Top 10 criteria for selecting a managed services provider

How cloud and managed services help IT deliver business value

IBM

Contents

Overview

With 24x7 access to devices, information and choices, consumers have become increasingly empowered in today's digital world. Organizations in turn are initiating their own digital transformations to create new business models that align with growing consumer expectations.

To accelerate their digital transformation, many companies are adopting new technology like cloud, mobile and analytics. Adopting these technologies is resulting in a diverse and complex hybrid IT environment unlike anything we have seen, spanning multiple delivery models, vendors, processes and data. Managing such a complex environment can be challenging, particularly as companies continue to face flat or shrinking IT budgets. Combined with inflexible IT systems and rising management costs, many organizations are simply unable to deliver on the digital transformation agendas that their businesses require.

As a result, organizations of all sizes are examining their strategies to see whether the IT services they design and deliver in-house can be more valuable, efficient and effective when provided by a managed services vendor. In fact, 70 percent of CIOs who are focused on growth plan to partner extensively for new skills and expertise rather than doing everything in-house.

Managed services span a range of capabilities, creating options for IT organizations looking to benefit from externally provided services that allow them to focus on more business-critical issues and strategic functions and activities. Cloud solutions increase this range of choices, providing greater potential than ever for IT organizations to transform.

Taking the right steps now to use managed services and cloud can enable organizations to gain significant business and IT agility and add greater value. This paper examines the range of managed and cloud services available in the market today, establishes the most important qualifications to consider in choosing a managed services provider and outlines a strategic approach to making services sourcing decisions.

Focusing on core competencies

Industry: Engineering and construction

Company profile: A global leader in engineering, procurement, construction, maintenance and project management; active across six continents.

Size: 43,000 employees

A long-standing managed services client, the company challenged IBM when it came time to renew its contract for global IT support. The company wanted enhanced services plus a hardware refresh option — at the same price as the original contract.

By centralizing support and management services and increasing productivity with new tools, IBM met the company's pricing targets. In addition to onsite and remote management services for infrastructure at locations worldwide, the new agreement included server optimization, an enterprisewide technology upgrade and hardware lifecycle management.

With IBM providing performance management and supporting the entire multivendor IT environment, the company can focus on its core competencies and support business growth with optimized performance of its mission-critical infrastructure.

Making the case for managed services

By conventional definition, managed services comprise the remote monitoring and management of a client's selected hardware, software or networks, which can be located on premises or hosted in a third-party data center. The services typically include alerts, operating system patch management, problem resolution and proactive problem prevention. The managed services provider assumes responsibility for helping prevent downtime and improve IT performance, as measured by service level agreements (SLAs).

IBM has a broader view, extending the concept of managed services beyond traditional application and infrastructure management to include cloud (both public and private), networks, storage, desktop and communications — as well as managed services for security, data backup and recovery, disaster recovery, mobility, help desk and technical support. These are the core components of IT operations.

All are essential and consume significant resources — a significant percentage of IT budgets go to maintaining infrastructure and the status quo — yet they are nondifferentiating when it comes to business value.Further, the underlying technology for delivering and managing each one continues to evolve. Adopting and making the best use of technology innovation to provide continuous improvement and cost reduction over time requires constant development or acquisition of advanced skills.

Staying up to date on technology and gaining ready access to necessary or scarce skills by using managed services from an experienced provider can meet your IT needs. Managed services are often seen as most fitting for small and midsize businesses that have small IT departments and limited resources. Yet large enterprises are just as likely to use managed services to address specific issues within their IT areas or to offload management of nondifferentiating IT services and free in-house staff to focus on core business and pursue innovation.

Why companies adopt managed services

Large or small, companies look to trusted managed services providers to address a range of issues around cost, complexity, service quality and risk. Meeting user demands, reducing risk and controlling costs while taking advantage of technology innovations require extensive skill and understanding. Change must be accomplished while keeping current operations up and running as efficiently as possible. Moreover, the rapid pace of innovation makes it increasingly difficult to evaluate new technologies and determine whether they will bring competitive advantages — or merely add complexity to your environment. Understanding how services providers deliver value around these priorities offers a platform for building a business case for managed services versus in-house IT.

