MAXIMIZING SAAS

A Simpler & Safer Pathway To The Cloud

K2VIEW

Harvesting more than the low-hanging fruits

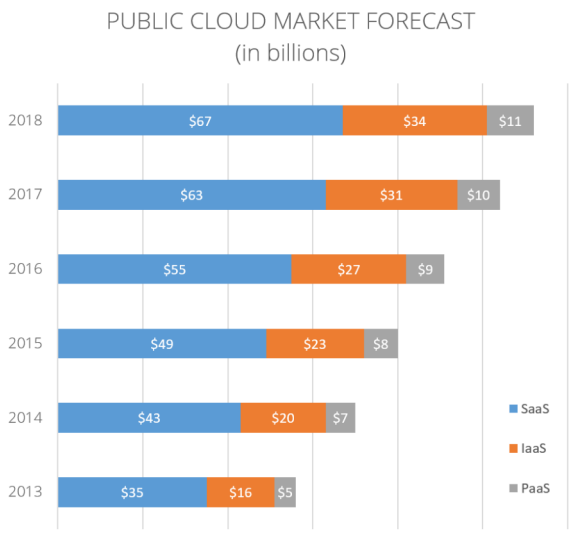
The current hardships of SaaS implementations

Implement hybrid solutions: choosing between Scylla and Charybdis

The hybrid solution the cloud deserves

Harvesting More Than The Low-Hanging Fruits

Some buzzwords live and die in brochures, some outlive their hype and have a profound impact in our business lives. Software as a Service falls undoubtedly in the later category. SaaS solutions have been embraced by Enterprises, and withhold a major portion of their business organizations. The reason for this market change is clear: SaaS solutions are cost-effective, scalable and easily maintained.



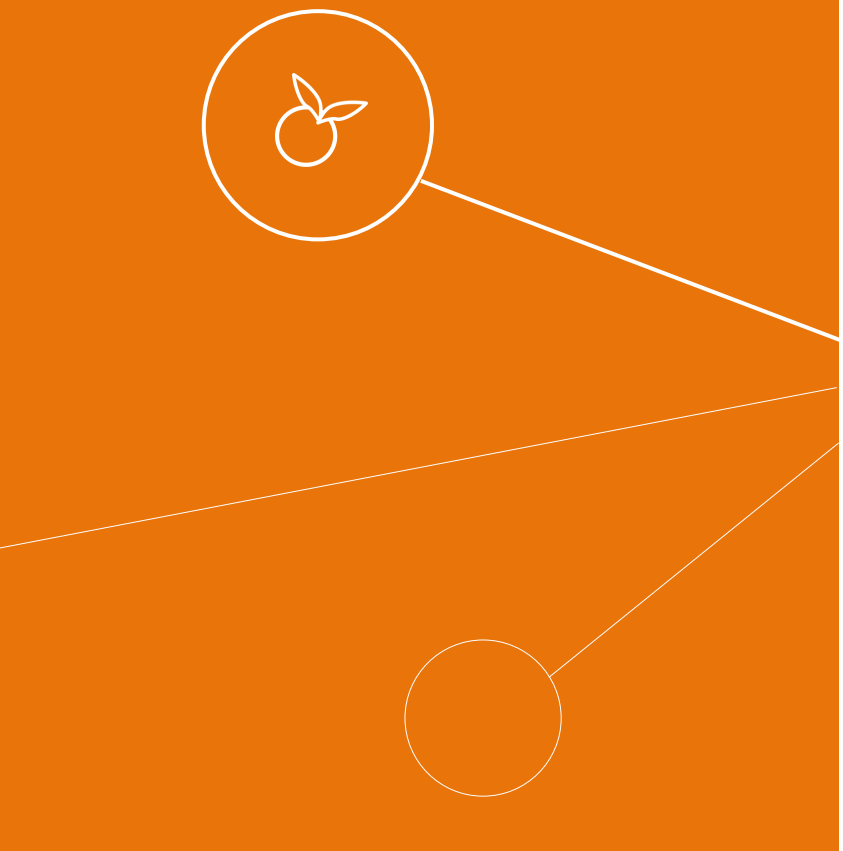
Source: Technology Business Research Inc.

