

Cloud Buyers' Requirements Questionnaire

A Proposal for Discussion

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Cloud Buyers' Requirements Questionnaire

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Cloud Buyers' Requirements Questionnaire

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Executive Summary

This White Paper describes a questionnaire that will help you identify your requirements for Cloud computing in a structured way, so that you can more easily reach the best solution. It contains questions about your enterprise – not about the products and services that you might be considering. It is put forward for discussion, with the intention that this discussion, and validation in the field, will result in a practical tool for use by enterprises.

The questions explore the following areas:

- PD: Problem or Opportunity Definition
- PC: Problem or Opportunity Context
- BP: Business Process
- MS: Market Segmentation
- FL: Financial and Lifecycle
- QA: Quality of Service (QoS) Aspects
- FR: Functional

The answers to these questions will be input to your architecture development, as part of the process of Architecture Requirements Management. (See, for example, the Architecture Requirements Management process in TOGAF™ [1].)

Introduction

This White Paper describes a questionnaire that will help you identify your requirements for Cloud computing in a structured way, so that you can more easily reach the best solution. It contains questions about your enterprise – not about the products and services that you might be considering. It is put forward for discussion, with the intention that this discussion, and validation in the field, will result in a practical tool for use by enterprises.

Your responses to this Questionnaire will ensure a complete and structured statement of your business situation and requirements, thereby ensuring a better solution fit, strengthening your negotiating position, and mitigating risks. Cloud computing knowledge is not needed to respond to this Questionnaire because its scope does not extend to describing the solution architecture, but rather is confined to collecting the business requirements needed to determine the most appropriate Cloud solution.

Your business situation is either a problem or an opportunity for which you are seeking a solution that includes IT enablement. This Questionnaire pre-supposes that the current and/or future state of your business situation does and/or will not meet requirements.

The Questionnaire poses high-level questions in each category and provides responses in some cases. When responses are provided, you may simply select one of those responses, or use those responses as a template for creating a new response. The canned responses minimize the effort required to produce a statement of your business situation and requirements.

Because there are likely to be exceptions to the principles on which this tool is based, it should not be used as the sole source of guidance on Cloud fit. And because this tool only considers a granular set of business requirements at a particular point in time, several iterations for each of numerous business situations would be required to generate appropriate input to a corporate-level Cloud adoption strategy.

You should respond to all the questions, though your response in some cases may be “not applicable”. Depending on your objectives, respond either on the basis of your as-is or to-be state. Respond to the questions in the order presented.

PD: Problem or Opportunity Definition

Objective

Describe the business situation.

PD.1: What are the business goals you seek to address?

Define your business goals for obtaining a Cloud solution which improves the current and/or future state of your IT.

Example Responses

1. Improve financials
2. Reduce medium and/or long-term Total Cost of Ownership (TCO)
3. Improve cash flow
4. Shift from capital expenditure (CAPEX) to operational expenditure (OPEX) (private Cloud-incompatible)
5. Improve Quality of Service (QoS) and/or Service-Level Agreements (SLAs)
6. Access to functionality and/or domain expertise
7. Scale labor and/or fixed asset capacity up/down
8. Become a Cloud provider

PD.2: What type of business problem are you seeking to address?

Examine the types of Cloud computing business use-case that might be applicable to define the scope and opportunity in your business.

Example Responses

Refer to *Strengthening your Business Case for Using Cloud* [2].

PC: Problem or Opportunity Context

Objective

Describe the context – environmental factors – for the business situation.

PC.1: At what stage are the products and services impacted by this business situation?

Does the business seek to explore new products and services in new markets (transformative and disruptive) or to exploit existing markets with current products and services (utility and commodity)? This positioning is a key aspect of business strategy and delivery.