Cost reduction Economies of scale and industrializing service delivery help managed services providers meet a lower cost point than most organizations can achieve in-house. In addition, many of a provider's costs — from infrastructure and overhead to technical staff — are shared across multiple customers. Typical cost savings that can be expected from IBM Managed Services are summarized in Table 1.

Capital expense reduction Enterprises are continually challenged with constrained capital expenses. Decisions about where to invest capital are difficult — and typically the choice is to focus capital investment on revenue-generating initiatives. Similar to the way many companies lease real estate rather than purchase, delivery models like cloud and managed services can free capital by shifting IT costs to operating expenses, where there is greater flexibility.

Increased efficiency A managed services provider can deliver new value in hybrid environments through brokerage, best practices, standardization, analytics and automation capabilities that can deliver higher efficiency and tighter IT controls. A managed services provider can deliver new value in multi-cloud environments by helping you plan, procure, govern and manage IT services across multiple cloud models and suppliers.

Access to skills The need to find, retain and build the skills you need to support your heterogeneous IT environment is relentless. Managed services can reduce skills-related risk, because the responsibility for attracting and retaining skilled individuals falls on the managed services provider. Providers are often in the best position to pool and use their resources among multiple customers, offering greater skill diversity than they might achieve for themselves at a lower cost point.

Better service levels and reduced risk Service quality is the ultimate value that a managed services provider can offer. Moreover, promises of service quality are backed by contractual SLAs. Services providers therefore have an incentive to cost-effectively develop the tools, processes and governance required to deliver reliable services. In addition,

they have experience that can rarely be matched in-house. Services providers typically see problems that internal IT staff may see only once or twice — and they know how to resolve them or, even better, to anticipate them and help prevent disruptions.

The fact is that for services providers, bigger is better. A larger services provider with years of experience can provide substantial benefits and working knowledge that you can take advantage of within your environment. The result is a more stable, dependable and protected IT environment that can meet users' service availability and performance expectations.

Improved security, business resilience and compliance management Reducing risks related to security, business continuity and compliance with associated regulations are critical IT areas that can be addressed effectively by managed services. Security in particular comprises a growing area for services providers and customers alike. Escalating threats and a complex technology landscape make it difficult for in-house IT organizations to keep up with changing requirements. In addition to up-to-date skills and security intelligence, services providers should have the ability and the technology to help reduce risks by automating a broad range of IT functions, from basic patch management to vulnerability scanning to data backup. Advanced analytics that detect patterns and raise alerts, combined with automated preemptive capabilities can help reduce the business impact from downtime.

A services provider can also bring time-tested processes, procedures and infrastructure resources to help clients recover critical systems and data within time frames specified by regulatory requirements — and test these procedures regularly to make sure they work. A managed services provider that can address all of these areas also helps organizations integrate these functions for a more holistic approach to IT risk management.

Access to technology innovation Managed services providers have the skills and resources to implement new technologies quicker, enabling clients to more readily exploit IT innovations such as cloud, analytics and mobility that can provide new business value. Further, demand for innovation fosters healthy competition among services providers, helping drive down costs and create a market environment focused on customer needs. What's more, a managed services provider assumes most of the risk of new technology innovation by taking on the investment in startup costs, training and implementation.

Flexibility and scalability to adapt to changing business conditions Services providers can scale the scope, size and range of managed services based on business needs. This allows companies to better align IT with operating requirements and speed time to market with faster provisioning of new resources.

