A weekly newsletter with links to blogs and industry news for subscribers to the Architecting IT blog.

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This is newsletter #55, 2018-W17 published on 29 April 2018.

Same As It Ever Was

The image shown here comes from the Computer History Museum in Mountain View, Silicon Valley, in the US. I snapped quite a few pictures during my last visit just a few weeks ago, including this early IBM System/360 system.

From a nostalgia perspective, this is an amazing place; the IBM 360 Series was where I cut my commercial computing teeth, although that was on the grandchild of this architecture, System/390.

As I look across the industry, it got me thinking, how much changes and how much basically stays the same?

Shiny

Everybody loves to play with new toys. Maybe it's inherent in all of us, developed from an early age by our parents. Perhaps it's unique to the IT industry. In any event, tech people love to play with the latest, greatest thing.

Mostly though, what's quickly classed as "legacy" is usually keeping things running in the background. IBM mainframes like the one above (although much more advanced) are still at the core of many large enterprises. What about other platforms?

Oracle & Microsoft

Take databases as an example. DB-Engines tracks database usage. Oracle, MySQL and Microsoft SQL Server are the top three databases by a mile. Look back over the past 5 years at the trend (link here) and you can see this hardly changes.

There are some very obvious successful newcomers like MariaDB, however even DB2 and Microsoft Access are still in the top 10. With all the relative growth of the cloud, even Amazon's DynamoDB isn't in the top 20.

Plus ça Change

Despite the claims that new technologies (like containers) will take over the world, very little changes quickly. Possibly the greatest revolution in IT over the last 15 years has been in the adoption of server virtualisation, which has undoubtedly changed the technology landscape.

Outside of this, in general things change slowly because technical debt is high (see this week's opinion post) and operational efficiency is important. Fitting new technologies into operational processes takes time.

Hype Cycle

Gartner's Hype Cycle curves observe this technology adoption most keenly. We could perhaps do with an extension to this methodology to highlight the half-life of companies, products and platforms. I wonder what this would show? It's obvious that database half-life is long, what about other technologies?

What do you think?

Chris Evans

New Architecting IT Blog Posts...

- What are TBW and DWPD? (29 April 2018)
- The Burden of Technical Debt (27 April 2018)
- NetApp embraces cloud for future business growth (25 April 2018)
- Why HCI Data Protection is Different (24 April 2018)

New Storage Unpacked Podcasts

- #48 - Introduction to Datrium DVX (Sponsored) (27 April 2018)
- #47 - Enterprise Storage is Not Boring (20 April 2018)

Events 2018

The Architecting IT team will be attending the following events. Get in touch if you want to meet up!

- NetApp Analysts Day (7 May 2018)
- Nutanix .Next 2018 (8-10 May 2018)
- Pure Accelerate 2018 (22-24 May 2018)
- Flash Memory Summit (7-9 August 2018)

Past events pages

- Cloud Field Day 3 (4-6 April 2018)

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