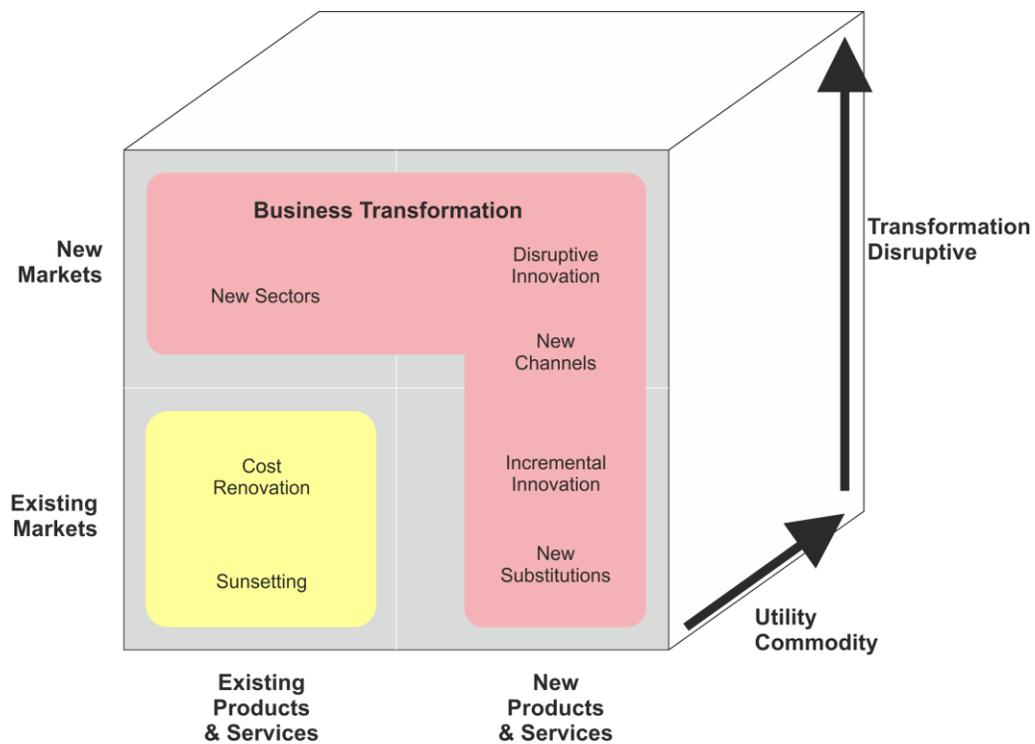


Figure 1: Impact on Products and Services

Example Responses

Refer to *Strengthening your Business Case for Using Cloud* [2] for pointers to Cloud business use-cases with a similar business strategy.

Existing business products and services can be:

- Offered through on-demand self services
- Augmented and enhanced through on-demand features and options
- Commoditized for competitive low-cost advantages

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New business products and services can be:

- Augmented and sourced on-demand
- Disruptive to existing products and services through superior cost and functional performance
- Offered as commodities for competitive low-cost advantages

Existing markets can be:

- Expanded through rapid scaling and expansion of products and services offered
- Entered through offering commodity products and services for competitive low-cost advantages

New markets can be:

- Entered competitively through rapid scaling and expansion of products and services offered
- Entered through offering commodity products and services for competitive low-cost advantages

PC.2: What is the scope of the situation relative to the process complexity?

