Cumulus Maximus

Oracle offers agencies next-generation approach to cloud

Millions of motorists, bicyclists and pedestrians rely on smart phone-enabled navigation apps to simplify travel. In most cases, a single app gets them where they want to go.

By comparison, the journey to federal IT modernization has been like an expedition equipped with a dizzying array of platforms, applications, mobile devices, data solutions and clouds of every type – amazing services and technical gadgetry. Yet, in many, if not most cases, those products aren't well-integrated; they don't work well together. Consequently, the road to modernization has been bumpy, fragmented and poorly marked.

Oracle, with 40 years experience supporting the public sector, is vying to be a unifying force in federal IT modernization.

Oracle Cloud Infrastructure is a

Generation 2 enterprise cloud that integrates platform-, infrastructure-, database- and software-as-a-service on a single platform. This powerful solution delivers compute power, networking performance and a comprehensive portfolio of infrastructure and platform cloud services. Built to meet the needs of mission-critical applications, Oracle Cloud essentially "defrags" the splintered federal IT services sector. By supporting existing workloads while delivering modern cloud development tools, enterprises can bring forward proven IT solutions.

Oracle envisions its multi-cloud service as the next leg on a journey it started in the late 1970s: solving business challenges that allow organizations in the public and private sector to more easily achieve critical missions.

"We like to think of the Oracle Cloud environment as an extension

of the Oracle ecosystem that solves business challenges for our customers," says Tony Cossa, former CTO for USDA, now director of product management, Oracle Cloud Infrastructure.

Easy, simple, fast and secure

In addition to advancing interoperability on the road to IT modernization, OCI was designed to have broad attributes that would appeal to federal agencies including scalability, flexibility, efficiency and ease of use.

At a time when concerns over privacy and data integrity continue to grow, OCI is "delivering the next generation of cybersecurity," says Ken Ritchhart, program lead, federal business development, Oracle.

OCI has recently completed a raft of security certifications (including FedRAMP, DoD IL2 and IL5 PATO)

PRODUCED BY: **FCW**   SPONSORED BY: ORACLE PartnerNetwork   **Affigent** AN AKIMA COMPANY   **BIAS**   **DLT**   DYNAMIC SYSTEMS INC.   MYTHICS

needed to implement the OCI solution at federal agencies, as well as state and local government organizations. The U.S. Air Force was the sponsoring agency for OCI's authority to operate application.

"Advanced security and compliance features, including a comprehensive approach at a granular level, allows civilian and defense agencies to manage their cloud environments based on their internal principles of security," Cossa says, adding that Oracle provides capabilities for customers to configure security based on risk tolerance.

Decades of experience have taught Oracle that technology is only as good as its interface with users. Heeding that truism, Oracle created in OCI the most user-friendly product it has ever developed. OCI's user experience is "easy, simple, fast and secure," making it easier for workers to focus on their agencies' missions, notes Ritchhart.

Oracle Fusion Cloud (SaaS) also has received DoD, IL4, PATO, for defense department agencies.

Return on investment

The total cost of implementing and running OCI compares favorably to other options, Oracle says. Creating a database with backup capabilities could take a day using traditional methods. With database-as-a-service, you can complete the task, including multiple add-on features, in 20 minutes.

"The key thing for agencies is the high return on investment in terms of minimizing the amount of labor required," Ritchhart says.

There is also the high cost of

downtime – higher for defense agencies in the field. "The military is in the position of operating in austere areas where unexpected events can take away part of your network," Ritchhart says. "We provide capabilities so you can operate even if the network is down."

OCI is a game changer, in part, because it closes functional gaps between legacy and cloud, between on-prem and off and between data originating in various systems developed by disparate vendors, the company says. "Customers can leverage OCI as part of their cloud strategy to support disaster recovery for on-prem solutions, Dev/Test and production workloads," Cossa says.

"Oracle provides the most complete cloud capabilities to support the various mission functions critical to our customers."

Platform stability

In the federal sector, platform stability is a key differentiator because most government agencies can't afford to be down for any length of time without compromising mission integrity, Cossa says.

In addition to platform stability, Oracle's long-term relationship with government agencies means that the company is in tune with government culture and has "familiarity with the mission and the capabilities required to make agencies successful," says Ritchhart, who worked in the federal government for 45 years before moving to the private sector. "We clearly have the breadth of mission understanding that is tied into the products and the support that we

provide customers. Folks count on Oracle to always be there. That means a lot to government agencies."

As data moves from the periphery of the enterprise to the core function of networks and agencies' missions, Oracle's expertise positions it to lead the transition. Data is in its DNA, Ritchhart says. "Oracle is better suited than anybody in terms of bringing together all those different stove pipes, integrating those things together and then being able to create the analytics that go with using new tools," he says.

The ability to integrate capabilities and data into an enterprise is a powerful tool. Its developers hold that OCI will make it "extremely simple" for users to "take advantage of the wealth of data they have."

Leveraging the Oracle Cloud solutions will enable customers to integrate customer and mission capabilities while positioning them to gain extensive visibility into data that will allow them to visualize information to build inputs into decisions and trends while innovating their services. And by automating as many functions as possible, government can reduce the cost of overhead, maintenance and manpower.

The upshot?

"Focus more on mission, less on the technology," Cossa says.