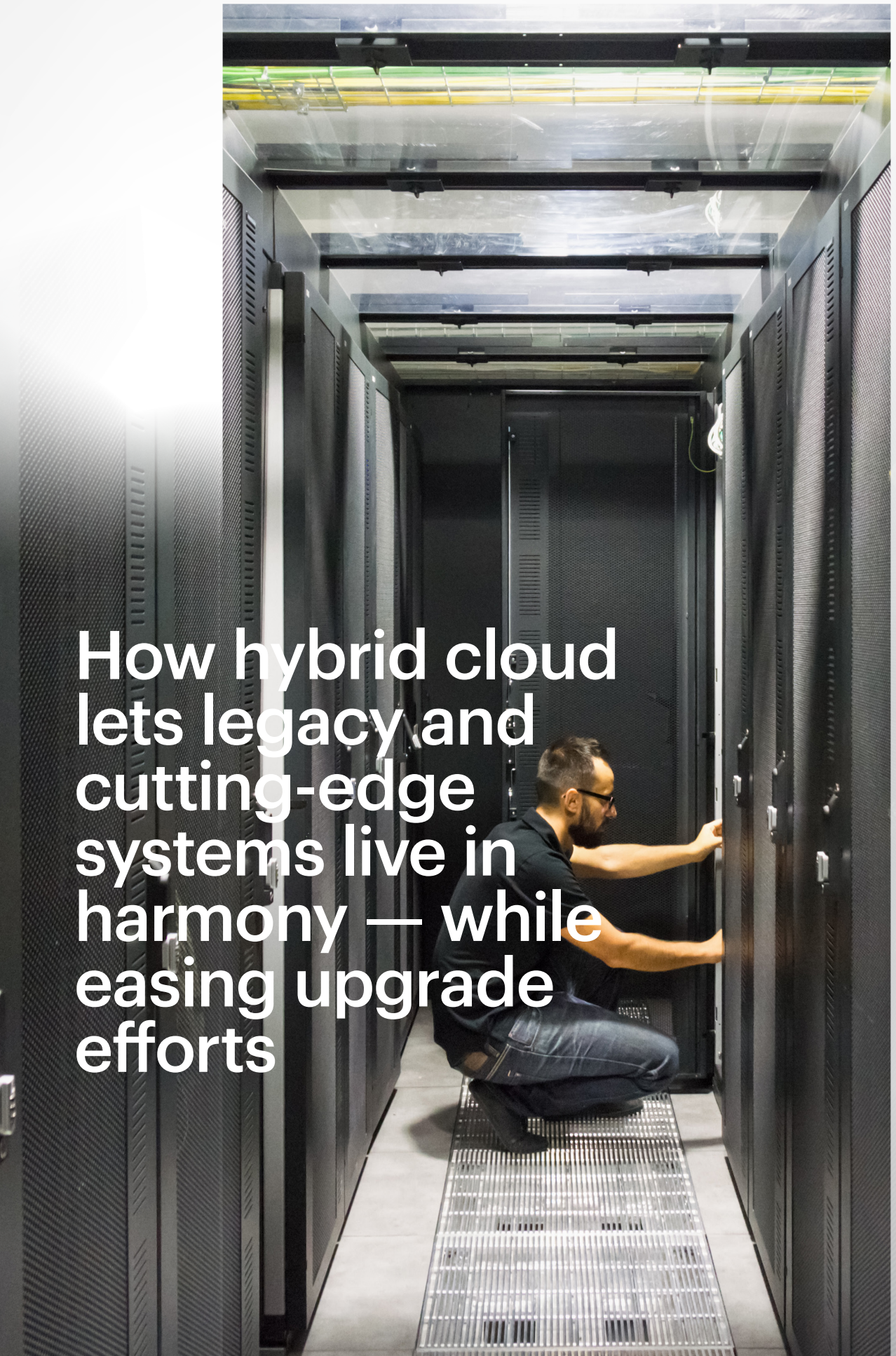

How hybrid cloud lets legacy and cutting-edge systems live in harmony — while easing upgrade efforts

Preparing multigenerational IT for the AI age

With the rapid rise of artificial intelligence (AI), business leaders are taking a fresh look at their IT estate to make sure they're ready to embrace this emerging technology. Taking stock, most organizations are finding themselves with a mix of newer and older systems, a multigenerational tech stack that, over time, has become integral to their operations and workflows.

