FLOWTRAQ

IS A CLOUD-BASED NETWORK VISIBILITY SOLUTION RIGHT FOR YOU?

Network visibility solutions are increasingly effective at providing the information you need to protect your organization's valuable data. Now, as cloud-based network visibility solutions begin to emerge on the market, how do you know if an on-premise or cloud-based solution is right for you?

For most organizations, particularly small to medium businesses, cloud-based solutions can be a viable and economical option. In certain industries, cloud-based solutions may not be perceived as an option, such as for organizations with large amounts of classified data, like government, financial services and the military. And some question whether the cloud is a good fit for organizations that have security policies that prevent data from being sent outside their own firewalls. This tip sheet outlines six benefits of cloud-based solutions to help you determine what's right for you.

1. FLEXIBILITY — TIME SAVED

You can deploy your cloud-based solution through a third party, such as Amazon Web Services or Azure, and minimize your hardware investment. This option provides the capabilities you need without having to buy, build or maintain your own servers; simply log in to view your network activity via a browser. Additionally, paying for your services by the hour has distinct benefits. It amortizes the cost of the hardware, power and cooling, as well as networking infrastructure, set-up, management of hardware failures, and fixing network capability problems. These amortized costs are probably lower than your own, as the folks that build cloud services benefit from the law of large numbers — they are efficient and well trained.

For Security-as-a-Service Providers

If you're in the business of providing security-as-a-service and need a visibility tool as part of your deliverable, you can offer a cloud-based network visibility solution on your own servers and host it on behalf of your end users.

2. LOWER COST — MONEY SAVED

Because cloud-based solutions don't require an up-front hardware investment, they are more affordable than many people realize, especially for small or mid-sized companies that may not have a significant security budget. The other cost advantage to cloud-based solutions is that they are often offered as "pay as you go." Instead of a fixed-price model that establishes an annual fee, the variable pricing model tracks actual usage. So a retailer who has a spike in traffic during the holidays may see a temporary cost increase during that timeframe, but then costs will drop down again after the holidays are over. When it comes to usage, there is a "break even" point where it's actually more affordable to go with an on-premise solution. But if you're an organization with lower traffic volumes, the cloud route might be your best option.

3. SCALABILITY — YOUR SYSTEM GROWS WITH YOU

For companies that don't process huge network traffic volumes, a cloud-based network visibility solution can be a great place to start. However, you'll want to make sure that the solution you choose is scalable. This way, as your company grows — and as your traffic volumes increase to a point where it's more cost-effective to invest in a perpetual license — you can seamlessly move to an on-premise solution. When you've reached maximum capacity, a scalable cloud-based system will enable you to transition easily, without having to invest in a brand new system.

4. SHARED TENANCY — FASTER PERFORMANCE

Cloud solutions offer the benefit of shared tenancy, since not everyone is using the cloud at the same time. This means that you may benefit from much faster analysis because a lot of the shared resources are likely available when you need them. It also means you get much more bang for your buck than you would have gotten if you had bought servers yourself. The cost of outsourcing to the cloud goes down significantly when more and more organizations use the same provider, because the risk of hardware failure is spread among many. And because all capital expenses become an operational expense, cloud-based systems let you grow economically.

5. SECURE CLOUD — WORRY FREE

Just because your network visibility solution is in the cloud doesn't mean it's not secure. In fact, it can sometimes be more secure because the provider has made significant investments in state-of-the-art data centers vs. some on-premise solutions, which may not have the same level of security protections employed. Certain cloud solutions let you detect and alert suspicious activity on-the-spot as well as analyze network performance issues and investigate incidents. To ensure that your data flows are securely stored in the cloud, look for a solution that securely stores your information separately from others and requires strict login credentials.

6. CONVENIENT — FAST DEPLOYMENT

If you decide that your organization is not as secure as it could be and you want to deploy a network visibility solution quickly, there's nothing as convenient as a cloud-based solution. There is no hardware to install. You can literally make a phone call and within a few hours you can be up and running. Cloud activation is not only quick, it's incredibly easy and painless. And even though cloud-based solutions process millions of data flows a second, they are very reliable because the cloud provider's service level agreements provide the highest reliability and redundancy. For you it means no servers. No management. You just set it up and flip a switch.

ABOUT FLOWTRAQ

FlowTraq® provides software and services for high-performance network monitoring, analytics, security and forensics to detect a range of network behaviors, including distributed denial of service (DDoS), brute force attacks, botnets, worms, network scans and other network traffic anomalies. To request a free trial of FlowTraq, visit **www.flowtraq.com/trial**.