Service area	Typical potential cost savings with IBM
Integrated managed infrastructure services (servers, storage, devices, middleware)	≥20% payback in 12–18 months
Managed network services	10–40% payback in the first year
Managed security services	Up to 55% payback in the first year
Managed backup and restore services	Up to 40% payback in 1–12 months
Managed resiliency services	Up to 25% reduction in recovery time and recovery point objectives
Managed virtualized desktop services	30–40% payback in 8–18 months
Managed help desk services	15–25% payback in 18–24 months
Managed hosting services	25–50% payback in the first year
Managed technical support services	Up to 40% reduction in support costs with payback in 6–12 months
Brokerage services	Up to 40% savings and reduced cycle time to help deliver IT solutions

Table 1: Managed services options that yield results and save money, based on IBM's experience with actual client engagements. (Individual client results vary.)

The 10 most important things to consider when selecting a managed services provider

The potential benefits of managed services can be achieved by selecting the right provider—one that can demonstrate the ability to provide skills, processes and resources that exceed your in-house capabilities. When you evaluate managed services providers, consider the following 10 criteria to help you make an informed decision.

1. **Deep skills and experience**

   Any managed services provider should, as a baseline, have skills that go beyond basic operating system maintenance and availability management. Ask about skill levels related to managing change, virtualization, high availability, middleware and databases, multiple network technologies, cross-platform integration, mobility, security and, of course, cloud technologies. Go beyond the basic questions about certifications and headcount. Ask about scalability and availability of staff with specialized skill sets, how specialists are organized and share knowledge, and how best practices are communicated. By the same token, a managed services provider should have deep expertise across all delivery models, including not only managed services and cloud but also traditional IT and strategic outsourcing. In this way the provider can help you achieve an integrated multisourcing strategy—in-house, managed services, outsourcing and cloud—structured to meet your needs.

2. **Proactive, technology-based approach**
   Find out whether the services provider has a "break/fix" mentality or a proactive approach that emphasizes problem prevention and continuous improvement. Look for a provider that goes beyond simple monitoring and device management; for example, employing sophisticated technologies like advanced analytics can drive incident prevention by analyzing failure patterns across platforms and processes, affording visibility into areas for customer and service provider improvement. The provider should employ sophisticated back-end technology like automation across all offered managed services. Look for technologies that provide such capabilities as sophisticated alert mechanisms, automated workload categorization and prioritization, incident escalation and remediation. Ask to what degree the services provider uses automation to reduce human intervention and improve quality and productivity.

3. **Alignment with industry best practices and ITIL standards**
   A key to achieving a more reliable, highly available IT infrastructure is to optimize IT management. A services provider should employ industry best practices in managing your IT resources — in particular, aligning with the ITIL approach to IT service management. ITIL best practices encompass problem, incident, event, change, configuration, inventory, capacity and performance management as well as reporting. Best practices for transitioning from in-house to the provider's management system are also a critical area to explore.

4. **Consistent processes, knowledge management and consolidated service visibility**
   Consistent service delivery is built on consistent processes that are clearly scripted and employ a repeatable methodology. Your services provider should be willing to share examples of policy and process documentation and explain how they are replicated across multiple delivery centers. Similarly, a services provider should have a knowledge management system that enables staff from any location to access historical problem and resolution information. Also important is the means by which the services provider gives you visibility into the health of your infrastructure and the performance of your managed services. Look for a security-rich, web-based portal that consolidates related services into a single dashboard with access to real-time service visibility, online tools for managing services and flexible reporting capabilities.

5. **Support for multivendor, multicloud environments and strong relationships**
   Today's IT infrastructures are typically heterogeneous, hybrid environments of traditional IT — composed of hardware, software and network products — and public and private clouds from a variety of vendors. A services provider should have at minimum proven experience working with multivendor, multicloud hybrid environments — and more important, have relationships with leading vendors to help ensure availability today and visibility into product evolution paths and emerging technologies. A truly vendor-neutral services provider should be able to play the role

of broker — helping you plan, buy, manage and operate across multiple cloud models and providers that provide the best fit for your business.

