

Seven Tips to Selecting the Best Cloud Backup Solution

by Jerome M Wendt

Cloud offerings such as the Google Cloud Platform provide more options than ever for companies to ensure the availability and protection of their applications in the cloud. By following these seven tips, companies can select the right backup software to orchestrate the management of these cloud services. In so doing, they will find that HYCU does more than protect applications hosted in the cloud. HYCU equips companies to deploy backup in the same manner as any other cloud service.



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7 TIPS TO SELECTING THE BEST CLOUD BACKUP SOFTWARE

- Simple to start and stop
- Takes care of itself
- Integrates with a cloud provider's identity management services
- Integrates with a cloud provider's management console
- Capitalizes on the breadth of the cloud provider's storage services
- Provides default policies to accelerate and simplify backup and recovery
- Controls cloud costs

Advanced Backup Utilities ... but No Orchestration

The cloud has gone mainstream with more companies than ever looking to host their production applications with general-purpose cloud providers such as the Google Cloud Platform (GCP). As this occurs, companies must identify backup solutions architected for the cloud that capitalize on the native features of each provider's cloud offering to best protect their virtual machines (VMs) hosted in the cloud.

Company that move their applications and data to the cloud must orchestrate the protection of their applications and data once they move them there. GCP and other cloud providers offer highly available environments and replicate data between data centers in the same region. They also provide options in their clouds for companies to configure their applications to automatically fail over, fail back, scale up, and scale back down as well as create snapshots of their data.

To fully leverage these cloud features, companies must identify an overarching tool that orchestrates the management of these availability, backup and recovery features as well as integrates with their applications to create application-consistent backups.

Seven Tips to Selecting the Right Cloud Backup Solution

To select the right cloud backup solution for them, here are seven tips that companies can follow.

1. **Simple to start and stop.** The cloud gives companies the flexibility and freedom to start and stop services as needed and then only pay for these services as they use them. The backup solution should give companies the same ease to start and stop these services and only bill companies for the applications it protects during the time it protects them.

The simplicity of the software's deployment should also extend to its configuration and ongoing management. Companies can quickly select and

deploy the compute, networking, storage, and security services cloud providers offer. In the same way, the software should similarly make it easy for companies to select it, configure it for the backup of VMs, and turn the software off if needed.

2. **Takes care of itself.** When companies select any cloud provider's service, companies get the benefits of the service without the maintenance headaches associated with owning it. For example, when companies choose to host data on GCP's Cloud Storage service, they do not need to worry about administering Google's underlying IT infrastructure. The tasks of replacing faulty HDDs, maintaining HDD firmware, keeping its Cloud Storage OS patched, etc. fall to Google.

In the same way, when companies select backup software, they want its benefits without the overhead of patching it, updating it, and managing it long term. The backup software should be available and run as any other cloud service. However, in the background, the backup software provider should take care of its software's ongoing maintenance and updates.

“HYCU exemplifies how easy backup and recovery can and should be in the cloud.”

3. **Integrates with the cloud provider's identity management services.** Companies use services such as LDAP or Microsoft AD to control access to corporate IT resources. Cloud providers also have their own identity management services that companies can use to control their employees' access to cloud resources. The backup software will ideally integrate with the cloud provider's native identity management services to simplify its management and ensure that those who administer the backup solution have permission to access VMs and data in the cloud.

4. Integrates with the cloud provider's management console.

Companies want to make their IT environments easier to manage. For many, that begins with a single pane of glass to manage their infrastructure. In cloud environments, companies must adhere to this philosophy as cloud providers offer dozens of cloud services that individuals can view and access through that cloud provider's management console.

To ensure cloud administrators remain aware that the backup software is available as an option, the backup software must integrate with the cloud provider's default management console. In this way, these individuals can remember to use it and easily incorporate its management into their overall job responsibilities.

5. Capitalizes on the breadth of the cloud provider's storage services.

As companies adopt cloud services, they should select a product that exploits the various storage services that cloud providers offer. Cloud providers have multiple storage service types such as block, file, and object. Further, each storage type has varying levels of availability, performance, and price associated with it.

To optimize data availability and backup performance while minimizing cloud storage costs, the backup solution should possess the abilities to access each of these various storage types as well as place data on the most appropriate storage tier based on pre-established policies.

6. Provides default policies to accelerate and simplify backup.

Despite the many knobs to turn and dials to watch that cloud providers offer for their clouds, they make it easy for companies to get started with their various services. For example, almost any individual can be up and running using a cloud service in less than an hour. To achieve this, cloud providers, by default, deliver services backed by policies that ensure the application uses cloud services with high levels of availability and performance.

Similarly, a backup solution should make it is easy for companies to get started with backup in the cloud. It should, by default, provide a few policies with labels such as bronze, silver, and gold that align with industry standard backup norms. Using these default policies companies can quickly start protecting their applications and data in the cloud while still having options to create their own backup and recovery policies if needed.

7. Controls cloud costs.

It should come as no great surprise that cloud providers make their money when companies use their services. The more of their services that companies use, the more the cloud providers charge. It should also not shock anyone the default services that cloud providers offer may be among their most expensive.

The backup software can help companies avoid racking up unneeded costs in the cloud. The backup software will primarily consume storage capacity in the cloud. The software should offer features that help manage these costs. Aside from having policies in place to tier backup data as its ages across these different storage types, it should also provide options to archive, compress, deduplicate, and even delete data. Ideally, it will also spin up cloud compute resources when needed and shut them down once backup jobs complete to further control costs in the cloud.

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HYCU Brings the Benefits of Cloud to Backup

Companies choose the cloud for simple reasons: flexibility, scalability, and simplicity. They already experience these benefits when they choose the cloud's existing compute, networking, storage, and security services. So, they may rightfully wonder, why should the software service they use to orchestrate their backup experience in the cloud be any different?

In short, it should not be any different. As companies adopt and adapt to the cloud's consumption model, they will expect all services they consume in the cloud to follow its billing and usage model. Companies should not give backup a pass on this growing requirement.

HYCU is the first backup and recovery solution that companies can choose when protecting applications and data on the Google Cloud Platform to follow these basic principles of consuming cloud services. By integrating with GCP's identity management services, being simple to start and stop, and helping companies control their costs, HYCU exemplifies how easy backup and recovery can and should be in the cloud. HYCU provides companies with the breadth of backup services that their applications and data hosted in the cloud need while relieving them of the responsibility to continue to manage and maintain it. ■

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