In fact, Cloud Computing and in particular SaaS (being the most mature cloud computing model), is arguably the most disruptive and impactful software trend of the last 5 to 10 years. According to a report by Transparency Market Research, SaaS alone represented $24 billions revenue in 2014 and is forecast to expand at a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of 27.9% from 2015 to 2022.

If taken the time to analyze what solutions are implemented, one soon realizes that most of the current implementation revolve around use-cases adjacent to the core of the business: file sharing, emails, office suites, sales CRMs, and so on.

Obviously this white paper does not intend to downplay this impact. The purpose of this whitepaper is to get a closer look at how enterprises adapt the SaaS model within their organizations.

Harvesting More Than The Low-Hanging Fruits



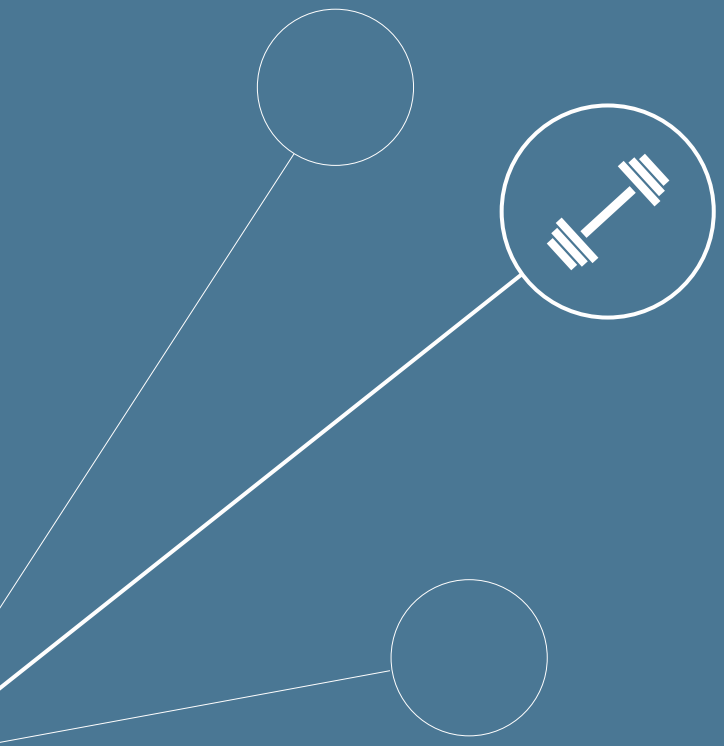
What are the challenges of SaaS implementations for business driven use-cases and around what areas of the business are the solutions implemented?

10 MOST COMMON SAAS IMPLEMENTATIONS

1. Microsoft Office 365
2. Salesforce.com
3. Box
4. Google Apps
5. Concur
6. Amazon Web Services
7. Zendesk
8. Dropbox
9. LinkedIn
10. GoDaddy

The current SaaS executions revolve around use-cases adjacent to the core of the business: file sharing, emails, office suites, sales CRMs, and so on. The simple explanation as to why core business applications aren't seen implemented as SaaS would be because core business applications aren't available, efficient or mature enough to be implemented in this model. I don't believe this to be the case. The potential market of applications dedicated to core business problems is immense, and dedicated applications are available. Paradoxically, the value proposition of SaaS for core business solutions intuitively seems to be even more advantageous than business adjacent solutions. Core business applications are by definition at the center of an organization, thus driving the majority of their costs. If an application is driving most of your costs, and the SaaS model is known to optimize costs, why don't we see more business-centric solutions implemented as SaaS?

Hardships Of SaaS Implementations



Changing to a new computing model is complicated because it requires change and because of its inherent qualities.