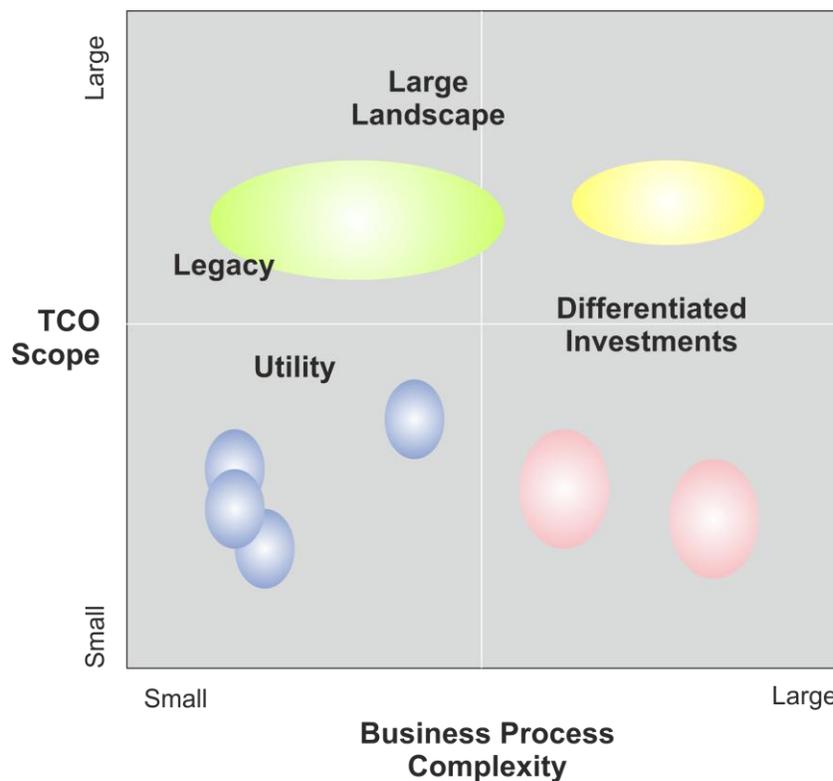


Figure 2: Business Operation Scope versus Complexity

Example Responses

Refer to *Strengthening your Business Case for Using Cloud* [2] for pointers to cloud business use-cases with a similar business strategy.

Responses to this general question can be obtained by addressing the more detailed questions below, depending on the business operation scope and complexity.

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Large scope of business operation:

- What scope of existing business operation can be moved to an on-demand hosting provider?
- Can a large scope of existing IT landscape be moved to a on-demand model?

Small scope of business operation:

- What niche business process operations could be moved to an on-demand hosting provider?
- Can specific IT operations be moved to an on-demand hosting provider?
- Can specific IT operations be commoditized for competitive low-cost advantages?

High business process complexity:

- Can highly complex business processes be improved through complexity reduction?
- What specific business processes need to be retained under control of the business for competitive advantage?

Low business process complexity:

- Can low-complexity business processes be commoditized for low-cost competitive advantages?

PC.3: What is the balance between information security and collaboration (resource to service arbitrage)?

Companies need to understand the degree of collaboration and types of data that can be moved into a Cloud environment, and need to assess the different Cloud deployment and hosting models that meet their sovereign, corporate, and personal security and collaboration needs.

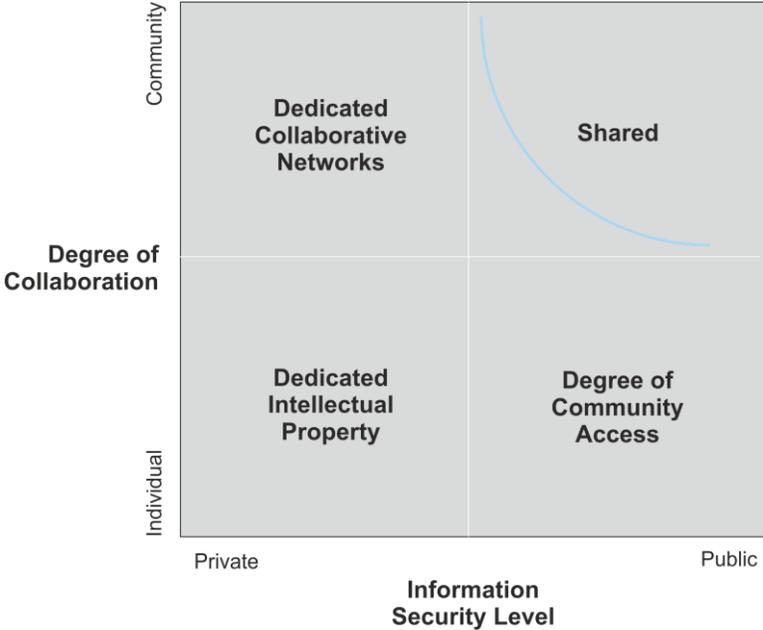


Figure 3: Information *versus* Ownership

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Example Responses

Refer to *Strengthening your Business Case for Using Cloud* [2] for pointers to Cloud business use-cases with a similar business strategy.

Responses to this general question can be obtained by addressing all of the more detailed questions below.