But many worry legacy IT could slow AI adoption. Some 80% of global IT decision-makers believe they won't be able to fully leverage AI until they modernize their legacy systems and applications, according to a 2023 survey.[1] Respondents said they had an average of 22 legacy systems currently in use within their organizations, each one a potential barrier between the business and the future.

There's one strong path to modernization emerging, however: hybrid cloud, which allows any organization to consolidate the management of multigeneration IT on a single platform. It's a solution within reach of most enterprises, as the vast majority — 91% — are already using it, according to research from Hewlett Packard Enterprise.[2]

A hybrid cloud platform lets enterprises see and connect every asset in their IT infrastructure. "If you can't see it, you can't manage it," says John Gromala, senior director of product management at HPE. "When you bring all of the pieces together, you can bridge existing platforms with newer platforms and migrate data where it needs to go."

With a unified platform, hybrid cloud gives enterprises the scalability, agility, and sustainability features they need to leverage today's emergent AI as well as technological innovation headed our way in the next 10 months — or 10 years.

Blending tried and true with cutting edge

For most enterprises, replacing existing IT systems every year isn't practical or financially feasible. Legacy technology is called legacy for a reason. Over time, it becomes embedded in an enterprise's core operations and workflows.

But new opportunities requiring more advanced technologies often arise, such as the recent emergence of generative AI and large language models (LLMs), which promise to transform everything from customer support to employee workflows. Hybrid cloud paves the way for organizations to get the most value out of both new and preexisting IT systems and applications. It's the best of both worlds, letting them migrate to more modern systems without breaking the bank.

"Hybrid cloud gives you the ability to migrate your workloads where and how they're needed," Gromala says. "Whether it's basic IT functions and capabilities or newer, more advanced AI capabilities, it all fits within that same hybrid framework."

Rather than investing lots of money exclusively in public cloud compute power and data capacity that may remain unused, a hybrid cloud platform allows companies to tap as much power and capacity as needed, expanding and contracting to meet the needs of the moment. That scalability is invaluable to enterprises implementing AI, which typically relies on enormous amounts of data capacity.

Consider generative AI bots, which are LLM-trained, using voluminous but variable amounts of data. "Some enterprises are training LLMs at massive scale with multiple petabytes of data while others only need one rack in their data center," explains Gromala. "Whatever the scale, hybrid cloud provides capacity in an elastic way. And a cloud consumption model helps people manage IT change to meet business agility needs, no matter what their current IT estate may be."

[1] "Is the AI revolution the catalyst to complete cloud modernization?," Rackspace, June 2023

[2] "From hybrid cloud by accident to hybrid cloud by design," HPE, April 2023

How hybrid eases digital modernization

Gromala says, inevitably, enterprises will find they need to transition from legacy IT to newer technologies if they want to remain competitive. He gives a ballpark estimate of three to seven years for the current lifespan of today's IT platforms, noting hybrid cloud can smooth the path for the transition from old to new systems and applications. "Migration is a natural part of the hybrid IT lifecycle," he says.

Again, you can thank AI for accelerating that lifecycle, with 84% of enterprises saying they plan to increase their investment in IT infrastructure in the coming year specifically to support AI.[3]

The good news for enterprises racing to embrace AI-capable IT systems is that many hybrid cloud providers offer services to assist in the migration process with minimal disruption to their existing businesses. Some providers even purchase and recycle older IT systems to ensure they're securely decommissioned, making sustainability part of the digital transformation journey.

Equally valuable is the visibility a hybrid cloud platform provides for managing IT assets. "With a single platform, you can actually see, map, and track the carbon usage of every system and manage each of them based on your business needs and sustainability goals," Gromala points out.

For enterprises, the ability to see and manage their IT estate, unifying both legacy and cutting-edge assets, represents the true promise of hybrid cloud — and platforms like HPE GreenLake are already delivering on that promise.

Learn more at

HPE.com/data

[3] "Nutanix State of Enterprise AI Report — AI Technologies Usher in New Era of Data and Infrastructure Modernization," Nutanix, November 2023

Visit HPE.com

Chat now

a50010034ENW, Rev. 1

HEWLETT PACKARD ENTERPRISE

hpe.com