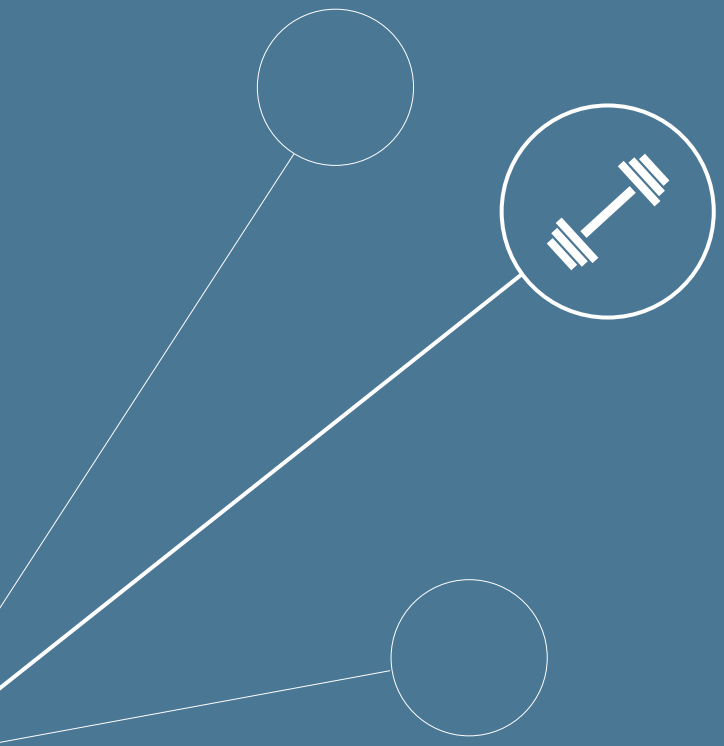
Let's first have a look at what changing to a new model means for an organization, which roughly equates to the following:

- Mindset shift to consider new model
- Conceptualization of a new architecture using new model
- Gestation and approval of a change path
- Change implementation
- Workforce adaptation to change
- Finally, exploit new model can be exploited

What this long iteration is forcefully hitting upon, is that one of the main reason organizations chose to move to the cloud is because of this simplicity. In the realm of software, moving non-revenue essential data like emails or file sharing is an excellent proposition, as the current model can basically be ignored and replaced with a new one. When it comes to applications that are at the heart of your business, you need to make sure that your transition is bulletproof. Consequently, the excessive integration costs and risks are often the first veto to SaaS implementations.

The other hurdles driven by change are not to be underestimated either. Moving to a new technology only can introduce loss of functionalities from incumbent solutions; a risk easily taken for applications that do not have direct revenue stream implications, but a pondering proposition when talking about the heart of one's business.

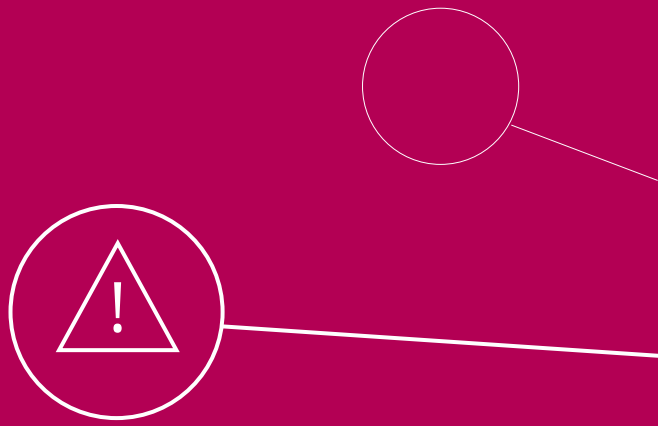
Hardships Of SaaS Implementations



Furthermore, moving to a new application requires entire teams to change their way of work; this adaptation is inevitable for the end-users but the cost of adaptation of the teams in charge of software and data layer administration can be avoided when moving to new applications supporting current technologies and languages.

Asides from change-driven issues, SaaS implementations have their specific pitfalls. The number one risk that comes to mind in SaaS implementation is Security. Exposing and replicating data outside of well-controlled, DMZ-policed, firewall protected data center is delicate, particularly so when proposing to move business-centric data to the cloud. Another interesting caveat of SaaS implementation is the double-edge sword that is the loss of control over their administration. While avoiding maintenance and administration costs is one of the biggest advantages of cloud implementations, it can lead to loss of visibility of sensitive business data. Data has recently emerged as a source of value, therefore losing control or in depth access to it is a drawback. Potential value shrinkage in your data pool isn't the only consequence of this loss of control. Indeed, when proxying fully the management of your data to an SaaS, you lose the opportunity to introduce agile customization, since a change in an underlying data structure you do not have control over is much more complex.

