% of organizations in the Middle East want to modernize sales and marketing applications ahead of any other applications. These organizations intend to rehost such applications from on-premises environments to public cloud infrastructure as part of the migration process.

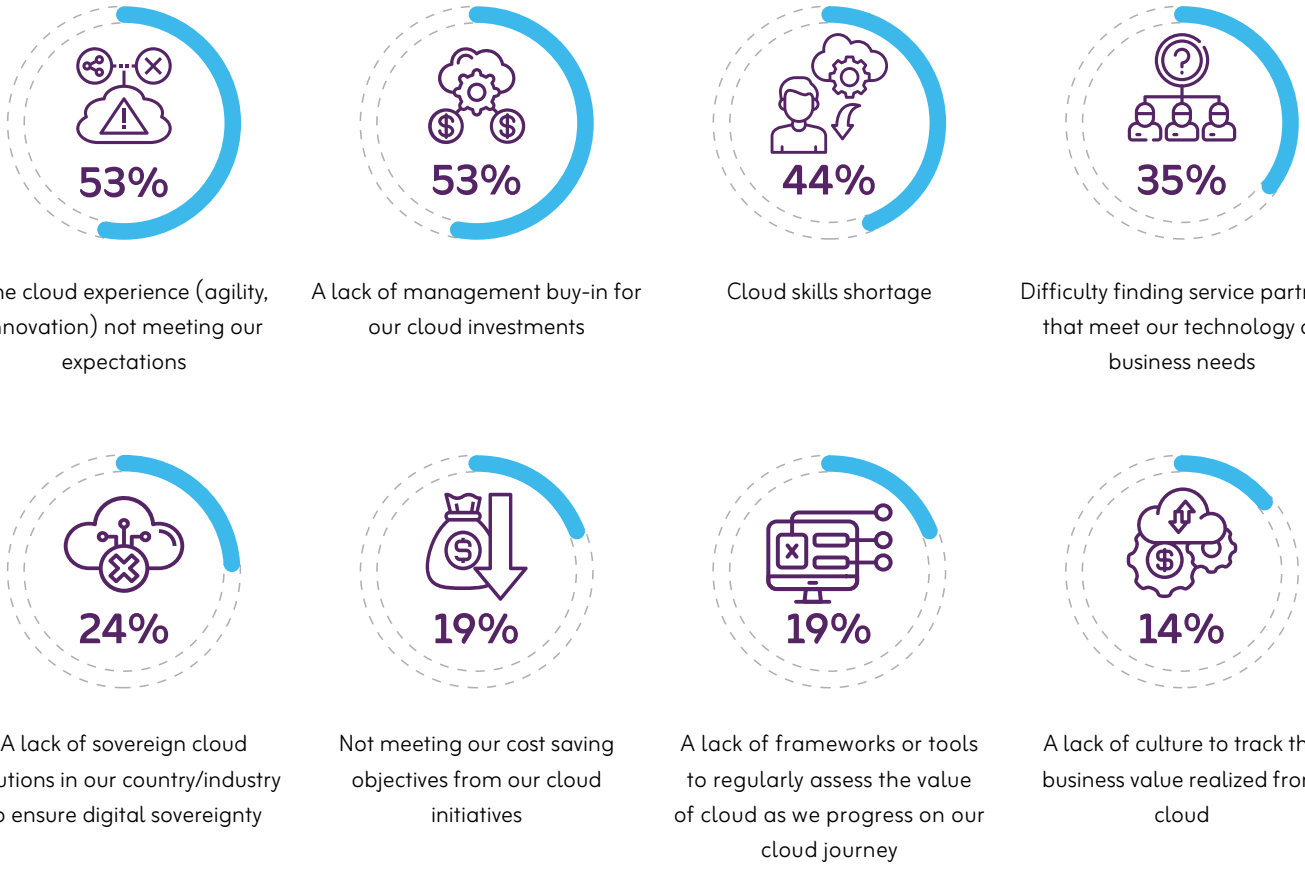
UNLOCKING CLOUD POTENTIAL: OVERCOMING BARRIERS TO ACHIEVE BUSINESS GROWTH

Despite the proven cloud adoption trend, most organizations in the Middle East are classified as low or moderate adopters due to persistent post-adoption challenges. Security concerns top these challenges, especially in industries like finance, defense, and government where stringent data regulations require meticulous compliance. Integrating existing legacy systems with cloud without disruption poses another substantial challenge, alongside the ongoing struggle to bridge skill gaps in managing and optimizing cloud technologies.