6. **Consistent global service delivery, with options for local resources**
   Choosing a managed services provider with global capabilities can position companies of all sizes for growth and expansion in today's economy. Global delivery capabilities offer many advantages, including rapid implementation in new locations, the ability to effectively manage customer projects that span operations in multiple countries, local-language support for branches or subsidiaries, and in-country location of resources and data to help address regulatory and legal requirements. As whether a services provider employs standard delivery processes across all locations and how multilocation teams are organized and communicate.

7. **Performance-based SLAs**
   A significant advantage of managed services is that responsibility for performance rests with the services provider. Focus on what the provider delivers rather than how the service is performed. This helps the provider innovate, improve service delivery and reduce costs for mutual benefit. In turn, the services provider should be willing to commit contractually to meeting your service-level requirements — and back up those commitments with financial penalties or other consequences if those SLAs are not met.

8. **Broad portfolio of managed services aligned to your business model**
   Because your business and IT needs are continually changing, you want the flexibility to add managed services without adding unnecessary cost and complexity to your sourcing strategy. Many organizations find that services fragmentation — using multiple managed services vendors — can become costly and complex. Although sourcing by process may seem optimal because it allows you to hire "best of breed" for a particular activity, it can perpetuate silos, hinder agility and make change more difficult. To preserve future flexibility, require that any prospective provider offer a thorough suite of managed services, from infrastructure management and managed security, resilience, mobility and other IT services to managed hosting and cloud. Also, look for a provider that offers flexibility in doing business with you, such as giving you the option to retain your current equipment and, where it makes sense, your current processes. Managed services can also offer a new financial approach to deploying IT capability. Your chief financial officer (CFO), for example, might want a managed services provider that can offer a pay-per-use option, allowing the enterprise to scale up or down to match business requirements.

9. **Technology foresight and a path to innovation**
   With strategic partnering becoming increasingly prevalent, it's important to consider the impact sourcing relationships can have — not only on business outcomes but also

on a company's core business model and corporate culture. If innovation and transformation are critical components of your business strategy, how can a prospective managed services provider contribute? Does it have proprietary insights or experiences that can shed light on future technological or market shifts? What competitive advantages could you gain from access to — or even better, collaboration with — the provider's research and development function? How can the provider's expertise, assets, reach and partner network help you develop new business models or expand into new markets?

10. **Financial stability and reputation**
    Whether you are considering a relatively short-term, introductory foray into managed services or looking for a long-term, strategic relationship, a prospective vendor's financial stability is crucial. Today, a services provider's length of time in the market is no longer a reliable predictor of future longevity. Research annual reports, financial statements and opinions offered by business and IT industry press and analysts. And ask potential providers to back up their claims with customer references and quantified success metrics.

How cloud is transforming managed services

With the prevalence of hybrid IT environments, cloud is the new normal and has become a foundation for managed services delivery. Whether it is a public infrastructure-as-a-service (IaaS) offering or managing a customer's internal private cloud environment, cloud computing services offer the same benefits of other managed services — but typically to a greater degree. This is particularly true of increased efficiency, greater flexibility and scalability, reduced cost and capital expenses, and access to the advanced skills that cloud requires. Cloud offers an important additional benefit: usage-based pay-as-you go pricing.

Many of these extended benefits derive from the characteristics that separate cloud computing from traditional IT environments — the combination of virtualization, standardization, automation and self-service. They also are essential to defining a cloud infrastructure service versus a managed infrastructure service. Although standardizing on fewer hardware and software configurations makes business sense in traditional environments, for cloudit is critical to promote increased virtualization, infrastructure simplification and inherently reduced costs. Automation in cloud computing can reduce human involvement and potential for error, speed deployment, reduce operating costs and better manage compliance. Self-service is a concept introduced with cloud that allows for more user control, choice and involvement in provisioning IT services while reducing costs, speeding deployment and helping improve user satisfaction.