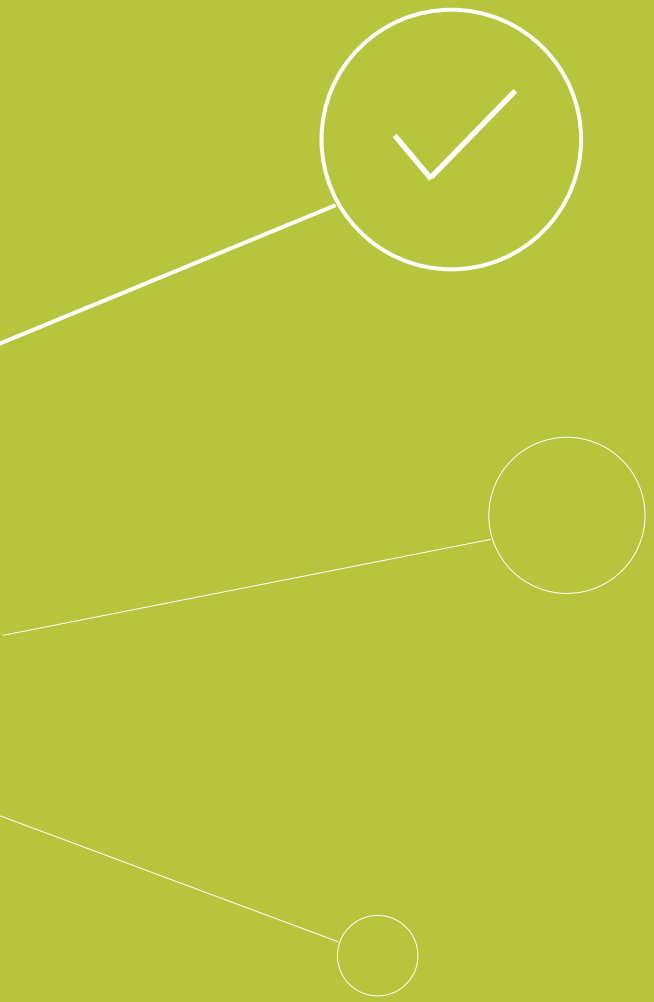
Implement Hybrid Solutions: Choosing Between Scylla And Charybdis



These concerns evidently encouraged the ascent of a new class of hybrid implementations, allowing the exposure of data to SaaS while maintaining control over it internally. The idea is brilliant: take advantage of the easy maintenance, scalability and performance of the cloud, while alleviating any issues of security, visibility or agility. Unfortunately, for many of these hybrids implementations, the idea only looks good on paper.

This type of solution indeed still withholds significant integration costs. Exposing your data to the cloud requires the same amount of integration as migrating to the cloud. One may even argue that it complicates integration costs, because if to enjoy the SaaS inherent features such as high-availability or linear sclability, one must implement a high availability synchronization layer. This layer is complicated to implement and maintain. Added the potential stress that a highly available application can put on production systems, companies seldom opt cloud integration with existing system via batches, an aberration responding poorly to the concerns the hybrid solution set out to solve in the first place: both purposes of maintaining control and security (since the data is pushed to the cloud on a regular basis) and high availability (since the data is only sporadically pushed to the cloud) are defeated. Hence, yet another layer of mitigation is considered, to enable real-time exposure of data while limiting stress over internal production system: exposing a copy of production, thus introducing hardware duplication costs and latency.

The Hybrid Solution The Cloud Deserves



Observing all the challenges introduced by SaaS for business-centric application as well as the pitfalls of current hybrid applications, it is fair to ask: what would be the most efficient way to implement business-centric applications?

I think the answer is a type of hybrid solution leveraging a strong data management platform. In order to cater to all the problems identified throughout this white paper, this data management would need to have the following qualities:

- Be able to easily integrate data from any sources in existing systems
- Be able to present this data in real time with minimum impact on current systems
- Be able to be easily used by current applications and teams (leveraging current tools and languages like SQL)
- Be able to provide the highest level of security
- Be linearly scalable and highly available to respond to SaaS demands- Offer complete control over its schema for maximum agility and visibility

K2View Fabric is a data management platform offering all these features. Indeed, its Logical Unit representation enables atomic ETL, full SQL support and row-level security in a distributed architecture. Fabric offers a unique solution to the ever-expending realm of SaaS, as proven by the market who sees large organizations selecting Fabric as the solution of choice for the integration of their core business applications to the cloud.

THE LOGICAL WAY TO MANAGE YOUR DATA

K2VIEW

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