Many organizations are proactively addressing these issues through strategic planning, proactive workforce development initiatives, close collaboration with cloud service providers, and alignment of technology strategies with overarching business goals. **Most organizations build datacenters rather than optimize their workloads before moving to cloud.**

Figure 3: What prevents organizations from realizing the full value of cloud

Q. What prevents your organization from realizing the full value of cloud?



Source: IDC Cloud Survey 2024. N=355. Size: 100+ employees only

As the above chart illustrates, more than half of CIOs reported that the cloud experience (in terms of agility and innovation) does not meet their expectations and hinders their organizations from realizing the full value of cloud computing.

Data privacy and sovereignty is a challenge:

Most organizations that IDC studied have distinct challenges. For example, organizations across regulated industries are often at odds with regulators regarding the perception of data privacy and data sovereignty. Complex regulatory frameworks and nuanced geopolitical landscapes also contribute to this concern and compel many organizations to take a cautious approach to cloud.

ROI visibility challenges creating a hinderance while adopting cloud:

The ROI from cloud adoption remains a contentious issue, hindering some organizations' willingness to fully embrace cloud technologies.

Lack of tech talent:

Another challenge that has a greater impact on countries' national visions and the digital transformation agendas of organizations is the limited availability of tech talent and talent mismatch. The Middle East region has an expanding tech ecosystem, yet the scarcity of skilled cloud professionals poses a significant hurdle to the seamless adoption of cloud technologies. The limited availability of new-age tech talent that is skilled in leveraging AI-enabled, cloud-based technologies is creating labor competition among countries and organizations in the Middle East region. The talent mismatch — which is the presence of employees with outdated skills and the absence of staff with modern skill sets — also complicates cloud adoption initiatives.

Organizations with operations across multiple geographies face unique hurdles vis-à-vis data residency requirements and often need tailored solutions that balance compliance with the advantages of cloud technology. To reinforce trust and compliance and create a more robust cloud ecosystem in the Middle East, these organizations are forming strategic partnerships with cloud providers and supporting the creation of localized datacenters.

The Middle East region is struggling with a skills mismatch.

Tech talent skilled on newer technologies is in short supply, whereas existing technical resources have skills that are either obsolete or getting obsolete.

Organizations are also opting for managed cloud services in light of the existing cloud talent shortages. With managed cloud, organizations have a specialized and expert approach to handling complex cloud infrastructure. Third-party expertise ensures the efficient deployment, configuration, and ongoing management of cloud platforms, allowing organizations to focus on their core competencies. With dedicated teams monitoring and managing the infrastructure, organizations can benefit from higher availability, reduced downtime, and optimal performance of their cloud environments. The rapid pace of technological advancements is another motivator. Managed cloud service providers stay abreast of the latest technologies and updates, ensuring that organizations leveraging their services can take advantage of the most innovative solutions without having to manage these intricacies themselves.

Per the 2024 IDC cloud survey, the top two challenges that organizations will face with managed cloud services over the next 12 months are security regulatory risks (46%) and excessive costs (41%). Below, the key challenges are explored in a little more depth:

Non-availability of cloud talent and resources to manage cloud:

Organizations face heightened difficulties in recruiting and retaining experienced cloud specialists, leading to increased wage pressures and potential talent gaps. Per IDC's cloud survey published in January 2024, **79% of organizations struggle to attract and hire the talent needed to manage cloud.** In the absence of experienced personnel, organizations may struggle to define and enforce policies that ensure compliance, performance optimization, and efficient resource allocation.

Lack of modernization capabilities:

A lack of modernization capabilities can impede the transformation of legacy systems and applications. This limitation undermines the agility, and scalability promises of the cloud; it also hinders the realization of cost efficiencies and innovative capabilities. **Inadequate modernization capabilities, such as limited DevOps expertise or containerization strategies, can hinder the ability to optimize applications for cloud environments, reducing operational efficiency and scalability.**

Information security:

Organizations must navigate the intricacies of identity management, encryption, and access control to fortify data protection and mitigate the risk of unauthorized access. Organizations need to architect solutions that leverage the benefits of cloud scalability and adhere to stringent security standards. Striking the right balance between accessibility and security is essential. Per the IDC cloud survey published in January 2024, **security/ regulatory risks are the top concerns cited by 46% of organizations in the Middle East.**

Multicloud and cost management challenges:

