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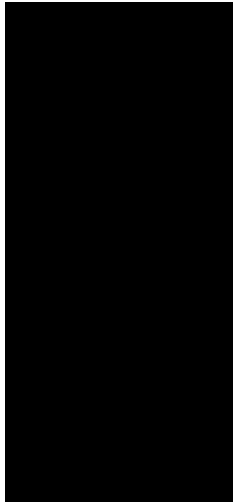
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Cloud Computing Interest Outweighs Activity

By [Andrew R Hickey](#), ChannelWeb

1:08 PM EST Tue. Jan. 12, 2010

While cloud computing is still in the hype stage, IT executives consider it an increasing priority for this year, according to Symantec (NSDQ:[SYMC](#))'s recently released [2010 State of the Data Center](#) survey. But despite the growing interest, cloud computing deployments and activity remain relatively low, the survey revealed.

The [Symantec survey](#), which was conducted by research company Applied Research and included responses of 1,780 businesses worldwide with 1,000 or more employees, found that more than 50 percent of enterprises consider cloud computing in some form as an important priority in 2010.

More precisely, 57 percent of companies surveyed said private cloud computing is either somewhat or absolutely important; 54 percent said hybrid cloud computing is somewhat or absolutely important; and 53 percent said public cloud computing is somewhat or absolutely important.

Meanwhile, only 15 percent said private cloud computing was absolutely or somewhat unimportant; 16 percent said hybrid cloud computing was absolutely or somewhat unimportant; and 17 percent said public cloud computing was absolutely or somewhat unimportant. In addition, 41 percent of businesses surveyed said cloud computing is an area where their [disaster recovery](#) plans need the most improvement.

And while interest in cloud computing is increasing, only about 20 percent of companies queried said they used some form of cloud computing as a cost-containment strategy in 2009. According to the survey, 24 percent of companies used private cloud computing last year to cut or tighten costs, while 22 percent used hybrid cloud computing and 20 percent used public cloud computing. The Symantec survey did not collect data concerning cloud computing as a cost-containment strategy in its 2008 State of the [Data Center](#) survey.

The survey results jibe with what solution providers are seeing in the market. Currently, interest in cloud computing is growing, but execution and adoption is relatively slow.

According to James Damoulakis, CTO of GlassHouse Technologies, a Framingham, Mass.-based solution provider specializing in data center consulting and services, the main priority for most companies in 2010 is to reduce costs in the data center, an area where cloud computing can help.

"The financial side of the picture is still huge," he said. "If the cloud becomes the way to do that, organizations will embrace the cloud."

Overall, Damoulakis said, companies' interest in the cloud is going to vary. While 2010 will continue to fuel the hype, it will also be the year when a lot of organizations realize the true value of the cloud and start moving applications there when it makes sense.

Damoulakis said GlassHouse has a lot of conversations with customers around cloud computing, but as yet it's still a relatively small part of GlassHouse's overall business. He expects, however, activity to increase as the year goes on.

"To me, the real issue is dissatisfaction with IT being business as usual," he said. "That's what's driving interest in

the cloud. The current approach can't be sustained into the future and has to change. I think 2010 will be a significant year moving forward."

Chris Pyle, president and CEO of Champion Solutions Group in Boca Raton, Fla., agreed.

"Our client base has been asking us 'What is this all about?'" he said. "I certainly don't think it's going to happen overnight; we're not going to just flick a switch and move everything to the cloud. This is not a revolution, it's an evolution, and it's something the channel has to pay attention to."

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