

# Chart a Faster Path to Citizen Service Transformation With Secure Multicloud

Even as uncertainty swirled, the COVID-19 pandemic crystalized the power of the cloud for state and local governments. The experience accelerated the adoption curve while underscoring the need for extreme flexibility that only multicloud can deliver. It also further exposed the inherent complexity of navigating this approach. The bottom line: to reap the true promise of multicloud, state and local governments need a clear strategy and a trusted guide.

## Everything Changed...Almost Overnight

*“...the digital provision of citizen services and the adoption of remote work by state employees has by necessity leapt forward and achieved a degree of change that would in normal circumstances have taken multiple years.” – The Agile State CIO – Leading in a Time of Uncertainty – NASCIO 2020 State CIO Survey*

Historically, the public sector has been slow to embrace the concept of remote work. During the pandemic, however, government organizations, by necessity, actually leaned into telework to a greater degree than the economy overall, according to the [US Bureau of Labor Statistics](#). And, in some cases, agencies achieved that pivot in days, thanks to the mobile technologies, and the cloud, which provided the ability to scale rapidly. [In Massachusetts](#), for example, more than 90 percent of back-office staff were teleworking, and other states posted similar successes.

Schools followed a similar path by embracing remote learning at scale – for all students at the height of the pandemic and later as many moved to a hybrid model on the path to the next normal. The cloud even came into play in corrections systems to support state-mandated prisoner visitation rights. State and local governments rapidly deployed cost-effective cloud-based video systems to meet requirements.

The pandemic also exposed the serious limitations of legacy systems, including unemployment compensation enrollment and management systems. In many states, these critical systems run on decades-old mainframe platforms, which cannot scale to extreme demand or rapidly incorporate changes to benefit programs. The cloud once again played a critical role by enabling virtual contact centers and assistants that helped to ease backlogs and connect citizens with vital services.

## Normalizing and Extending the Cloud

Many of the pandemic-necessitated stopgap cloud-based measures – which previously may have been categorized as shadow IT – have yielded tremendous short-term value. More importantly, however, they hold the key to transforming citizen services well into the future. It’s time for state and local governments to turn their focus to securing cloud-based initiatives and extending and optimizing their impact.

This mission is especially critical at a time when the demand for citizen services has never been greater and budgets are beginning to tighten. Georgia, for example, [cut](#) nearly \$1 billion from K-12 public school budgets and programs for children and adults with developmental disabilities. Florida's governor [vetoed \\$1 billion](#) in previously approved spending and cut budgets for community colleges, behavioral health services, crisis intervention services, and services for people experiencing homelessness.

State and local governments are looking for creative ways to do more with less – and cloud is an important part of the equation. The cost benefits of cloud are well known, including the attractiveness of moving from a CapEx to an OpEx model, as is its ability to accelerate the path to further modernization. The real game-changer, however, is the agility cloud delivers and its ability to cost-effectively and immediately right size an organization's technology ecosystem in just a few clicks.

Further, cloud can offer a faster path to leveraging and operationalizing emerging technologies, such as artificial intelligence and edge computing, to name just a few. Cloud-based infrastructure enables IT organizations to rapidly create development environments and sandboxes where they can cost-effectively and rapidly create, test, and fail or succeed with minimal risk and cost.

## Multicloud is a Force Multiplier

If one cloud is good...two or more must be better. [A CompTIA](#) study shows that 83 percent of companies have moved either infrastructure or applications to a second cloud provider. State and local governments, like their counterparts in business, are following suit. Growing cloud interest is reflected in enterprise IT plans for 2021 according to a [Center for Digital Government](#) survey, with one 2020 Digital Counties Survey top finisher stating, "The use of a multiplicity of cloud offerings as a preferred option (unless proven otherwise) will enable the county to rapidly evolve to more modern, continuously updated, secure systems that are supported by mission-critical vendor partners, allowing IT staff to focus on business process evaluation and reengineering and applying appropriate solutions and innovation."

Multicloud is attractive for many reasons, including hedging against potential security threats and service outages, as well as avoiding vendor lock in. Multicloud also helps to optimize IT budgets and expands public sector organizations' ability to compare pricing, negotiate, and fully leverage the cost savings of cloud. There is also growing recognition that one solution does not fit all, and that no single cloud platform is a good match for every use case.

## Confusion and Complexity Rebound

One of the original value propositions of the cloud was its simplicity. Any maturing technology, however, inherently brings new complexity and confusion. Cloud is no different. Multicloud brings new challenges to every phase of the lifecycle: design, build, secure, manage, and optimize. The right strategy for the complete lifecycle will optimize value and reduce risk and cost associated with missteps that necessitate multiple moves.