Interoperability issues, diverse service models, and the distinct governance frameworks inherent in multicloud architecture demand a sophisticated approach to integration and orchestration, particularly as they affect the seamless operation of applications and data across different clouds. Moreover, the orchestration of workloads and data across multiple cloud providers introduces complexities in terms of data transfer costs, latency, and performance optimization. Per the IDC cloud survey published in January 2024, **42% of organizations seek a balance between customization and interoperability to avoid the risks associated with vendor lock-in.**

Lack of a systematic cloud partnership strategy:

Organizations must navigate the intricate landscape of partner ecosystems and evaluate providers based on their technological alignment, service offerings, and the ability to meet evolving business needs. Constructive collaboration is crucial for staying at the forefront of technological advancements, fostering innovation, and ensuring that the cloud adoption journey aligns with the strategic objectives of organizations. Per the IDC cloud survey published in January 2024:

organizations consider "ecosystem and partnership" as the most important factor when selecting a cloud platform for migrating and modernizing applications.

– IDC Cloud Survey, Middle East, January 2024.

MAXIMIZING CLOUD ROI: TRANSFORMING IT INVESTMENTS INTO TANGIBLE VALUE

Organizations primarily adopt cloud due to the multifaceted value proposition it offers across several strategic objectives. The cloud business case in terms of value/ROI encompasses avoiding costs, driving growth, mitigating security or data privacy risks, and driving a corporate agenda (like sustainability or diversity). Investing in the cloud is not just about investing in technology; it is also about investing in a foundational ecosystem that will reap value-driven benefits as highlighted below:

- **Assessing and avoiding unnecessary cloud cost** is critical for organizations to continue their cloud journeys. One of the recommendations is to shift from up-front, big bang approaches to shorter, smaller steps or agile models. A razor-sharp focus on identifying and eliminating avoidable expenses systematically is needed. This must be done regularly across infrastructure, software products, services, tools, connectors, application programming interfaces, and the various other components that are needed to run a business efficiently.

- **Agility** can be achieved with cloud as it enables IT elasticity and scalability, supports the rapid deployment of resources, fosters innovation, and reduces the time to market for products and services. Altogether, cloud helps organizations meet or exceed their clients' needs and build competitive barriers. IDC's survey of organizations conducted in January 2024 reveals that more than 35% organizations in the Middle East, Türkiye, and Africa region consider cloud to achieve organizational agility.

- Cloud technologies offer advanced data platform capabilities, such as centralized data storage, integrated analytics tools, and governance frameworks, ensuring clean, usable data that drives **insight-based decision-making** and operational excellence.

- Additionally, cloud offers enhanced **resiliency** through robust disaster recovery mechanisms, ensuring business continuity even in unforeseen circumstances.

- **Security**, while initially a concern, is also a pillar of cloud value, with reputable providers offering advanced security measures that often surpass what many organizations can achieve on their own. IDC's research reveals that most global and local cloud providers in the Middle East region ensure secure deployment of cloud services for their customers.

By embracing cloud technologies, organizations across the Middle East are breaking geographical barriers and facilitating collaboration between entities in different countries within the region. This interconnectedness allows for the sharing of resources, data, and expertise, promoting joint innovation initiatives and knowledge exchange. Additionally, cloud-based platforms enable easier access to specialized tools and services, fostering a collaborative ecosystem that encourages cross-industry partnerships and accelerates innovation. This collaborative approach not only enhances regional competitiveness but also propels the Middle East toward becoming a hub for technological advancements and groundbreaking initiatives that benefit the entire region's socioeconomic landscape.

If late cloud adopters in the Middle East are to convert themselves into industry leaders, their strategies must focus on targeted resource allocation, scalable solutions, and time value for competitive advantage.

Resource Allocation

The first step is to invest in human capital and technology. Late adopters often face a skills gap which can be addressed through targeted training programs and strategic partnerships with cloud service providers. This ensures that organizations have the expertise needed to manage and optimize cloud environments. Financial resources should also be allocated wisely, prioritizing cloud solutions that offer the best ROI while minimizing initial costs.

Scalability

Cloud solutions must be presented as scalable platforms that can grow with the business. For late adopters, this means starting with smaller, manageable projects that demonstrate the benefits of cloud technology. As these projects succeed, organizations can incrementally scale cloud infrastructure, reducing the risk associated with large, upfront investments in technology. This gradual approach allows late adopters to see immediate benefits while planning for long-term growth.

