



Hybrid Cloud Strategy Evaluation Checklist

Plow Networks

Prepared 2026

7101 Sharondale Court
Suite 200
Brentwood, TN 37027
plow.net

*This document contains proprietary and confidential information prepared for you by Plow Networks.
This document should not be reproduced without the consent of Plow Networks.*

How to Use This Checklist

This worksheet is a structured evaluation framework for IT leaders assessing a hybrid cloud strategy before committing to providers, architectures, or multi-year agreements. Work through each of the six sections with the relevant stakeholders — architecture, security, compliance, finance, operations. Mark each item as complete (), in progress, or not yet addressed, and use the risk column to flag items that require attention before the commitment is finalized.

A thorough evaluation typically takes 3–6 weeks. The items that are vague, outdated, or "we'll have to check" are the gaps that matter most.

Section 1: Workload & Data Gravity

Which workloads belong where, and why. The evaluation should identify poor candidates for public cloud before the migration plan is built, not after.

Evaluation Item	Status	Risk
Inventory of workloads with current placement (on-prem, cloud, SaaS)	<input type="checkbox"/> Complete <input type="checkbox"/> In Progress <input type="checkbox"/> Not Started	<input type="checkbox"/> Low <input type="checkbox"/> Med <input type="checkbox"/> High
Each workload categorized by latency sensitivity and data volume	<input type="checkbox"/> Complete <input type="checkbox"/> In Progress <input type="checkbox"/> Not Started	<input type="checkbox"/> Low <input type="checkbox"/> Med <input type="checkbox"/> High
Data gravity assessed for high-volume stores (DBs, file shares, analytics data)	<input type="checkbox"/> Complete <input type="checkbox"/> In Progress <input type="checkbox"/> Not Started	<input type="checkbox"/> Low <input type="checkbox"/> Med <input type="checkbox"/> High
Workloads flagged as unsuitable for cloud with documented reasoning	<input type="checkbox"/> Complete <input type="checkbox"/> In Progress <input type="checkbox"/> Not Started	<input type="checkbox"/> Low <input type="checkbox"/> Med <input type="checkbox"/> High
Integration dependencies between on-prem and cloud workloads mapped	<input type="checkbox"/> Complete <input type="checkbox"/> In Progress <input type="checkbox"/> Not Started	<input type="checkbox"/> Low <input type="checkbox"/> Med <input type="checkbox"/> High

Section 2: Connectivity & Latency

Hybrid cloud only works if the connection behaves like a reliable extension of the network. Measure before you assume.

Evaluation Item	Status	Risk
Baseline latency measured to each candidate cloud region under peak load	<input type="checkbox"/> Complete <input type="checkbox"/> In Progress <input type="checkbox"/> Not Started	<input type="checkbox"/> Low <input type="checkbox"/> Med <input type="checkbox"/> High
Bandwidth capacity and redundancy between sites and cloud confirmed	<input type="checkbox"/> Complete <input type="checkbox"/> In Progress <input type="checkbox"/> Not Started	<input type="checkbox"/> Low <input type="checkbox"/> Med <input type="checkbox"/> High
Dedicated connectivity options evaluated (Direct Connect, ExpressRoute, etc.)	<input type="checkbox"/> Complete <input type="checkbox"/> In Progress <input type="checkbox"/> Not Started	<input type="checkbox"/> Low <input type="checkbox"/> Med <input type="checkbox"/> High
POC performance validated for chatty/latency-sensitive applications	<input type="checkbox"/> Complete <input type="checkbox"/> In Progress <input type="checkbox"/> Not Started	<input type="checkbox"/> Low <input type="checkbox"/> Med <input type="checkbox"/> High
Failover path tested for primary WAN/cloud connection outage	<input type="checkbox"/> Complete <input type="checkbox"/> In Progress <input type="checkbox"/> Not Started	<input type="checkbox"/> Low <input type="checkbox"/> Med <input type="checkbox"/> High

Section 3: Compliance & Data Residency

"The provider is compliant" does not mean "your workload is compliant." The gap between the two is where most compliance failures happen.

Evaluation Item	Status	Risk
Data residency rules identified for each regulated data category	<input type="checkbox"/> Complete <input type="checkbox"/> In Progress <input type="checkbox"/> Not Started	<input type="checkbox"/> Low <input type="checkbox"/> Med <input type="checkbox"/> High
Encryption at-rest and in-transit requirements validated per service	<input type="checkbox"/> Complete <input type="checkbox"/> In Progress <input type="checkbox"/> Not Started	<input type="checkbox"/> Low <input type="checkbox"/> Med <input type="checkbox"/> High
Key management responsibility documented (provider-held vs customer-held)	<input type="checkbox"/> Complete <input type="checkbox"/> In Progress <input type="checkbox"/> Not Started	<input type="checkbox"/> Low <input type="checkbox"/> Med <input type="checkbox"/> High
Audit trail and logging validated against compliance framework requirements	<input type="checkbox"/> Complete <input type="checkbox"/> In Progress <input type="checkbox"/> Not Started	<input type="checkbox"/> Low <input type="checkbox"/> Med <input type="checkbox"/> High
Shared-responsibility model reviewed for each service in scope	<input type="checkbox"/> Complete <input type="checkbox"/> In Progress <input type="checkbox"/> Not Started	<input type="checkbox"/> Low <input type="checkbox"/> Med <input type="checkbox"/> High
Compliance team sign-off obtained before architecture finalization	<input type="checkbox"/> Complete <input type="checkbox"/> In Progress <input type="checkbox"/> Not Started	<input type="checkbox"/> Low <input type="checkbox"/> Med <input type="checkbox"/> High

Section 4: Cost Modeling (3-Year TCO)

List pricing is the start of the model, not the end. The organizations that regret their cloud decision budgeted against list pricing alone.

