**Case Study 2: Conflict Tracker Deployment Model**

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As discussed in Case Study 1, Conflict Tracker is a browser and mobile-based news and pseudo social media application that reports specifically on conflicts worldwide. As determined in the previous case study, it will follow a Software as a Service (SaaS) cloud service model and based on the intended use and user base, it should be deployed as a public cloud. This case study will discuss the rationale for a public cloud deployment and the advantages/disadvantages of other deployment models according to the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) SP 500-292.

All of Conflict Tracker’s features are equally accessible by individuals and organizations depending on their metered service level (standard/free or premium paid). It is also available to these users (the general public) over the internet, a public network. Additionally, it was determined that the infrastructure of the service is completely maintained by the hosting party. Since NIST SP 500-292 defines a public cloud as “one in which the cloud infrastructure and computing resources are made available to the general public over a public network” (p. 10). Conflict Tracker categorically fits into that definition and should use a public cloud deployment model for its services.

Since a private cloud deployment “gives a single Cloud Consumer’s organization the exclusive access to and usage of the infrastructure and computational resources” (p. 10), this does not apply to Conflict Tracker. Deploying a private cloud model would be disadvantageous to the intended use and proposed business model of the software, restricting access to the creator of Conflict Tracker. However, if a news agency had a subdivision of their company that created, maintained, and monitored the app, then it would prove advantageous for anchors and journalists in the field reporting on the conflicts. These journalists could use their own proprietary aggregation of information for a user-friendly reporting experience and to keep their own journalists safe.

“A community cloud serves a group of Cloud Consumers which have shared concerns such as mission objectives, security, privacy and compliance policy, rather than serving a single organization as does a private cloud” (p. 11). Once again, this deployment model would be disadvantageous since Conflict Tracker is intended for use by the general public rather than by the news industry. It could be argued that this option is a viable deployment model if the intended user base was for news agencies and was in compliance with their journalistic standards. It would still be a SaaS but with a higher cost of entry and metering to make the business model viable. Conflict Tracker could become a depository for reporting by the organizations themselves, accessible by all users in the industry to aggregate data as a resource for more accurate public reporting and broadcasting. This will also allow the news agencies to keep their reporting journalists safe in conflict zones by tracking troop movements and let said reporters know where the “hot spots” are. These news agencies could also use Conflict Tracker’s expert opinion services if needed. However, since news agencies are private entities that rely on proprietary information and “exclusives” to be more competitive, this model is likely to not have buy-in from those organizations.

“A hybrid cloud is a composition of two or more clouds…that remain as distinct entities but are bound together by standardized or proprietary technology that enables data and application portability” (p. 12). Based on the deployment models advantages and disadvantages described above, the best hybrid combination would be a public and community cloud deployment. Advantages of this would be having a publicly-accessible version that allows users to have the Conflict Tracker-aggregated reporting that has been publicly released by sources. The community cloud would have the live reporting by and for news agencies that has not been published yet in combination with other sources that are updated by conflict tracker. However, this would disadvantageous to Conflict Tracker’s business model since the service is relatively narrow in scope. Providing such a broad array of services to both the public and news organizations would be a heavy cost burden and the disadvantages stated in the community cloud deployment model above would still apply.

Although there are some advantages to a non-public deployment model that could yield significant business opportunities, it is clear that the risks/disadvantages of such deployment models outweigh those benefits. A public deployment of Conflict Tracker is categorically aligned with its features and intended use. No conclusive market analyses have yet been done on other deployment models and until such data is available that supports a different deployment, a public cloud is the current best option and fits within the NIST definition.

**References**

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