Time Value

Leveraging the time value of cloud adoption is crucial in the Middle East's fast-paced economic environment. Late adopters need to recognize that the quicker they transition to the cloud, the sooner they can reap the benefits of enhanced operational efficiency, agility, and innovation. By adopting a phased approach, late adopters can quickly deploy cloud solutions in critical areas of their business, gaining a competitive edge and positioning themselves as leaders in their industry.

Dynamic cloud adopters typically reap more benefits compared to standardized cloud adopters due to the depth and scale of their cloud adoption and their seamless integration of various business applications. These organizations, which often have superior agility and scalability, leverage a wide array of cloud services to swiftly adapt to market changes and rapidly scale resources as needed. The depth of their cloud integration allows for more sophisticated data analytics and insights, facilitating informed decision-making.

> There is a positive correlation between cloud adoption and success of the digital transformation goals.
>
> – IDC Cloud Survey, Middle East, January 2024.

Standardized cloud adopters, while not harnessing the full depth and breadth of cloud services, still gain notable advantages from their partial adoption of cloud technologies. These organizations often experience some level of improved flexibility and accessibility, allowing basic scalability and remote access to certain services. Although their cloud usage might be limited, they benefit from reduced upfront costs and some level of operational agility, enabling quicker adjustments to changing business needs. However, they may miss the full spectrum of cloud advantages as they do not look at cloud as the strategic core of their digital strategies. They may partially tap into the advanced analytics capabilities or the comprehensive scalability and robust disaster recovery options that cloud offers. Their reliance on a limited scope of cloud services may result in less-to-moderate realization of business benefits (such as moderately optimized cost savings and acceptable scalability) compared to dynamic cloud adopters.

ABOUT ZAINTECH

IDC had the opportunity to study ZainTECH's approach to offering cloud solutions to organizations in the Middle East. ZainTECH is the ICT services provider arm of the Kuwait-based telecom operator Zain Group. It provides cloud solutions while also covering areas such as cybersecurity, Big Data, Internet of Things (IoT), AI, smart urban initiatives, robotics, drones, and edge technologies. ZainTECH leverages Zain Group's regional presence and infrastructure deployed across its various ventures in Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, UAE, Bahrain, Jordan, and Iraq to serve customers. IDC was informed about how ZainTECH's solutions help customers realize the value of their IT investments in terms of cost, revenue growth, governance, risk mitigation, and adherence to sustainability goals.

Overview of ZainTECH's Services and Solutions

ZainTECH offers a wide range of Cloud Services from IaaS to elastic compute for various workloads. Under storage, the vendor (ZainTECH) provides object, block, and file storage options. These are complemented with solutions covering areas such as disaster recovery as a service (DRaaS), backup as a service (BaaS), private and hybrid cloud offerings, cloud-based security services, and multicloud management services. The company claims to have capabilities across the cloud value chain (cloud strategy, migration, managed services, multi-cloud and managed security services, app modernization and transformation, multicloud and cost optimization management) and modern infrastructure services.

ZainTECH's approach toward cloud involves more than the lifting and shifting of on-premises datacenter workloads into cloud environments. For business workloads, the cloud team at ZainTECH has built capabilities across '6Rs' (Re-platform, Rearchitect, Replace, Retire, Rehost, and Refactor). ZainTECH's managed cloud services help customers free up technical talent for high-value activities.

Cloud Strategy and Future Plans

ZainTECH's cloud strategy is based on two principles — enhancing system strength and resilience and helping customers redeploy IT budgets toward driving innovation (instead of only keeping the bulbs on).
ZainTECH categorizes cloud customers as "Standardized, Rationalized, and Dynamic" based on their IT operations, ability to extract value from the cloud, and capacity to boost adoption maturity.

The **"Standardized"** stage:

- Almost 60% of ZainTECH's customers fall into this category. These customers rely on traditional IT practices, and their cloud usage is more about replacing on-premises hardware and utilizing productivity tools. Their focus is on optimization; as such, ZainTECH accelerates cloud adoption and transformative initiatives by leading with advisory services and positioning its engineering and cloud management capabilities.

The **"Rationalized"** stage:

- About 25% of customers fall into this category. While these customers have adopted cloud, their focus is on transformation. ZainTECH helps in the shift toward modernization, enabling cloud-native thinking.

At the **"Dynamic"** stage:

- About 15% of customers fall into this category. As very early adopters of cloud, they are now ready to integrate newer technologies like AI and machine learning into business processes. ZainTECH helps them accelerate digital transformative initiatives, integrate capabilities like IoT and digital twins, and deploy advanced data monetization strategies.