Gearing up for business success with an IBM-managed private cloud

Industry: Automotive

Company profile: Global automobile manufacturer headquartered in Germany

Size: More than 65,000 employees worldwide

To better address increasing demands from employees, customers and suppliers, this automobile manufacturer needed to improve the availability and performance of its SAP systems — while making them much more scalable and flexible. The company decided to move its 100 separate SAP systems to a private cloud environment designed, built and managed by IBM. The IBM team successfully migrated all 100 systems to a new IBM-based hardware and software platform in six months, with no disruptions to business operations.

Since 2011, operating support of the private cloud environment has been handled by IBM Managed Services. With on-demand server capacity, the automaker can expand and shrink processing capacity as needed to respond to changing external demand. And with IBM managing the hardware, operating system and virtualization, the company can focus on managing its SAP systems and meeting business needs.

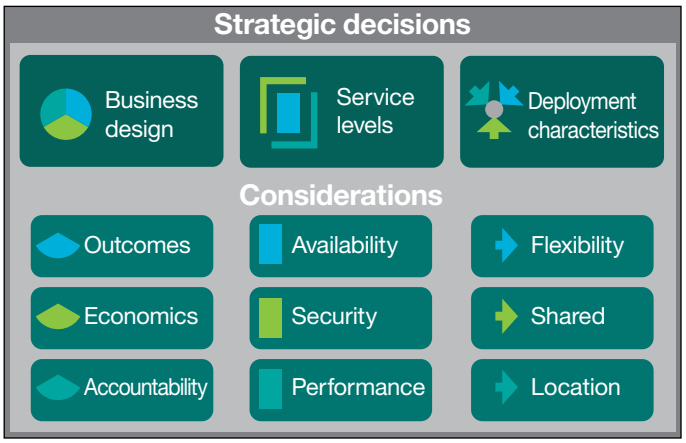

Figure 1: IBM's service delivery framework.

It is important to note that cloud as a delivery model is not an "all or nothing" choice. Instead, specific workloads can be moved to cloud based on a range of characteristics. With both public and private cloud options, clients can also have what is referred to as a hybrid environment. This approach provides an avenue for intercommunication and functioning between cloud and noncloud/traditional workloads as well as the ability to run workloads in either environment as priorities or computing needs change. Workloads like testing often fit nicely within a shared cloud model, while production services are often a better fit for private cloud or traditional IT options, usually based on privacy and security needs. Development workloads can be tailored to run in either option.

Making choices about delivery models

IBM has developed a framework designed to help clients choose the services and delivery models that are right for their individual IT organizations and enterprises. This framework is built around three critical decision points: business design, service levels and deployment characteristics (see Figure 1). IBM business and technology specialists work with you to understand your business requirements, service-level objectives and deployment choices, and match the right mix of delivery models to your business needs.

Business design

When looking at the business design, your focus needs to be on outcomes, accountability and economics. What level of control do you want, and who is responsible for what after the transition to managed services? Which pricing arrangement makes the most sense? Is your company moving away from fixed-cost expenses, and can you capitalize on a variable-expense model based on usage? Can you reduce capital expenses by taking advantage of the operating-expense model that managed services offers?

Service levels

To maintain service levels in a managed services environment, it is critical for both you and your services provider to have a clear picture about the performance metrics, security tools and policies and resiliency level your organization requires. Balancing your performance and service-level requirements with costs is an important exercise. Determining the right level of availability, security and resiliency of a particular service helps ensure that you are not paying a premium for a service level not required by your organization or conversely, allowing a crucial business process to be underprotected.

Deployment characteristics

Today your infrastructure can be dedicated, whether it resides in-house or is hosted by a services provider, or it can be part of a shared environment—which is often the most cost-effective choice. This evaluation starts with these key questions: Do you need a customized environment, or can you take advantage of the agility and scalability a standardized environment can provide? Where should your IT assets live? Who should own them?

IBM's proprietary service delivery framework is designed to guide clients step-by-step through the myriad considerations involved in transforming IT infrastructures, helping them determine the sourcing solution that best fits their needs.

