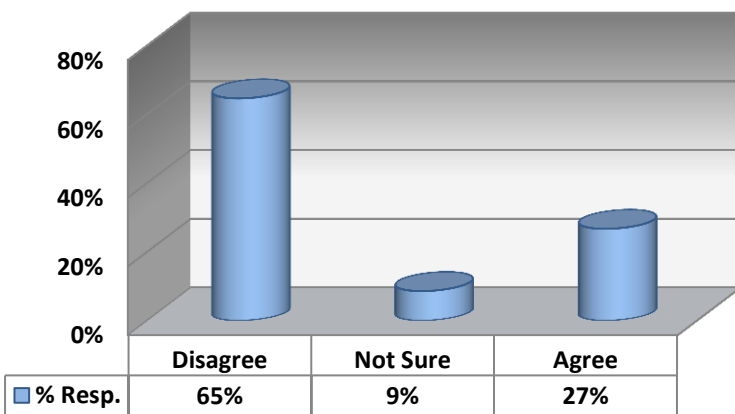


2010-11 Unix Survey: Clouds in the Real World

You can't swing a cat in the industry these days without it hitting someone who's either talking about cloud computing, tweeting about cloud computing, or talking about tweeting about cloud computing. As part of the virtualization section in our **2010-11 GCG Unix Vendor Preference Survey** (methodology and demographics [here](#)), we asked our 306 Unix data center managers and workers a few general questions about how they're using (or not using) cloud computing.

For purposes of the survey, we took pains to share our definition of the cloud to make sure that we were all on the same page. Briefly, we described cloud computing as providing users with a seamless pool of computing resources that aren't tied to physical systems and have an easy-to-use front end. We defined public clouds as a shared resource provided by a third party and private clouds as the same type of thing, but behind their own firewall.

"We're using public clouds for some tasks.."



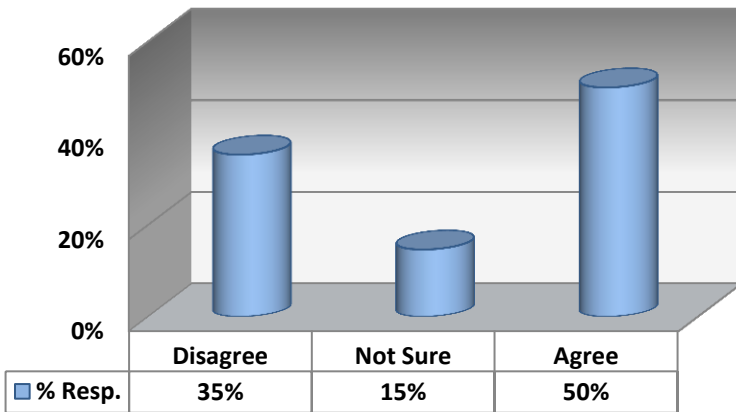
Less than a third of our enterprise respondents are using public clouds to augment their infrastructure. This might sound low, given the hype around the cloud computing model these days, but it rings true to us.

In qualitative responses in this section, customers indicated that they are leery of public clouds on a wide number of issues including security, availability, quality of service, and cost. Color them unconvinced – at least for now.

Another potential reason for public cloud reluctance is that our Unix respondents typically support mission critical workloads. Customers always avoid subjecting these applications to any unnecessary (or even necessary) risk. At this point in time, public clouds have yet to prove themselves as a reliable, safe, and performant alternative to traditional data center hosting.

However, when it comes to building private clouds behind their own firewall, we see quite a bit more customer interest...

"We're building our our own private cloud..."

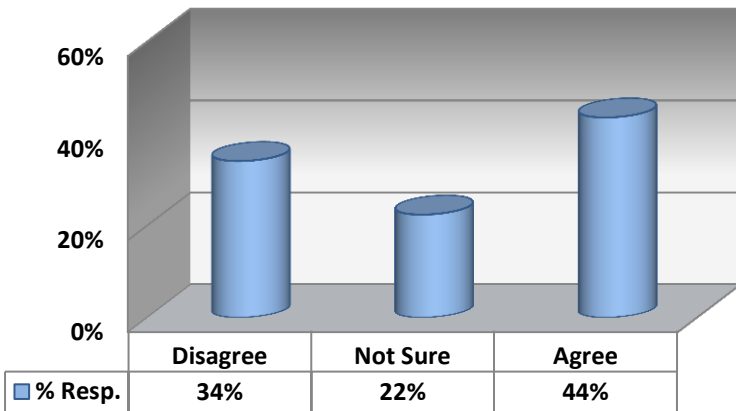


Half say that they're currently building their own cloud infrastructure; more than a third aren't yet going down that road.

Some respondents talked about clouds being the natural evolution of their virtualization efforts. Many of them expressed varying degrees of exasperation about the hype around cloud computing, and concern about the perception that clouds are a panacea for every IT task and challenge.

What *are* they looking to gain from clouding up their infrastructure? We asked, and they told us....

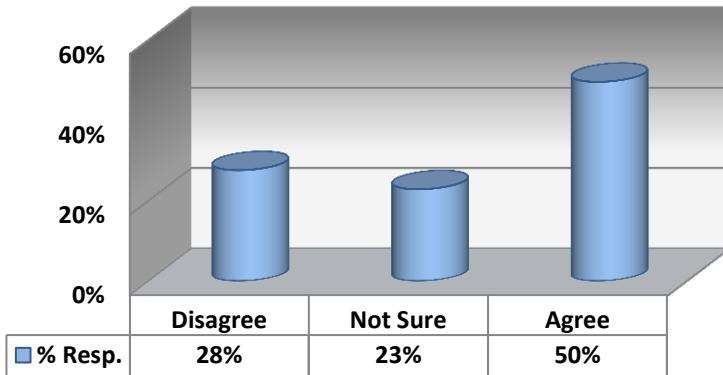
"Our main interest in clouds is to reduce costs..."



While much of the public chatter about clouds surrounds the model's potential to cut costs, that's not what our respondents are necessarily seeking from it.

In the comments, many expressed doubts that public clouds would result in cost reductions after SLA requirements are satisfied. They do believe that private clouds can reduce costs, but they also wonder if it will result in more management headaches over time.

"Our main interest in clouds is to increase IT flexibility and speed..."



Half of our respondents are looking to clouds (particularly private clouds) to make it easier for them to provide resources to the business units they support. They believe that a cloud infrastructure might make the process of standing up new apps faster and less labor intensive.

However, only half agree with this; the rest either don't buy it or aren't sure.

Color our enterprise customers skeptical when it comes to cloud computing. We saw frustration in many of their comments on this topic. They discussed their belief that the cloud concept is sound, and appropriate for some purposes, but they also believe that clouds are oversold. It will be interesting to see how – or whether – these attitudes change over time.

One area where cloud computing might pay the greatest dividends is in facilities consumption. Public clouds could significantly relieve strain on customer power, cooling, and floor space requirements because the workload leaves the data center. Private clouds will also have an impact as they force higher utilization rates and workload consolidation.

But do these customers have big facilities problems currently? Our [next installment](#) takes a look at 2010-11 survey results on power, cooling, and floor space issues.

If you're interested in finding out more about this survey (demographics, expanded results, detailed GCG analysis), click [here](#).

Gabriel
CONSULTING GROUP

www.GabrielConsultingGroup.com
gcginfo@GabrielConsultingGroup.com

(503) 372-9389