Community collaboration:

- Can business participants and stakeholders collaborate in a shared platform and business service environment?
- Can the information and assets created by collaboration be shared or are they private intellectual property (IP) to the corporation or collaborating group ?

Individual productivity:

- Can desktop and mobility be improved through on-demand personal productivity tools (email, access, office, applications)?
- Can the personal information and assets created by individuals be shared, or are they private IP to the corporation?

Public information security:

- Do current corporate and personal data rules and country legislation prohibit the storage and access to personal and corporate information in public locations?
- Does legislation such as the US Patriot Act affect personal and private data held in public locations?
- Can information held publicly be monitoring and managed to e-Discovery standards for legal purposes?
- Can personal and corporate information be selected, partitioned, and isolated effectively for storage and use in public locations?

Private information security:

- Do current corporate and personal data rules select and define intellectual property of those corporations and personnel?
- Can corporate and personal data be partitioned and isolated effectively for secure storage and access control and usage to corporate, industrial, and country legislative standards?

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PC.4: What is the acceptable risk – reward balance?

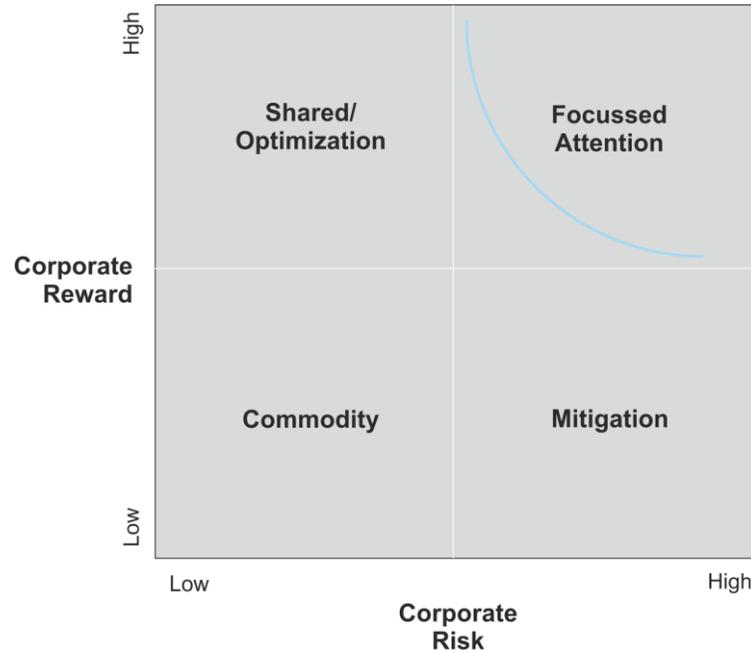


Figure 4: Risk versus Reward

Example Responses

Refer to *Strengthening your Business Case for Using Cloud* [2] for pointers to Cloud business use-cases with a similar business strategy.

Responses to this general question can be obtained by addressing the more detailed questions below, depending on the desired corporate risk/reward balance.

High corporate risk:

- Which business process operations carry high corporate risk in operational and legal failure?
- Can high corporate risk be mitigated further by enhanced risk sharing and Disaster Recovery (DR)/Business Continuity (BC) practices supported by on-demand backup and recovery services?
- Are there specific corporate risks that can be linked to specific IT software applications, infrastructure, and services?
- Can the trade-off with corporate benefits be traded-off and mitigated in order to manage the corporate risks?

Low corporate risk:

- Can business activities that can be quantified as low corporate risk be moved to an on-demand service environment?
- Can business activities be identified to explore and exploit on-demand business opportunities with mitigated risk management through partnerships and risk sharing with Cloud services?

High corporate reward:

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- Can opportunities for market share, revenue, profit, or cost management be enhanced through on-demand delivery, products, and services?

Low corporate reward:

- Can business activities with low corporate return be commoditized for low-cost competitive advantages?

BP: Business Process

Objective

Describe the business processes to be enabled with a focus on their importance to the business.

Respond to the following Business Process questions in terms of a business process, or a set of business processes (including the business as a whole) that are under consideration for enabling with Cloud computing.

BP.1: Which business process(es) are under consideration?

Select from one or more of the following categories at the level of granularity that is applicable.

