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Is cloud operator lock in an issue for enterprise?

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No one cloud platform can provide everything an enterprise IT department needs.

Even the largest providers like Amazon, Rackspace and Azure are often only providing compute, storage and virtual machines, not the actual business software.



Interim results presented by Adam Dodds, IDC Australia research manager, show that already approximately 25% of New Zealand enterprises have two or more cloud providers.

This number is likely to rise drastically as more legacy systems are replaced by cloud versions or migrated to virtual machines in the cloud.

Organisations will likely end up dealing with a large number of cloud providers, Software-as-a-Service providers and legacy on premises systems – often with a need for these systems to interact with each other.

Cloud Ethernet Forum (CEF), a standard body, launched last year to tackle this interoperability challenge, intending to set common standards for cloud systems to interact between themselves.

Read our story about CEF launching [here](#).

“Customers want to move virtual machines in between both private and public clouds and integrate with legacy systems with ease,” says James Walker, president, CEF.

The CEF is an admirable concept and its success will make it a lot easier for enterprise customers and cloud operators to accelerate the adoption of cloud computing.

The issue is that common standards will lower the barrier to entry, meaning the current leaders and largest players have little incentive to play ball.

These leaders are actually incented the opposite way around, to lock in their customers with hundreds of proprietary APIs and standards.

There is some light at the end of the tunnel however. The CEF is introducing a certification standard, which it hopes will be worn as a badge of honour by members and, in time, enterprise customers will demand this new open standards approach.