

# Infrastructure Trend Report 2017

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# Analyst Perspective

"In a milieu of lightning-fast technological change, stating that 'the future is now' is rhetorical almost to the point of meaninglessness. However, there is always a point where a forward-looking future trend starts to make a tangible difference in the here and now.

In this report, Info-Tech Research Group focuses on five trends that will demand the attention of the infrastructure and operations manager in 2017. They require your attention because of threat or opportunity, or both. These are not necessarily new trends. Cloud computing, for example, didn't just land on us. But in each trend, there is something going on in 2017 – beyond the hype and buzzwords – that is important.

Info-Tech has identified seven key-initiative-plan areas that infrastructure and operations managers need to focus on for success in their role. In addition to identifying why it is important to take action related to the five trends, we will also point to how such actions fit into one or more of these key initiatives."

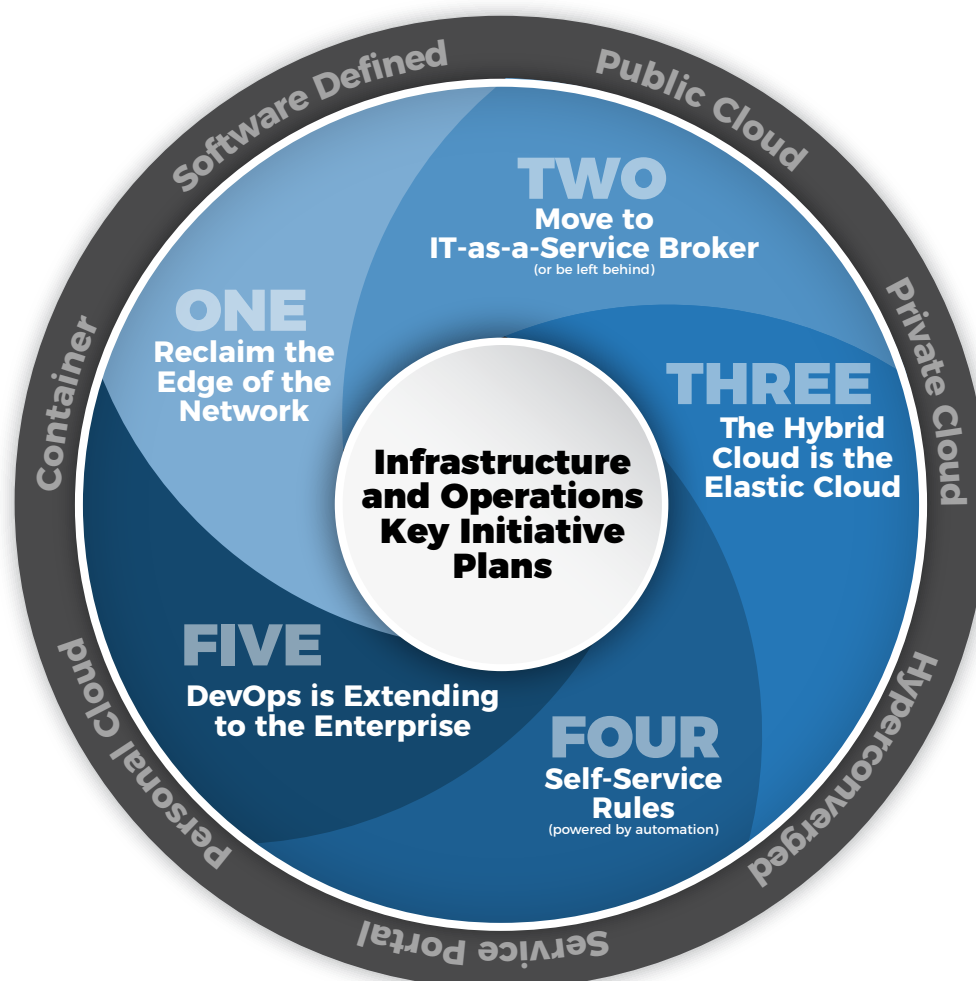
**JOHN SLOAN**

Director, Infrastructure Practice

Info-Tech Research Group



# Five Trends That Demand Attention in 2017



# Seven Key Initiatives

## FOR INFRASTRUCTURE AND OPERATIONS

Info-Tech's key initiative plans are the essential projects that every infrastructure leader should undertake. We match each trend to relevant key initiative plans based on the trend's implications for that project.