Most likely the answers will differ depending on the infrastructure components and applications, services and business processes they support. For that reason, you want a managed services provider that can offer solutions that integrate multiple delivery models, including managing a traditional IT environment, shared private cloud services and shared public cloud services. With outsourced management of your IT infrastructure, some services—like tape backup and parts of the network—are shared, but other services are private. When a shared cloud is dedicated at the virtual machine level, you share some infrastructure but have dedicated virtual machines and storage services. In a public cloud service, you share all services with other users within the infrastructure.

Enhancing availability and user satisfaction

Industry: Energy and utilities
Company profile: Natural gas, energy and related energy services provider in Italy

This Italian energy company needed help implementing and managing a new IBM® System i® infrastructure. In addition to engaging IBM to install the computing system, the company selected IBM to provide numerous managed services on an ongoing basis, including monitoring, managed server support, reporting, customer care call management and managed security policy verification.

As a result of the managed services relationship with IBM, the company has realized higher systems availability and improved user satisfaction. In addition, the company has reduced risk by having the IBM team provide backup and restore services to protect critical data. Continuous support for the company's IT team allows in-house specialists to address and resolve issues quickly and efficiently.

Charting a path for managed services adoption

A strong managed services and cloud strategy means you can expect your new or existing managed services arrangements to grow along with your business and usage needs. You can start with a flexible labor arrangement, which takes advantage of the managed services provider's skilled resources. Often referred to as staff augmentation, this model brings the skills you need into your organization for special projects or to just provide the resources you need for day-to-day services.

The next level can be to adopt selected managed services for your infrastructure. This approach allows certain infrastructure functions, such as backup and recovery, server and storage management or security, to be managed by a provider while you retain other infrastructure responsibilities and manage your applications.

As you move along your strategic continuum, you can advance from having some services to all services provided by a managed services vendor. You can use your infrastructure and configure it as a traditional IT environment or as a private cloud, which provides more virtualization and standardization. You can also ask the services provider to manage everything, up to and including the facility itself. Or you can move your infrastructure to a hosted or shared environment that is owned and managed by the services provider.

Wherever you start, your provider should offer a range of services that includes cloud as well as basic and advanced managed services. This provider should work with you to define a strategy that shows where you are on a continuum and how cloud and other innovations fit within your plans. Your ability to act on technology innovation with confidence is stronger when you have a services provider you trust to embrace breakthrough productivity and accelerate value creation.

IBM IT strategy and design consultants help companies of all sizes chart a path for cloud and managed services adoption that is realistic and relevant to your industry and your business objectives. We can work with you in many ways, from holding briefings for key executives and conducting structured workshops to providing strategy and design consulting services that result in detailed roadmaps for today's enterprise IT.

Managed and cloud services from IBM

Custom managed services	
IBM Integrated Managed Infrastructure Services	Helps clients improve application availability and infrastructure use while reducing costs using IBM best practices and analytics-based monitoring and management tools for hybrid infrastructures consisting of traditional IT and cloud environments
IBM Managed Security Services	Provides around-the-clock monitoring and management of client in-house security technologies, with a single management console and view of the entire security infrastructure
IBM Managed Resiliency Services	Maintains near-continuous business operations and helps manage regulatory compliance, improve systems availability and better protect data
IBM Managed Mobility Services	Provides lifecycle services and advanced mobile device management to help reduce the complexity, risk and higher costs that come with a proliferation of mobile platforms
IBM Remote Network Managed Services	Offers subscription-based services that provide remote monitoring and management of single or multivendor network communications solutions; managed environments include core and edge data center networks, customer on-premises network equipment, and campus and LANs
IBM Managed Support Services	Provides predictive and preventive maintenance services to help optimize IT availability and achieve measurable business continuity results; supports IBM and non-IBM hardware and software products, and virtualized and cloud infrastructures
IBM Managed Mobile Virtualization Services	Provides users with faster, security-rich access to corporate data and applications from nearly any device through a private cloud solution that transforms a traditional desktop infrastructure into a virtualized environment
IBM IT Outsourcing	Delivers a thorough stack of sourcing services from infrastructure to applications to business processes; implementation approaches include managed services and cloud —selected, tailored and integrated to meet client needs
IBM Cloud Automation Service	Integrates automated capabilities into existing cloud and traditional IT environments for service requests and unreported problem-driven incidents to help reduce severity tickets and downtime
IBM Cloud Brokerage solutions	Helps you to plan, buy, and manage - or broker–IT resources across mutiple cloud models and suppliers while reducing risk and overall IT costs