Responses

Complete Business Process Portfolio (horizontal platform replacement for the whole business).

No specific business processes.

Human Capital Management (HCM):

- Skills Management (staffing, diversity), Knowledge and Collaboration, Learning
- Compensation Planning, Benefits Administration, Workers' Comp, Asset Management

Financial Management (FM):

- General Ledger, Accounts Payable, and Accounts Receivable (GLAPAR), Payroll, Taxes, Order to Cash, Real Estate Management
- Financial and Compliance Reporting, Sarbanes Oxley (SOX) and BASEL II
- Business Performance Management, Risk Management

Customer Relationship Management (CRM):

- Sales, Customer Experience Management (CEM), Call Center, Sales Force Automation (SFA), Kiosk, Self-service
- Business Intelligence (BI), Business Analytics, Campaign Management, Sales Analytics

Supply Chain Management (SCM):

- Procurement, Inventory Management, Import Compliance, Supplier Relationship Management (SRM)
- Engineering, Manufacturing, Product Lifecycle Management (PLM), Workforce Management, Resource and Capacity Management, Logistics

Information Technology (IT):

- Application Architecture and Management
- Infrastructure (Hardware [HW], Operating System [OS], and Middleware) Architecture and Management
- Data Center Architecture and Management

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Corporate HQ (Business Units, Geographies):

- Research & Development (R&D)
- Strategy and Portfolio Management
- Marketing
- Communications
- Legal
- CSR
- Operations

Example Responses

1. FM, GLAPAR
2. CRM, Call Center
3. FM, Payroll
4. HCM, Skills Management, including training and certification
5. Corporate HQ, Marketing, Business Analytics
6. SCM, Procurement
7. HCM, Benefits Administration

If your response to Question BP.1 was “No specific business processes”, then skip to the next requirements category.

BP.2: Are these business process(es) differentiating, part of your company's competitive advantage; and if yes, is that differentiation IT-based?

Select one response from the following list for each process, or select the bottommost applicable response.

(Differentiating business processes are integral to a business's competitive advantage and cost-effective operation. Differentiating business processes are the only processes for which a business case for in-house, custom, dedicated enablement independent of the rest of the business portfolio can readily be made.)

Responses

Non-differentiating, Business as Usual:

- Minimize TCO, maintain functionality and QoS
- For example, benefits, campaign, inventory, GLAPAR, IP management

Non-differentiating, External Compliance:

- Timely delivery of functionality, meet QoS requirements, minimize TCO
- For example, SOX II, ethical procurement, carbon footprint

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Differentiating, IT Supported:

- Meet functional and QoS requirements, adapt quickly to changes in those requirements
- For example, buy online, return in the store

Differentiating, IT-based:

- Align with corporate mission and strategic objectives, erect barriers such as IP protections to prevent imitators
- For example, Internet search engine

BP.3: To what extent are the non-IT resources consumed by these processes dedicated and customized?

Responses

Degree of dedication: fully dedicated, partially dedicated, or fully shared:

- If partially dedicated, note which types of non-IT resources – e.g. labor, fixed assets, process definitions – are fully or partially dedicated

Degree of customization: customized, tailored, standardized:

- Tailoring a standard resource does not significantly alter the skills and knowledge inputs required to operate or manage that resource
- As is applicable, note which types of non-IT resources have been tailored

BP.4: To what extent are the IT resources consumed by these processes dedicated and customized?

Responses

Degree of dedication: fully dedicated, partially dedicated, or fully shared:

- If partially dedicated, note which types of IT resources – e.g. application labor, applications, IT infrastructure labor, IT infrastructure – are fully or partially dedicated

Degree of customization: customized, tailored, standardized:

- Tailoring a standard resource does not significantly alter the skills and knowledge inputs required to operate or manage that resource
- As is applicable, note which types of IT resources have been tailored

MS: Market Segmentation

Objective

Describe the market segments in which your business operates.

MS.1: In which industry sector does your company operate?

Select one or more of the following categories, or provide a more detailed response if you feel that this is appropriate.

Responses

The following industry and super-sector classification is from the Industry Classification Benchmark [3].

Not relevant.