Standardized

60% OF CLOUD ADOPTERS

Teams

Focus on maintaining existing systems with an emphasis on stability and security.

Processes

Rely on traditional IT practices. lacking significantcloud integration. and security.

Technology

Limited cloud use to productivity tools and replacing on-premise hardware.

Total IT Spend **3.3%**

- Run the business — **75%**
- Grow the business — **25%**
- Transform the business — **0%**

Simplify and Optimize

- Migrate legacy workloadsto cloud
- Implement managed services
- Focus on IT infrastructure optimization
- Enhance cybersecurity posture

Rationalized

25% OF CLOUD ADOPTERS

Teams

Shift focus towards identifying cloud engineering opportunities and planning modernization.

Processes

Evaluate and plan for infrastructure as code and cloud-native applications.

Technology

Prepare for advanced cloud solutions, starting AI and analytics exploration.

Total IT Spend **3.3%**

- Run the business — **60%**
- Grow the business — **30%**
- Transform the business — **10%**

Modernize & Transform

- Adopt containers and microservices
- Begin application modernization to refactor or re-architect legacy apps
- Implement Infrastructure as Code (IaC)
- Start leveraging data analytics

Dynamic

15% OF CLOUD ADOPTERS

Teams

Engage in innovation, starting to integrate AI and ML into business processes.

Processes

Embed Agile/DevOps practices for optimized cloud-native development.

Technology

Adopt advanced technologies (IoT, digital twins, blockchain) for new business opportunities.

Total IT Spend **3.3%**

- Run the business — **50%**
- Grow the business — **20%**
- Transform the business — **30%**

Accelerate Towards Strategic Outcomes

- Drive innovation with AI and ML
- Accelerate digital transformation initiatives,
- integrating IoT, digital twins, and blockchain
- Deploy advanced data monetization strategies

Building Cloud Capabilities Inorganically

ZainTECH's key acquisitions include BIOS Middle East, Adfolks UAE, Citrus consulting, Specialized Technical Services (STS), and NXN. These acquisitions enhance ZainTECH's cloud-native engineering and AI capabilities and regional expertise, driving customer value and strengthening its market position.

BIOSME strengthens ZainTECH's position in cloud services across the Middle East region. BIOSME brings regional expertise and has strong capabilities in public, private, and hybrid clouds and DRaaS, BaaS, and IaaS.

Adfolks specializes in cloud-native engineering, app modernization, automation, and DevOps, thereby accelerating digital transformation.

Citrus consulting, a Redington subsidiary, is an AWS advanced consulting partner. This acquisition will support ZainTECH's clients with advisory, technology, and managed services.

STS, a system integrator in the Middle East, specializes in modernizing existing IT infrastructure. Acquiring STS will enable ZainTECH to expand its service offerings to enterprises and government entities, access top talent, foster innovation, and enhance its competitive position across the region.

Partnerships Drive Growth

ZainTECH has a partner network that includes global hyperscalers, infrastructure providers, resellers, and ISVs. The company actively seeks to widen its market reach by developing new business models and catering to industry-specific requirements through ISV partners. The company is dedicated to understanding the unique challenges faced by its clients in the Middle East and tailoring innovative solutions to meet their evolving needs.

ZainTECH is committed to providing end-to-end cloud solutions ranging from consulting and deployment to managed services and security. The company offers flexible pricing, outcome-driven engagements, 24/7 support, and a regional cyberfusion center to ensure top-tier security.

A few of ZainTECH's recent partnerships are highlighted below:

- ZainTECH announced a partnership with CoreStack during March 2024 that focuses on accelerating cloud adoption across the Middle East region. This partnership aims to provide next-gen multi-cloud governance, FinOps, and cost management solutions.
- ZainTECH is now Microsoft Azure Expert Managed Service Provider and has also solidified partnerships with AWS and OCI for Cloud . ZainTECH Cloud solution is powered on VMWare, ZainTECH's attainment of these partnership status further solidifies its position as a trusted partner in the digital transformation journey of businesses across the Middle East. It also signifies its proficiency in managing and optimizing Azure services to provide clients with reliable, scalable, and secure cloud solutions.

