



Why the operating system matters



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Defining the foundation for an adaptable cloud strategy

Operating systems have been around since the beginning of modern computing, but in those early days, the operating system played a secondary role within the infrastructure. For decades, the hardware itself—massive mainframes in dedicated server rooms and laboratories—was the primary consideration. The operating system (OS) was just part of the framework, an efficient way to interact with the physical hardware, the peripherals, and the subsystems. With the shift to cloud-based infrastructure, it feels like we've circled back to that time. Today, the operating system is often considered incidental to the cloud provider and available services.

This approach to your cloud infrastructure is limiting and restrictive. One of the lessons learned from the old datacenter was the danger of brittle spaghetti architectures, and that lesson is being repeated in a lot of multcloud infrastructures now.

What most IT departments (and CTOs and business leaders responsible for strategic execution) really want is an environment that is flexible, adaptable, resilient, and—above all—manageable. And the ability to execute a flexible, adaptable, resilient, and manageable technology strategy is a reflection of your overall operating environment—your infrastructures, your services, and (yes) your operating system.

A brief history of operating systems

It can be helpful to describe what an operating system is.

Think of the entire infrastructure as a stack. The lowest level is the hardware and its firmware, then the operating system, then application services (middleware), and the applications themselves.

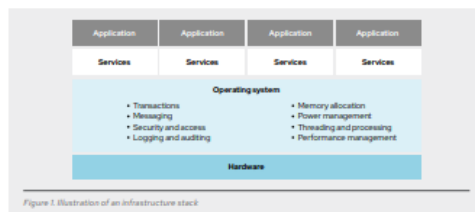


Figure 1. Illustration of an infrastructure stack

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E-book Why the operating system matters

See how your operating system can be the foundation that solidifies and unifies your IT infrastructure and whatever environments it encompasses.