### 01 **STANDARDIZE THE SERVICE DESK:**

Increase end-user satisfaction by providing timely and effective responses to user requests and resolutions of all incidents.

### 02 **BUILD YOUR INFRASTRUCTURE ROADMAP:**

Keep agility and stability in focus while planning and communicating the future of your Infrastructure practice.

### 03 **CRAFT YOUR CLOUD STRATEGY:**

Identify and mitigate risks to your database in a cloud computing environment before you migrate.

### 04 **CREATE A RIGHT-SIZED DISASTER RECOVERY PLAN:**

Stop just satisfying auditors and start actually protecting the business.

### 05 **DEVELOP AN END-USER COMPUTING STRATEGY:**

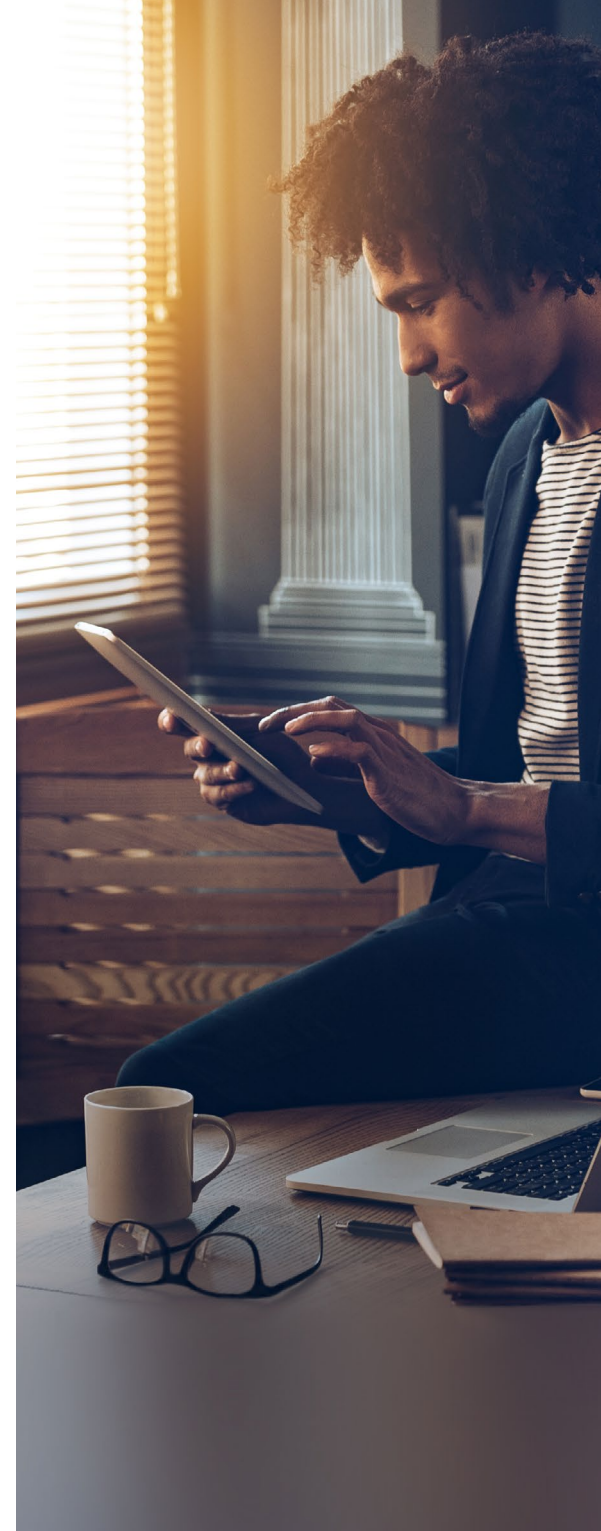
Ensure your end-user computing strategy is framed within the context of your organization.

