

If you are preparing for DevOps transition or considering a DevOps solution for your organization you should look out for some traps. Most common trap is to buy a comprehensive solution or a closed solution that promises all DevOps support.

Background:

DevOps is name of a cultural shift that brings in more agility and nimbleness to your organization. It is not just about automation. DevOps talks about freedom of innovation and driving initiatives with self motivated and teams who are in control of themselves.

Technologies change tremendously every few years and there are numerous example of companies and giants getting wiped out of competition because they were not able to keep up with technology advancements.

One of the easiest ways to prepare your organisations is to prepare your teams and provide them freedom so that they can come up with best solutions to the problems your organisation face. Solutions need to be elected bottom up rather than forced top down. Later is often non technical decision which might not always be right.

DevOps involves multiple stages and there exists solutions that specialise in a particular stage. For example we have Jenkins for CI, terraform for provisioning, Ansible for configuration, LDAP for user management, Prometheus for monitoring, etc. These are just a few to name and the solutions are well tested in industry. Moreover every competitive tool in DevOps industry has a vibrant ecosystem that allows integrations and customizations.

Your company is unique and needs specially crafted solution. There is no silver bullet in DevOps and no one solution fits all. You should be able to carefully choose between the solutions and since most of them are community driven, the updates are available for fixes immediately. License costs for open source solutions are nil and support can always be bought if you need it.

Issues with a Comprehensive Solution in DevOps

A company trying to provide a software that claims to provide complete DevOps solution is like claiming to build a car out of parts completely built inhouse. So either it will be extravagantly costly or lose on quality. In both cases it does not provide flexibility that time demands with a continuously optimizing DevOps solution. Even if the software vendor claims to provide flexibility and customization into the product it is at their own will and limits not mentioning the overhead and maintenance costs customers have to bear.

Software Vendors are not transparent about portability and data migration if needed. Most of the time this ends in customer having no option but to stay with the vendor because client becomes dependent and there is no way out. Comprehensive softwares lacks help from community and client has no option but to be dependent on the vendor for all its requirements. Finding skilled personnel for maintenance is also a major concern.

Since DevOps is a term covering a wide range of concepts, it is very unlikely that vendor actively updates its software to take care of all technical advancements in industry. New vibrant technologies like containerisation, orchestration, new protocols, APIs, integrations with 3rd party services as soon as they are available are included late or not at all. Today organisations need to be able to embrace agility and be on our toes to adapt to the market. Being not able to adapt in time will only result in losses.

Layoffs are more common in organisations that are not agile and workforce is not allowed to make technical decisions. Technology evolution inside organisation is more important than a sudden revolution that is created by a decision to not use a particular technology or solution and leaving the workforce outdated.

Limitations of a single vendor DevOps software

They are trying to fit one solution to all customers which is not the true state of DevOps. Every organisation is unique and has its own problems to solve. There might be a pattern in parts of DevOps implementations like CI or Deployment type but there are a lot of other factors that do not match between two organisations.

When company image is at stake on production units one should not bet on Jack of all trades. A collection of specialised tools working in seamless way is more efficient than one bulky software that tries to control everything. One should choose expert solutions and then build a greater ecosystem for themselves which is unique and solves a problem completely.

Solution is not open to public and support is costly. Onboarding is time consuming and eventually results in vendor lock in situations. This leaves companies at stake when the next technology drift happens in market.

One cannot switch parts of software with other pluggable systems. Even the technology leaders today do not rely on one single solution and build expert systems to solve one problem at a time. A bigger ecosystem built using pluggable tools allows to swap, try and test a tool before it becomes a part of larger ecosystem. This keeps technology at

organisations evolving and always ready for future challenges.

Advantages of a diversified and agnostic solutions

Most of the expert tools in market provide integrations with other tools and help in forming a ecosystem. Experienced DevOps service providers can help in choosing the best ones for your use case and build a system that solves your problems.

Tools used in such a solution can be swapped in future with little or no impact on other functioning tools of the larger ecosystem. This helps to be nimble and evolve with technology changes. Individual tool providers know best of their segment and are always ready with patches, new features and a vibrant support system.

Since tools solve a smaller problem they are more effective at it and are mostly platform agnostic allowing you to run your environments on any platform, cloud or datacenter. These tools provide a wide spectrum of greatly usable features which cannot be matched by a single software vendor.

There is a wide collection of solutions to choose from and it provides freedom of choice. Costs are greatly reduced and open source softwares are free of cost. Skills for such community driven tools are readily available in market. Licences are mostly free and there is freedom for buying support for the tools you choose. These tools are competing in a open space and try to avoid vendor lock in situations themselves allowing organisations to freely migrate to other solution without any problems and also providing help during such instances.

Benefits of dealing with a neutral system integrator

DevOps service providers or system integrators are people with great experience in understanding your organisation's state and proposing what would suit best. These people are technology and vendor agnostic and will provide you with advice that will help you gain technical edge in market.

DevOps service providers bring in best of all verticals in DevOps and choose the most suited tools for the job. The solution thus created is crafted just for your company needs and there is no match to the benefits that the solution brings with it.

At times a custom solution might be needed for solving your organisation's problem as it will be unique and no tool in market solves it yet. Good DevOps professionals will help you in identifying and bridging the gaps in technology and building a true seamless DevOps

experience.

System integrators are your friends trying to help you out with solving your problems rather than selling a product. Later will push the decision of software choice on you while the DevOps experts will lead you through the way understanding the risks and mitigating them together.

DevOps service providers aim at making your organisation self sustaining and bring agility to your workforce by introducing evolution in technology. They will understand the importance of terms like adaptation, friction, traction, change, acceptance and will work out a plan for complete transformation. The aim is to make your organisation ready for handling any technology challenges rather than trying to fit in a software that is not crafted for you.

Conclusion

Vendors who are trying to create and provide one single software as a solution to DevOps are missing the point. DevOps is complementary part of being Agile. Tying down to one vendor will make you lose your agility. To be agile is to be free and make choices on the go to adapt, evolve and survive.

Build a solution by choosing specialised tools and seek help of experts. Embrace and experience true agility with DevOps solutions crafted just for you.