

## The Cloud Solution Provider of the Future

Posted On Sep 15, Posted by [Michael Vizard](#) Category [Cloud Computing](#)

Cloud Channel Summit conference shines a spotlight on evolution of the channel in the age of the cloud

There's a lot of talk these days about to what degree cloud computing may actually wind up killing the channel. In the short term, there seems to be [a lot of opportunity for the channel related to building private clouds](#). But as public cloud computing services continues to gain momentum, the specter of disintermediation of the traditional IT channel continues to loom.

The real issue, says Jeff Kaplan, managing director of [THINKstrategies](#), an IT vendor and solution provider consulting firm, is that cloud computing will kill the channel as much transform it, which happens to be the subject of an upcoming [Cloud Channel Summit conference](#) in Mountain View, Calif. that THINKstrategies will host in November.

Kaplan says we're already seeing the emergence of new solution provider entities that are reselling various applications and services, whether that's a bank selling mobile computing applications to customers as part of a software-as-a-service (SaaS) offering or [traditional IT organizations deciding to make their internal IT infrastructure available as a cloud computing service](#).



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More traditional solution providers will also have to evolve. Kaplan notes that instead of relying primarily on technology services, the solution provider of the future is going to [operate more as](#)

[a business consultant](#)

that

[functions as a broker by aggregating the management of various cloud services](#)

on behalf of a particular customer.

No matter how you look at the cloud, Kaplan concedes that the business models are still a little murky. Some solution providers will opt to build their own cloud computing services, while others will opt to [resell compute infrastructure](#) made available by companies such as Rackspace. What is for certain is that most customers will want to deal with somebody that is more than just another faceless entity in the cloud, which means there will always be a role for solution providers to play.

Tags: [private clouds](#) , [Rackspace](#) , [channel](#) , [solution providers](#) , [software-as-a-service](#) , [SaaS](#) ,  
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