### 06 **DEVELOP AND MANAGE THE INFRASTRUCTURE AND OPERATIONS BUDGET:**

Articulate how infrastructure and operations initiatives and projects support business operations and priorities.

### 07 **MAP SKILLS FOR CHANGING INFRASTRUCTURE AND OPERATIONS:**

Be practical and proactive – acquire the technical skills needed to support your future state environment.



# Infrastructure Trends That Matter in 2017

## RECLAIM THE EDGE OF THE NETWORK

In networks, north/south is increasingly giving way to east/west. Most traffic no longer needs to be routed through head office. Software is changing the WAN game, enabling this detour and the ability to intelligently direct traffic across multiple connections. Organizations now have the power to monitor and guide traffic across their network connections, giving them more leverage vis-à-vis ISPs and facilitating the reclamation of the edge of the network.

## MOVE TO IT-AS-A-SERVICE BROKER (OR BE LEFT BEHIND)

If you build it, they will come. But what if someone else builds it better? The business model is changing. The fact is that infrastructure and operations no longer build all of their own capabilities. Increasingly, services off the rack are perfectly fine – no tailor necessary. That's not to say, however, that a personal shopper would be a negative...

## THE HYBRID CLOUD IS THE ELASTIC CLOUD

With the growth of public and private cloud options, many organizations have a consistent goal of hybrid cloud. But having virtual servers hosted on multiple internal and external services is not a true hybrid cloud. Numerous developments, from convergence to software-defined infrastructure, are paving the way to fluid and elastic hybrid clouds in 2017.

## DEVOPS IS EXTENDING TO THE ENTERPRISE

DevOps is a marriage of development and operations, leveraging cross-functional teams to facilitate continuous delivery (Ebert et al. 2016, 94). It's no longer the exclusive domain of big players with agile cloud development efforts. Infrastructure and operations managers will be tasked with staffing the Ops side of this paradigm: coordinating the resources necessary to conduct software development in a cloud, and at a more granular level, architecting support of application containers according to business value and specific suitability.

