- |Resellers
- |Control Panels
- |Private Label
- |Sell Domains

- Blogs
- WHIR TV
- WHIR Events
- WHIR Webinars
- Trade Shows
- Contact Us

Big Data Solutions – the Hosting Provider Opportunity

Justin Lee on January 11, 2013

- Tweet   47
-
- Share
-

"Storage Servers" Flickr photo courtesy of grover_net.

Related Topics: big data, cloud computing, executive interviews, softlayer, zl technologies

Data is being produced at an overwhelming rate. Every day, some 2.5 quintillion bytes of data is being created, with 90 percent of this global data generated by web and mobile based applications in the last two years, according to a recent IBM study.

But rather than adhering to expectations of the past by providing simply the ability to store lots of data, hosting companies must now be able to deliver the means to derive value from that data. This has driven a need for sophisticated technologies that allow customers to effectively process, organize and analyze large amounts of data.

Hosting companies occupy an important spot in the big data storage and analysis process, frequently providing that space where the data is stored. By partnering with software vendors to provide their own big data solutions, web hosts have an opportunity to grab a piece of the more than $100 billion global market.

"Unstructured data that has not been managed provides the biggest opportunity for web hosting services," says Kon Leong, CEO of ZL Technologies, a company that develops software for consolidating unstructured data into a single repository for compliance, optimization, records management and e-discovery purposes. "There is a need to manage it now for various things like e-discovery litigation and compliance reasons."

Because so many big data requirements have to do with the storage and management of data, and because they are best addressed simultaneously, they lend themselves to being solved by hosted services, delivered by service providers.

"In the last 10 years, some companies have solved them one at a time," says Leong, "and that has caused more headaches now. The web hosts can say, 'look, I can put all of that in one place and manage all of these tasks.'"

So, hosting providers are in the right place at the right time to benefit from a powerful emerging trend in the technology world. But building out and launching a big data solution can still seem like a daunting task for a hosting provider, particularly a smaller provider without a lot of development resources.

Fortunately, building an effective big data solution, for a hosting provider, doesn't have to be about development, as much as putting the right pieces together to form a set of resources and tools that effectively address customers' data storage and analyzing needs.

There are many database tools on the market for handling big data sets, the best known of which is probably the open source Apache Hadoop project, which is designed to operate at a large scale and on distributed server resources. Hadoop and other tools can be packaged with a hosting provider's own resources to provide customers with a packaged answer to big data challenges.

SoftLayer is a fine example of a hosting provider that has built a big data solution using pre-existing tools and its own unique resources in a configuration tuned specifically for the demands of data processing.

In December, SoftLayer partnered with 10Gen to develop and launch big data solutions built on 10Gen's MongoDB NoSQL database and SoftLayer's Bare Metal Cloud (which provides self-serve and pay-as-you-go access to dedicated server hardware). The service includes pre-built server images using 10Gen's preferred OS configuration and pre-installed with the MongoDB software.

"Big data solutions are really a complement to everything else in your product portfolio," said SoftLayer's VP of product innovation Marc Jones at the time of the product launch. "In our case, we feel like it's a natural extension to our platform. Our goal is to enable our customers to be able to get started with and leverage big data faster and from a performance perspective, more economically than you can from a virtualized infrastructure."

According to Leong, the window of opportunity for web hosting providers to get into the big data solutions market is getting smaller each day, and if they are serious about adding big product solutions to their portfolio they should do it as soon as possible.

"Those hosting providers that can grab the market at this particular point will own the customer for a long time," says Leong. "So it's a mad dash for market share if one is prepared to provide a holistic solution. Hosting providers should grab their customers now; it will be too hard later."

Talk back: Do you look at big data solutions as an opportunity for your hosting business? Are you looking to launch big data solutions? Are you currently working on developing solutions specifically for big data analytics processes? Let us know in the comments.

About Justin Lee

Justin Lee has been a staff analyst with theWHIR since 2004. He writes about a range of web hosting and IT-related issues facing the industry on the WHIR website, as well the print version of the WHIR magazine. Follow him on Twitter @Justin_theWHIR.

Leave a Comment

Name *

E-mail *

Website

Submit

- **Web Hosting News Alerts**

  Web hosting news sent to your inbox

  email address   Sign Up

- **WHIR To Go:**

-