Cost Line Item	Modeled	Notes / Risk
Compute and storage at realistic utilization (not peak)	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	
Egress charges based on projected data movement patterns	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	
Inter-region / inter-AZ traffic costs	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	
Licensing changes when moving workloads to cloud	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	
Reserved instance / commitment pricing modeled with flexibility tradeoff	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	
Support tier costs (often percentage-based)	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	
Third-party tooling costs (monitoring, backup, security)	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	
Sensitivity analysis run (what if data volume doubles, workload mix shifts)	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	

Section 5: Vendor Lock-in & Exit Strategy

Every cloud commitment is reversible. Some cheaply, some at enormous cost. Find out which before you sign.

Evaluation Item	Status	Risk
Exit strategy documented: cost, timeline, and data-migration path	<input type="checkbox"/> Complete <input type="checkbox"/> In Progress <input type="checkbox"/> Not Started	<input type="checkbox"/> Low <input type="checkbox"/> Med <input type="checkbox"/> High
Portable vs provider-specific components identified in the architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> Complete <input type="checkbox"/> In Progress <input type="checkbox"/> Not Started	<input type="checkbox"/> Low <input type="checkbox"/> Med <input type="checkbox"/> High
Contractual data access, portability, and transition terms reviewed	<input type="checkbox"/> Complete <input type="checkbox"/> In Progress <input type="checkbox"/> Not Started	<input type="checkbox"/> Low <input type="checkbox"/> Med <input type="checkbox"/> High
Open standards preferred where feasible (containers, open DB formats)	<input type="checkbox"/> Complete <input type="checkbox"/> In Progress <input type="checkbox"/> Not Started	<input type="checkbox"/> Low <input type="checkbox"/> Med <input type="checkbox"/> High
Egress-cost estimate if we needed to leave in year 2 or 3	<input type="checkbox"/> Complete <input type="checkbox"/> In Progress <input type="checkbox"/> Not Started	<input type="checkbox"/> Low <input type="checkbox"/> Med <input type="checkbox"/> High

Section 6: Operational Readiness

Strategy without operational capability produces expensive lessons. Evaluate honestly whether your team and tooling are ready.

Evaluation Item	Status	Risk
Team skill inventory for the target cloud provider and specific services	<input type="checkbox"/> Complete <input type="checkbox"/> In Progress <input type="checkbox"/> Not Started	<input type="checkbox"/> Low <input type="checkbox"/> Med <input type="checkbox"/> High
Monitoring & observability stack works across on-prem and cloud	<input type="checkbox"/> Complete <input type="checkbox"/> In Progress <input type="checkbox"/> Not Started	<input type="checkbox"/> Low <input type="checkbox"/> Med <input type="checkbox"/> High
Security operations model extends to cloud workloads	<input type="checkbox"/> Complete <input type="checkbox"/> In Progress <input type="checkbox"/> Not Started	<input type="checkbox"/> Low <input type="checkbox"/> Med <input type="checkbox"/> High
Change management and incident response adapted for hybrid environment	<input type="checkbox"/> Complete <input type="checkbox"/> In Progress <input type="checkbox"/> Not Started	<input type="checkbox"/> Low <input type="checkbox"/> Med <input type="checkbox"/> High
Runbook documentation covers cloud failure scenarios	<input type="checkbox"/> Complete <input type="checkbox"/> In Progress <input type="checkbox"/> Not Started	<input type="checkbox"/> Low <input type="checkbox"/> Med <input type="checkbox"/> High
Support model (internal, vendor, MSP) defined for cloud workloads	<input type="checkbox"/> Complete <input type="checkbox"/> In Progress <input type="checkbox"/> Not Started	<input type="checkbox"/> Low <input type="checkbox"/> Med <input type="checkbox"/> High

Evaluation Summary

Count the High-risk items across all six sections. This is the most important number to bring to your commitment conversation.

Section	# High-Risk Items	Notes
1. Workload & Data Gravity	-----	
2. Connectivity & Latency	-----	
3. Compliance & Data Residency	-----	
4. Cost Modeling	-----	
5. Vendor Lock-in & Exit	-----	
6. Operational Readiness	-----	
Total High-Risk Items	-----	

How to Read Your Score

0–3 High-Risk items: Strong evaluation. Proceed with confidence, address remaining gaps in phase 1.

4–7 High-Risk items: Evaluation needs work before commitment. Treat this as a findings list, not a go signal.

8+ High-Risk items: Don't commit yet. The risk of an expensive mistake is material. Close gaps first.

Evaluating a Hybrid Cloud Strategy?

Plow Networks runs provider-neutral hybrid cloud evaluations for mid-sized companies — covering workload placement, cost modeling, compliance, and exit strategy — so you enter the commitment conversation with complete visibility into what you're signing up for.

[Request a Hybrid Cloud Evaluation →](#)