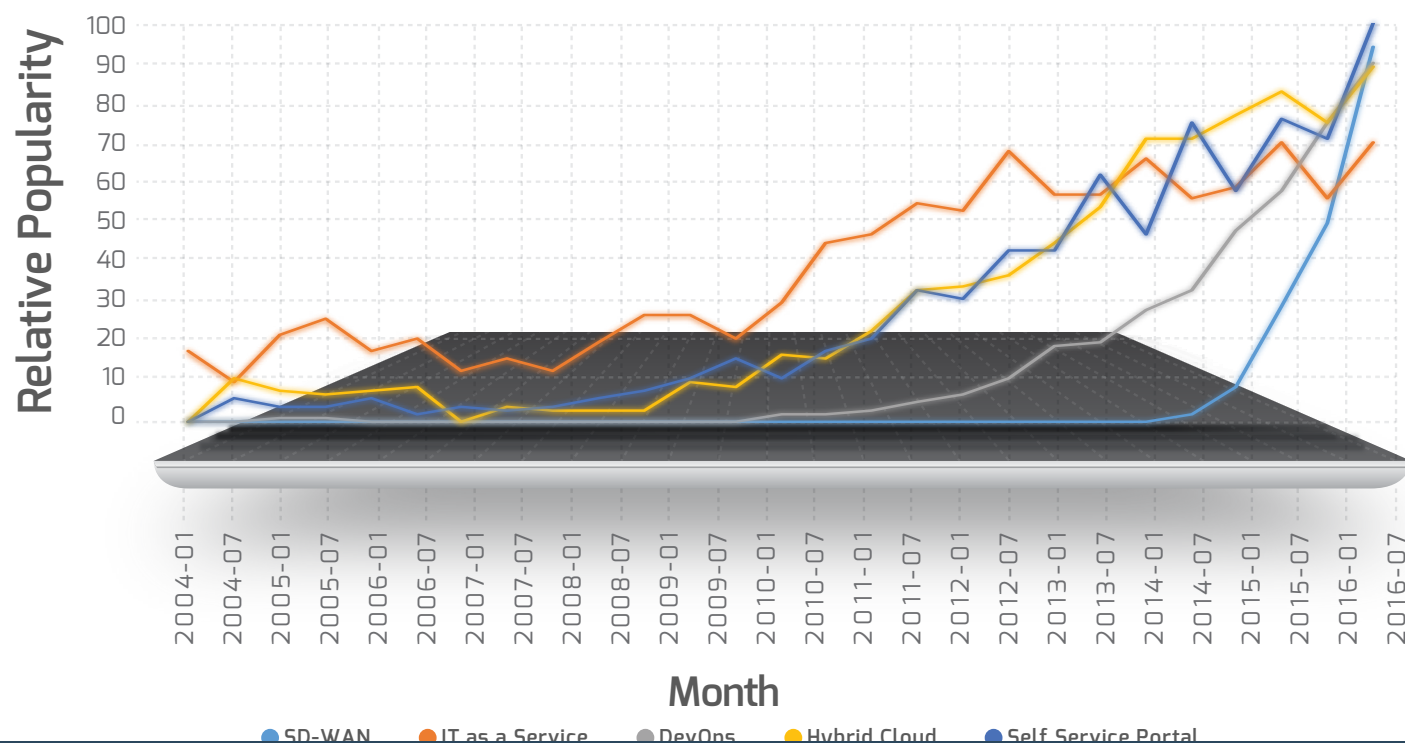
## SELF-SERVICE RULES POWERED BY AUTOMATION

Service desk technicians are expensive to employ, and IT budgets are flat. The solution? Push more of the service desk's responsibilities to end users. Whether it's self-service portals, automated incident response, or even reliance on power users, it's clear that self-service is here to stay. Infrastructure and operations leaders will have to contend with this new model of service, the service desk manager will have to assess the skills of both technicians and end users, and IT budgets will have to be reworked to fit this reality. But enablement and BYOD come at a very real cost. When end users are empowered to make their own choices, who is responsible for supporting them when they have problems?

# Search Trends: 2004–Present

Google is the great leveller – when we're interested, we jump to the search bar for answers. The story those searches tell is revealing. Over time, interest in the trends identified in this report has increased dramatically, most of them reaching their peaks within the last year or so.

## Google Search Trends: 2004 – Present





# For Each Trend, We Provide the Following:

## 01 RECOMMENDATIONS

Why does this trend matter to you? Info-Tech delivers with specific, measurable, attainable steps to address each trend head-on.

## 02 SYNOPSIS

A brief description of the trend, comprising a definition and some basic information about its trending status.

## 03 STATISTICS, SIGNALS, AND DRIVERS

What changes are driving each trend in 2017? Where is the evidence for these changes? Graphical representations of need-to-know statistics that illustrate the pervasiveness and/or impact of each trend.

