

Deadliest threats AWS poses to your business

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AWS Business Risks

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Summary

No we are not going to talk about outages and similar. There are even worse threats. The ones that undermine the existence of your business. We are taking care of more dangerous practices that can undermine the self core of your business impacting on:

- recruiting
- sane architecture
- destruction of resources
- crazy budgets
- do you know what you buy? The hidden locking
- deprecation policy missing
- refocusing cognitions
- **AWS is reinventing what it means to be a software vendor for all the markets it serves, including consumer, developer, SMB, and enterprise.**

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Introduction

AWS is currently offering at least 90+ services from 20 verticals at the last count

The challenge, however, is that some of the services are duplicates of each other, meaning that they do the same thing. So, it begs the question why the **duplication** and in many cases added complication?

Consequently, the ever-growing portfolio makes it more difficult for users, decision-makers and techs, support ecosystem of partners, and suppliers of services who have to be able to **stay abreast of the changes** in the AWS eco-system and **skill up** accordingly to meet the market demands.

The simplicity of approach seems to have gone out the window and it needs to come back.

According to Janakiram MSV who wrote an article for Forbes:

“One of the most significant challenges for AWS and its ecosystem is the **fragmentation** of the services. Just a few years ago, AWS had a handful of services that were classified under compute, storage, networking, databases and application development.”

He goes on to say that

“The service sprawl and fragmentation would also hurt the salesforce of AWS and the resellers. It would be tough for account managers and solution architects to succinctly articulate the AWS value proposition to customers. The partner ecosystem would also suffer from the challenge of keeping up with the pace of announcements.”

I would also add that due to the currently available and **overwhelming number of services**, service providers, consultancies, training partners, and technical professionals will inevitably have to answer some key questions.

Product life cycle

You have even new services which are superseding already available ones. The ever-growing portfolio makes it complicated in selecting the right product offering for a specific use case. Though the names are different, many services have a similar offering

Elastic Beanstalk → Codestar

“ AWS Elastic Beanstalk will make it even easier for you to create, deploy, and operate web applications at any scale. “

[A]

AWS Elastic Beanstalk is an easy-to-use service for deploying and scaling web applications and services developed with Java, .NET, PHP, Node.js, Python, Ruby, Go, and Docker on familiar servers such as Apache, Nginx, Passenger, and IIS.

You can simply upload your code and Elastic Beanstalk automatically handles the deployment, from capacity provisioning, load balancing, auto-scaling to application health monitoring. At the same time, you retain full control over the AWS resources powering your application and can access the underlying resources at any time.

[B]

AWS CodeStar is a cloud service designed to make it easier to develop, build, and deploy applications on AWS by simplifying the setup of your entire development project.

[C]

AWS CodeStar enables you to quickly develop, build, and deploy applications on AWS. AWS CodeStar provides a unified user interface, enabling you to easily manage your software development activities in one place. With AWS CodeStar, you can set up your entire continuous delivery tool-chain in minutes, allowing you to start releasing code faster. AWS CodeStar makes it easy for your whole team to work together securely, allowing you to easily manage access and add owners, contributors, and viewers to your projects. Each AWS CodeStar project comes with a project management dashboard, including an integrated issue tracking capability powered by Atlassian JIRA Software. With the AWS CodeStar project dashboard, you can easily track progress across your entire software development process, from your backlog of work items to teams' recent code deployments.

[D]

For example, both Amazon RDS and Amazon Aurora offer managed MySQL service. For an enterprise customer, it is not an easy task to choose the right managed database offering. On the DevOps front, both OpsWorks and CodeDeploy offer configuration management. Same is the case with Amazon SQS and Amazon MQ - both the services offer managed Message Oriented Middleware (MOM).

When it comes to data transformation, AWS Data Pipeline and AWS Glue address similar use cases. Instead of augmenting Data Pipeline with ETL capabilities, the product teams went onto build a brand-new service in the form of AWS Glue.

Recently announced Amazon AppSync has same capabilities as Amazon Cognito for offline access and synchronization of data. When mobile developers get started on AWS, they are not sure of which service to pick for storing and synchronizing user data.

Another example is choosing from Elastic Container Service, Elastic Container Service for Kubernetes, and AWS Fargate. All the three services enable customers to deploy and manage containerized workloads in AWS. But choosing the best option aligned with the customer scenario is not going to be easy.

Deprecation Policy Missing

On a different note, SimpleDB was quietly dropped from the portfolio without offering any guidance or migration tools. Amazon may need to have a well-defined deprecation policy for the services.