Customer References:

1. ZainTECH's DRaaS offering ensures resilience and continuity for one of the largest holding companies in the Middle East and North Africa region with operations across 15 countries. The client required a reliable disaster recovery solution to maintain IT uptime for over 170 critical systems. ZainTECH implemented a tailored DRaaS solution with Microsoft, Zerto, and Veeam replication, monitored 24/7 from the Dubai NOC. This solution delivered a 100% reduction in total cost of operation over three years, RPO under 60 seconds, RTO under 20 minutes, and continuous compliance testing, ensuring operational security and minimal downtime.
2. A major economic authority in Dubai partnered with ZainTECH to enhance application and infrastructure support across multiple cloud platforms. ZainTECH implemented a comprehensive managed services approach, delivering 24/7 monitoring, DevSecOps management, and multi-platform integration. This approach streamlined operations, with a single point of support for applications and infrastructure, while providing proactive incident management. By optimizing the architecture for application workloads, ZainTECH's solution significantly improved operational efficiency, offering the client a trusted, responsive support system tailored for continuous improvement and stability.

CONCLUSION

Cloud adoption, especially the migration of business applications to cloud, can be a cultural shift that fundamentally changes how an organization functions. The traditional ecosystem of technology vendors and their system integration (SI) partners that fulfil the client's business needs has radically transformed into an ecosystem of proactive technology vendors and SI partners are not only fulfilling the stated needs but also advising and partnering with customers to achieve their business goals.

Here are a few points that organizations should remember before embarking on a cloud adoption journey:

Choose a Cloud Partner Wisely: Critically assess cloud providers and their partners in addition to the internal stakeholders before embarking on an enterprise-wide cloud journey. Explore various options and look for a provider that can help quantify cloud's business value. Prior to selection, organizations should study a cloud vendor's product/innovation road map, commitment to the Middle East region, target industries, and references and success stories.

Be Aware of the Pitfalls of an Incomplete Cloud Adoption Strategy: Quite often, a knee jerk or a tactical response to workload migration can create an isolated or a siloed cloud instance in an organization's IT landscape. It is difficult to create an enterprise-wide cloud adoption strategy since business departments might have legacy systems deployed on premises and be unwilling to adopt cloud due to fear of an unplanned downtime or loss of service to customers. Therefore, it is important to bring IT, business users, and support functions onto one page and plan thoroughly before starting a cloud journey.

Plan for an Enterprise-wide Transformation but Start Small: Quick wins will instill confidence in the skeptics of cloud adoption. Even if a project fails, the impact is limited to a specific workload and department. As such, have a structured approach to cloud adoption. Micro-planning is always of immense help when an organization adopts cloud for its business-critical workloads (such as enterprise resource planning, customer relationship management, and payment system workloads).

Calculate ROI: Study the total ownership cost for most workloads for at least three years. Assume steady increases in the consumption of cloud services and prepare a commercial working model. A detailed techno-commercial assessment and ROI calculation can help an organization shortlist a partner and prepare teams before starting the cloud journey.

Thoroughly Evaluate the Cloud Partner Ecosystem: Cloud adoption essentially involves working with a cloud technology vendor (such as a hyperscaler or a SaaS, PaaS, and IaaS vendor and its partner). Selection of a cloud vendor that has an ecosystem of strong implementation partners can have a long-lasting impact and contribute to organizational goals and strategies. In addition to techno-commercial assessment of cloud vendors, look at the partner ecosystem. A comprehensive partner ecosystem speaks volumes about a vendor's client and partner relationships. Client references and testimonials also speak volumes about a vendor's commitment once a contract has been awarded. Additionally, reusable components and industry-specific frameworks created by a service provider can accelerate the deployment time, reduce cost, and provide the organization with industry best practices. As such, work with a partner that helps its customers with micro-level planning and execution. A cloud implementation partner that has partnerships with multiple technology vendors can help the cloud buyer avoid vendor lock-in. Partners that have a structured methodology for multicloud management can help customers with systematic cost control and ROI realization.

In summation, cloud is not just another deployment option; rather, it is an opportunity to transform business and build a resilient, crisis-proof organization.

ABOUT IDC

International Data Corporation (IDC) is the premier global provider of market intelligence, advisory services, and events for the information technology, telecommunications, and consumer technology markets. IDC helps IT professionals, business executives, and the investment community make fact-based decisions on technology purchases and business strategy. More than 1,100 IDC analysts provide global, regional, and local expertise on technology and industry opportunities and trends in over 110 countries worldwide. For 50 years, IDC has provided strategic insights to help our clients achieve their key business objectives. IDC is a subsidiary of IDG, the world's leading technology media, research, and events company.

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