

Cloud computing to drive tech startups

By S Shyamala | Apr 14 2011, Chennai

If you are an aspiring technology entrepreneur, do not hesitate or delay in launching your business. This is about the right time, in fact, the best in the last couple of years, at least in terms of flexibility of IT infrastructure.

While large companies are still struggling with the idea of completely relying on third parties for their IT systems, several startup firms in India are setting precedence by fully outsourcing their infrastructure.

Right from customer facing, breadwinning applications to backend software, technology startups are fully leveraging cloud computing to quickly go-to-market, reduce capital expenditure, increase efficiencies and also free up cash for day-to-day operations.

“Startup firms are the fastest adopters of cloud computing technologies,” says Ezhil Arasan B, director — CSS Corp Labs. “Many of them are ready to experiment with the technologies as they give them the liberty to pay as they go.”

One example is the startup Marcellus. The company provides a software-as-a-service platform that allows its clients (such as media companies and news agencies) to deliver high-quality videos on their own websites. Marcellus creates custom plans for enterprises with large bandwidth requirements. The company was started in 2007 and has employees in North America and India.

Marcellus has incorporated Amazon Web Services (Amazon’s cloud services arm) extensively within its architecture. The company does most of its revenue generating activities including storing and distributing content; handling video queues; running clients’ encoding processes, and scaling capacity on demand, on the cloud. It also plans to move its data storage to a cloud environment.

Preetam Mukerjee, CEO of Marcellus says, “Adopting cloud reduced our time to market by at least a year, which was crucial for us, given the Asia Pacific market space we target.” Marcellus is now planning to expand beyond Asia Pacific to the North American market. “Cloud environment helps us to continue to iterate on our business model of offering value-added infrastructure.”

Agrees Regina Tan, head of public and analyst relations, Amazon Web Services. The company has seen several such examples in India over the last couple of years, she adds.

She cites the example of redBus, the bus-ticketing portal. The company started by developing its applications on the cloud and then eventually moved all of its applications. Right now, almost all of redBus’ IT infrastructure including its customer-facing portal is handled by AWS and this has been one of the company’s successful cloud implementations in India, she adds.

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