## 04 SCENARIO ANALYSIS

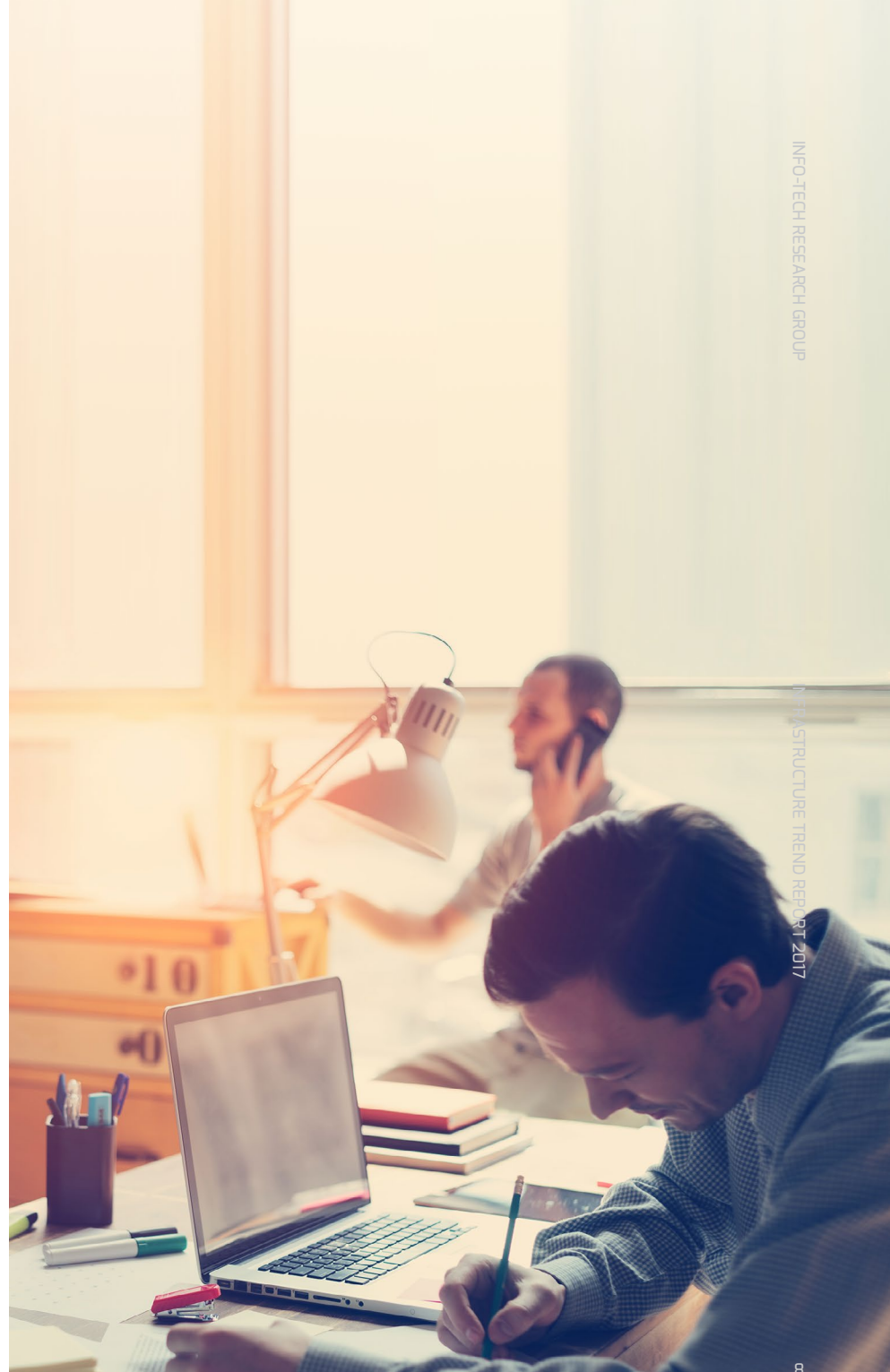
An outline of some common situations and how the trend might impact the business operations therein.

## 05 CASE STUDY

A specific occurrence of a trend, outlining a situation confronted by an organization, the solution it chose to implement, and the result of that solution.

## 06 RISK, UNCERTAINTY, AND OUTLOOK

What are some of the drawbacks associated with the trend? What don't we know? How should you approach this trend?



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