0001 Oil & Gas:

- Oil & Gas Producers; Oil Equipment, Services & Distribution, Alternative Energy

1000 Basic Materials:

- Chemicals, Basic Resources

2000 Industrials:

- Construction & Materials
- Industrial Goods & Services: Aerospace & Defense; General Industrials; Electronic & Electrical Equipment; Industrial Engineering; Industrial Transportation; Support Services

3000 Consumer Goods:

- Automobiles & Parts; Food & Beverage
- Personal & Household Goods: Household Goods & Home Construction; Leisure Goods; Personal Goods (including Consumer Electronics); Tobacco

4000 Health Care:

- Health Care Equipment & Services; Pharmaceuticals & Biotechnology

5000 Consumer Services:

- Retail; Media; Travel & Leisure

6000 Telecommunications

7000 Utilities

8000 Financials:

- Banks; Insurance; Real Estate; Financial Services

9000 Technology:

- Software & Computer Services: Computer Services; Internet; Software

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- Technology Hardware & Equipment: Computer Hardware; Electronic Office Equipment; Semiconductors; Telecommunications Equipment

Example Responses

1. Consumer Goods, Consumer Electronics
2. Technology, Internet

MS.2: In which geographies will the users of the Cloud solution reside?

Select one of the following categories, at the level of detail you feel appropriate in the case of specific geographical areas.

Responses

Not relevant.

Global.

Particular geographic area or areas.

Example Responses

1. North America and Western Europe
2. China
3. European Union

MS.3: In which country will the procurement of the Cloud solution be made?

Select one of the categories from MS.2 at the level of detail you feel appropriate in the case of specific geographical areas.

MS.4: What is the size of your company?

Select one of the following categories, or provide more detail if you feel that this is appropriate.

Responses

Not relevant.

Small:

- < US\$5M annual revenue

Medium:

- US\$5 – 100M annual revenue

Large:

- > US\$100M annual revenue

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Example Responses

1. Medium

FL: Financial and Lifecycle

Objective

Express the financial targets and contract and delivery terms for the solution.

If relevant, respond to the following questions for the potential enablement service(s) to be procured.

FL.1: What are your operating organization's financial parameters?

- Target annual service cost as a % of cost of goods sold (COGS)?
- Target annual service cost as a % of discretionary spend?
- Current and target multi-year TCO for the associated business process(es)?
- TCO, ROI, and resource yield of the existing enablement?
- Target RTI, TCO, ROI, and resource yield of the new enablement solution?

Example Responses

1. Target annual service cost as a % of COGS is xx%.
2. Target annual service cost as a % of discretionary spend is xx%.
3. Current TCO is xx over xx years; target TCO is xx over xx years.
4. For the existing enablement, the TCO is xx over xx years, the ROI is in xx months/years, and the resource yield is xx%.
5. The targets for the new enablement solution are: TCO of xx over xx years, ROI is in xx months/years, and resource yield of xx%.

FL.2: What are your procuring organization's financial parameters?

- Current and target ratio of fixed to variable cost?
- Current and target ratio of CAPEX to OPEX?
- Monitoring, metering, and reporting preferences?
- Billing metric preferences?
- Billing periodicity preferences (cash flow)?
- Preferred committed contract length?
- Total Cost of Acquisition (TCA) target, including total cost of decommissioning?

Example Responses

1. Current fixed to variable cost ratio is xx:xx; the target is xx:xx.
2. Current CAPEX to OPEX ratio is xx:xx; the target is xx:xx.
3. Monitoring, metering, and reporting preferences are xx.

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4. Billing metric preferences are xx.
5. Billing periodicity preferences are xx.
6. Preferred committed contract length is xx.

FL.3: What are your preferences regarding the following contract and delivery terms?

- Sub-contractor restrictions
- Billing metrics, method, and period
- Term and early termination
- SLOs and SLAs – SLA penalties account for timing, duration, and frequency of SLA misses
- Order fulfillment – the delivery processes (including billing and service-level reporting)
- Monitoring, metering, and reporting
- Auditing
- Feedback

Example Responses

SLAs:

- Business SLA: “up” targets – including point of demarcation and periodicity – and penalties for missing. For example, a payroll process that pays employees twice a month has much more stringent targets during the twice monthly pay periods than during the rest of the month.
- Technical SLA examples: acceptable single points of failure (SPOFs) including site failover; degree of resource over-subscription; and recovery time and point objectives (RTO and RPO). For example, a larger penalty is imposed if there are frequent and/or long unplanned outages.