The questions are endless:

- **What is our multicloud strategy?**
- **What goes where – public, private, hybrid?**
- **Which public cloud is best for each use case?**
- **How do we manage a growing universe of integrations?**
- **How do we optimize operational efficiencies?**
- **How do we ensure appropriate security and compliance – and avoid the risk and expense of having to move data multiple times due to security and compliance risk?**
- **What tools do we need to manage our multicloud environment?**

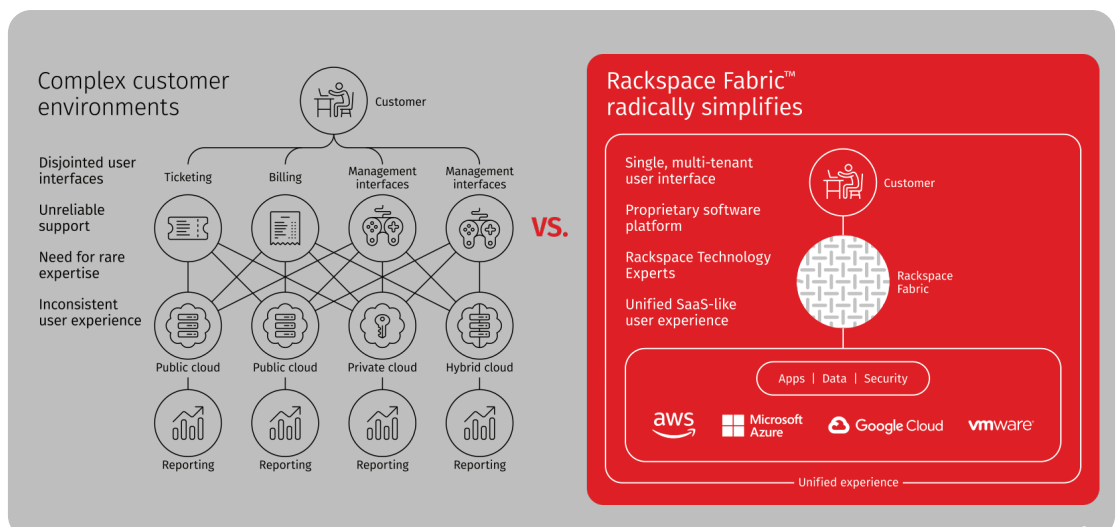
Managing a multi-cloud environment, where workloads are distributed across clouds and each cloud has its own interfaces, security requirements, SLAs, data flows, and more, can place a tremendous burden on in-house IT teams. Sound familiar?

## Time for Secure Multicloud-as-a-Service

Navigating the ever-evolving multicloud ecosystem is no easy task, and organizations increasingly seek a trusted guide, who can provide unbiased insight and a clear path forward, while eliminating a mounting operational burden. Rackspace Government Solutions delivers secure multicloud-as-a-service to solve this growing, and unnecessary, challenge.

Rackspace Government Solutions and managed services portfolio empowers state and local governments to confidently design, build, secure, manage, and optimize the cloud – so they can accelerate innovation and agility with multicloud.

The Rackspace Fabric technology service platform unites all cloud platforms, enabling consistency in multicloud. With this service layer, Rackspace Government Solutions provides common governance, ticketing, billing, tagging, and more throughout public sector organizations' multicloud estates. The solution does not replace native access to cloud technology; instead, it unifies the service layer between them. This enables a faster, more consistent approach to consuming cloud resources from multiple providers, enabling government organizations to realize the transformational capabilities of cloud much faster. Rackspace also delivers access to solution experts, engineers, data architects, and system administrators to help state and local agencies set a clear and successful course for their multicloud journey.



Offering unparalleled security, Rackspace Government Solutions has held FedRAMP Joint Authorization Board (JAB) certification since 2015, as well as DoD Impact Level 4 and DFARS/ CMMC authorization. Its solutions also comply with IRS Publication 1075, TAC 202, and HIPAA standards, to name just a few. In addition, as more states look to align with Federal security standards as part of their “State RAMP” initiatives, Rackspace delivers FedRAMP Moderate certification for optimal protection. In addition, Rackspace has extensive experience in working with providers and customers to bring FedRAMP authorized solutions to market and production. It applies this experience directly to helping state and local governments cost effectively prepare for and accelerate their own security standardization and compliance initiatives.

## Rackspace Government Solutions in Action

In 2020, a large State awarded Rackspace Technology its public cloud management contract. The San Antonio, Texas-based company is a Gartner Magic Quadrant leader for public cloud infrastructure professional and managed services, worldwide. It brings experience with thousands of other public cloud customers to bear for state agencies.

Rackspace is bringing best practices in multi-cloud management and security, infrastructure savings, and the ability to cost optimize workloads so the IT department and its agency customers get the best value.

Rackspace provides the expertise that the state needs to expand its public cloud program. The company manages all public cloud workloads, leveraging Amazon Web Services (AWS), Microsoft Azure, and Google Cloud Platform (GCP). Rackspace is AWS’s largest managed service provider, one of Azure’s top managed service providers, and GCP’s first managed service provider. It is also the only managed service provider to establish a VMware Cloud in AWS.

To further the state’s public cloud expertise, the public cloud contract leverages a Cloud Center of Excellence (CCOE) that helps state agencies exploit the benefits of public cloud. The CCOE includes complex cloud engineers, administrators, and a senior cloud architect. In addition to public cloud expertise, the CCOE can offer advance knowledge of new services from AWS, Azure, GCP, and emerging public cloud technologies.

“It’s not just about Rackspace reselling us public cloud. It’s about scoping, designing, and deploying it as well,” the IT department official noted. “We also needed a manager to provide and audit security controls. To really shore up the security of the state, we needed the right capability and expertise in the public cloud program.”

**Learn more about how Rackspace secure multicloud as a service solutions and managed services can help state and local governments alleviate multicloud complexity and transform how agencies deliver citizen services.**