[E]

Amazon has a tendency of shipping a new product instead of enhancing an existing offering through a feature. This is another reason why there are multiple overlapping products. With each new service added to the portfolio, the confusion increases among the partners and customers. The service sprawl and fragmentation would also hurt the salesforce of AWS and the resellers. It would be tough for account managers and solution architects to succinctly articulate the AWS value proposition to customers. The partner ecosystem would also suffer from the challenge of keeping up with the pace of announcements.

Disrupting Your Business: Architecture

With So many AWS services in play and with multiple AWS services available to address a specific solution.

How do I know which AWS service is the right solution for a client?

How do I know how to get the right level of knowledge?

How do I assess which candidates have the right depth and breadth knowledge?

Disrupting Your Business: Recruiting

Where do you draw the line? There are rumors of more certifications on the way, let's see what the year brings and how the certifications will map to real life use.

The questions for recruiters will be 'how do I articulate the right skill-set that map to all of these available services in order to get the best fit for the customer?'

A check of the Job-boards will show predominantly for AWS solution Architect and DevOps Engineer jobs. Surely this does not capture the depth and breadth of all the necessary knowledge required to provide insight on all the currently available AWS services..

Disrupting Your Business: Cannibalization

"Today's Amazon is far more than just an 'everything store,' it's a leader in consumer-facing AI and enterprise cloud services. And its insatiable appetite for new markets mean competitors must always be on guard against its next moves."

A handful of Amazon's recent moves, excluding M&A activity:

1. In October 2015, Amazon announced its data visualization tool QuickSight, at the same time that partner company Tableau, which provides similar features, announced that it was integrating deeper into AWS. The pattern recurred in November 2016 when Amazon made QuickSight generally available.
2. Amazon X-Ray and Pinpoint, announced in December 2016 and made generally available last week, compete with New Relic and other monitoring services, as does Amazon CloudWatch.
3. In February, the company announced Chime, a video-conferencing and team communication platform. The product competes with myriad offerings like WebEx, Zoom, Blue Jeans, and Skype for Business, as well as Slack's nascent offering.
4. In late March, Amazon announced Connect, customer-service software for call centers. This product both competes and partners with the startup Talkdesk, which runs on AWS.
5. Last week Amazon debuted AWS CodeStar, which provides a platform for easy application development and deployment.

CodeStar was met with particular trepidation. "When it matures, this is probably going to kill Heroku," software engineer Nathan Broadbent commented on Hacker News, referring to the platform-as-a-service company owned by Salesforce. "Honestly I'm surprised it took so long for AWS to start competing directly with Heroku," LendUp growth manager Austen Allred quipped on Twitter. CodeStar is the spiritual successor to Elastic Beanstalk, which was introduced in 2011.

[F]

Beyond IaaS, PaaS and SaaS

AWS announced dozens of new services in several categories, including artificial intelligence (AI), Internet of Things (IoT), containers, serverless computing, databases, as well as its core compute capabilities – to name a few.

This 'candy store' strategy consisting of shelf after shelf laden with delectable treats is quite intentional on AWS's part,

The breadth of offerings shows AWS's capability for innovation, of course, but also illustrates its 'customer obsessed' philosophy. In fact, customers are directly responsible for most new product innovations. "90% of what we build is what customers ask for,"

There is a broader story here, however. With many of its innovations, especially in AI and IoT, AWS is expanding beyond its public cloud roots.

True, every product ties to the cloud by leveraging the scale, ease of use, and pay-as-you-go benefits that AWS is famous for. But my biggest takeaway from re:Invent this year is that AWS is now turning a corner – perhaps the most important corner of its life.

AWS is not simply offering cloud-based AI services or cloud-based IoT services or cloud-based database services or whatever. Rather, AWS is now offering industry leading AI, IoT, database, etc., services that happen to be cloud-based.

Furthermore, such services will remain industry-leading because they are cloud-based, enabling AWS to expand its leadership well beyond its cloud sweet spot.

In other words, AWS is reinventing what it means to be a software vendor for all the markets it serves, including consumer, developer, SMB, and enterprise. The days of IaaS, PaaS, and SaaS are now over (AWS didn't use these terms even once). Instead, AWS is helping us define what it means to buy and use software in a world where we can take the cloud for granted. [G]

Crazy budgets

[H]

Conclusions

Ask to your direct and reliable contacts: horror stories are always secret and do not make out to the news. Are you able to receive some valuable sincere intelligence from your contacts? The tendency is to hide misfortunes. It is a must that the feedback you receive is true and sincere. Maybe could Linnode or Microsoft Azure be worth a look?

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