QA: QoS Aspects

Objective

Describe the requirements for the various aspects of Quality of Service (QoS).

QoS aspects encompass Reliability, Availability, and Serviceability (RAS), scalability, timeliness, and security – sometimes referred to as the “non-functional requirements” (NFRs) or the “ilities”.

QoS characterization includes the periodicity of each aspect, and relative prioritization of aspects at key time periods. The correlation of QoS and functional requirements includes periodicity.

QA.1: What are the tangible and intangible business impacts of the solution not achieving the minimum SLAs?

Example Responses

1. Tangible: short-term and long-term decrease in revenue (for example, customers turn to alternatives) and/or increase in expenses (for example, regulatory penalties, or new customer acquisition)
2. Intangible: loss of reputation

QA.2: What are your QoS requirements related to “Can I get it and keep It running”?

The aspects in this category include consumability, manageability, serviceability, agility, flexibility, and adaptability.

Consumability includes adoptability and usability.

Flexibility includes the ability to swap or change as allowed by the technology and the contract.

Example Responses

1. A development project must be able to obtain a new test environment within 1 day and sustain the use of this facility for a defined period of, for example, 1 to 2 months' usage.
2. We must be able to provision a new customer within 30 minutes and meet the requirements for that customer account validation.

QA.3: What are your QoS requirements related to “Is it running”?

The aspects in this category include availability, fault tolerance, recoverability, stability, reliability, and dependability.

Availability is typically measured in 9s. A “Five 9s” system is up 99.999% of the time – a little over five minutes per year downtime. Planned, scheduled outages for maintenance are typically excluded.

Fault tolerance avoids service disruption. A fully fault-tolerant design has no SPOFs, and often accommodates multiple failures within a service window – survivability of planned, unscheduled outages. Software fault tolerance designs include exception handling and task rollback.

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Recoverability is measured in terms of recovery time objective (RTO) and recovery point objective (RPO). RTO determines how quickly the system needs to be fully operational; RPO determines how much data loss can be tolerated.

Reliability is typically measured as mean time to failure (MTTF) and mean time between failures (MTBF) or number of failures in a billion hours (FITS). MTTF is used along with mean time to repair (MTTR) to calculate the MTBF.

Example Responses

1. "Five nines" availability, "eleven nines" availability
2. No scheduled maintenance between 09:00 and 17:00 Mon-Fri
3. System restart to take <15 minutes

QA.4: What are your QoS requirements related to "How is it running"?

The aspects in this category include system performance optimization: balancing scalability and throughput with the timeliness aspects of latency, predictability (determinism), and synchronicity.

Latency varies from less than 1ms to more than 150ms (milliseconds to minutes).

Micro-level predictability is often defined as "hard" (a Mission Control system, for example) or "soft" (a Plant Control system).

Macro-level predictability:

- Planned and scheduled; for example, Financial Management mini-peaks at end of quarter and major peak at end of fiscal year
- Planned and unscheduled; for example, Pharmaceutical certification on average five times a year, Florida hurricane response
- Unplanned and unscheduled; for example, Air traffic control response to ash cloud

Throughput may be described in a range of 1 to 100,000 transactions per second, or "moderate" to "very high". 1500 orders per second is moderate; the number of phone calls on Mother's Day is very high.

Synchronicity descriptors include tight tolerance, workload balancing, fairness, and time period correlated.

Example Responses

1. 95% of responses to take <500 ms
2. Normal maximum of 1,000 orders/sec but up to 10,000 orders/sec in 6 weeks before Christmas

QA.5: What are your QoS requirements related to "Is it running in spec"?

"In spec" means is the solution operating in accordance with the business's mission and policies. The aspects in this category include governance and low impact footprint.

Governance includes prioritization of services and transactions, compliance, access (security).