IBM Cloud Services

IBM Cloud Managed Services	Provides an agile computing IaaS solution designed to offer rapid access to enterprise-class cloud environments suited for development and test activities, batch processing, web hosting and a range of online applications
IBM Cloud Managed Services for Oracle Applications	Platform as a service (PaaS) helps reduce Oracle complexity through standardized, configured-to-order solution components; dramatically accelerate complex Oracle provisioning and copy services; and significantly increase flexibility
IBM Cloud Managed Services for SAP Applications	PaaS is designed to reduce SAP complexity through standardized, configured-to-order solution components; dramatically accelerate complex SAP provisioning and copy services; and significantly increase flexibility
IBM Cloud Managed Services for System z®	Offers IBM System z servers to run business and application workloads in a security-rich cloud infrastructure housed within IBM data centers; helps reduce total computing costs through a shared infrastructure for software, server, disk and tape requirements and consumption-based pricing
IBM Bluemix®	IaaS offers a choice of open cloud infrastructure services for IT operations; can be self-service or fully managed to deploy virtual and dedicated bare metal servers, develop applications and run production-ready workloads

Why IBM?

Along with meeting the criteria in each of the 10 most important areas to consider in selecting a managed and cloud services provider, IBM brings industry-leading expertise and capabilities to help clients manage diverse and often complex hybrid IT environments. We have the technology and business knowledge to help you understand and identify your requirements. We also specialize in each type of delivery model—not only managed services and cloud but also traditional IT and strategic outsourcing. In other words, we help you realize an integrated multisourcing strategy.

IBM can deliver efficiencies across hybrid infrastructures with a broad range of capabilities outlined in the sidebar "Managed and cloud services from IBM." In addition, we offer clients the flexibility to select the degree of support they want for each layer of infrastructure—from basic monitoring and management to long-term arrangements based on an innovation path designed to replace an aging or inflexible infrastructure with new technology.

Retailer builds the foundation for a new business model

Industry: Retail, education

Company profile: Founded in 1986 and based in the United States, this retailer reports annual sales of approximately USD 11.2 billion through more than 2,200 retail stores, e-commerce sites and a business-to-business sales organization.

Size: 66,000 employees in 59 countries

To position itself for stronger long-term growth, this major retailer needed to transform its business model from being product-centered to solution-centered. Taking that tactic would better enable it to address the most pressing priorities of its customers in the K-12 education market. The company collaborated with IBM Global Business Services, IBM Global Technology Services and IBM Integrated Managed Infrastructure Services to conceptualize, build, commercialize and distribute a cloud-based personalized learning solution to its K-12 customers.

The Personalized Learning on Cloud integrated learning solution is housed on a SoftLayer platform managed by Integrated Managed Infrastructure Services. The security-rich subscription service uses big data and predictive analytics software from IBM designed to help teachers provide detailed guidance for each student.The solution is expected to create a USD 500 million revenue stream for the retailer within five years.

For more information

For more information on how IBM cloud and managed services help you realize better outcomes and focus on creating value and innovation rather than operating chores, contact your IBM representative or IBM Business Partner, or visit **ibm.com**/us-en/marketplace/imi-services

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[1] "Moving from the back office to the front lines: CIO insights from the Global C-suite Study." IBM Institute for Business Value, November 2013. More than 1,650 CIOs from 62 countries were interviewed for this study.

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