Low impact footprint includes social responsibility and sustainability (for example, carbon-neutrality and water usage).

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Example Responses

1. The defined service is within the catalog menu specification.
2. The defined service uses the specific small, medium, or large service scope specification options to meet Operating Level Agreements (OLA) for the use of that service.
3. Changes to the specification are managed within a governance change control program.
4. Pay and conditions for operations staff must meet legal requirements for the countries where the staff are located.
5. Operations staff to have no access to customer data.

QA.6 What is the relative weighting of your QoS requirements?

Identify which QoS requirements must be met, and for which you are willing to negotiate less stringent terms.

Example Responses

1. The peak availability and throughput requirements must be met, but the latency and low impact footprint requirements may be diminished.

FR: Functional

Objective

If the functional characteristics of your workload are complementary to the other workloads enabled by a provider (i.e., if your workload improves the provider's diversity factor), then your business will be more attractive to that provider, and you should be able to negotiate better terms and conditions. (An improved diversity factor translates to higher resource yield.) You also reduce the risk of an outage due to insufficient resources during your peak consumption periods.

Key yield improvement factors include: variable resource requirements, variable QoS requirements, and fractional headcount consumption.

FR.1: What is the periodicity of your typical steady state usage?

Periodicity is the cycle of requirements, including average, peak, and off-hours. Cycles may be on a calendar basis (including hourly, daily, weekly, monthly, quarterly, and annually), or on an event basis.

Example Responses

1. Monthly periodicity – peaks at the same time each month
2. Annual periodicity – seasonal peaks
3. Special events: planned events with predictable capacity, which don't occur at the same time each month or year. Event examples: weather patterns such as blizzards, fads such as the “Tickle Me Elmo” doll, occasions such as weddings, and disasters such as fires.

FR.2: What is the growth or shrinkage of your typical steady state usage?

Example Responses

1. Increase/decrease in capacity at the beginning of each steady state contract year
2. One-time changes
3. Including acquisitions/divestitures, regulatory changes, and new markets

FR.3: What is the average and peak number of users by type?

Types of user include business users, “power” users, and process administrators.

Example Responses

1. The average number of xx users is xx, and the peak is yy.

FR.4: What is the predictability and periodicity of business activity (workload)?

Example Responses

1. Very predictable; normal activity 8:00 EST – 16:00 EST, Monday-Friday; peak activity last two days of each month, quarter, and fiscal year (ending March 31).

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2. Moderately predictable; normal activity 7×24; peak activity late November through December, with a half-peak in August.
3. Very predictable; normal activity 8:00 EST – 16:00 EST, Monday-Friday; peak activity 48 hours mid-month and end-of-month.
4. Fairly predictable; normal activity 8:00 EST – 16:00 EST, Monday-Friday for management, and 7×24 for online training; peak activity 4 - 6 weeks per year for certifications.
5. Fairly predictable; normal activity 8:00 EST – 17:00 EST, Monday-Friday for interactive, and off-hours Monday-Thursday for regular reports; peak activity off-hours Friday-Sunday for weekly report, and 1 - 4 times per week for *ad hoc* reports.
6. Very predictable; normal activity business working hours; peak activity May-July (peak manufacturing period).
7. Very predictable; normal activity business working hours; peak activity last week of October (last week of employee open enrollment period).

FR.5: How closely do the business-critical periods (periods of peak QoS) align with the workload periodicity?

Example Responses

1. The periods of peak business criticality and peak workload for an order fulfillment enablement solution for a clothing retailer are very tightly correlated.
2. The periods of peak business criticality and peak workload for a campaign management enablement solution for a clothing retailer are not tightly correlated. (The peak workload occurs off-hours while processing the weekly data import from a private label credit card processor; the peak business criticality occurs when the CEO requests an *ad hoc* report.)

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- [1] TOGAF™; refer to www.opengroup.org/togaf/
- [2] White Paper: Strengthening your Business Case for Using Cloud, W106, published by The Open Group, July 2010; refer to www.opengroup.org/bookstore/catalog/w106.htm
- [3] Industry Classification Benchmark (ICB); refer to www.icbenchmark.com

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