WHAT IS FINDEVOPS?

Proponents of DevOps tout key processes like continuous improvement and continuous release that result in a more cohesive, collaborative IT department and better products for end users.

Still, one key factor is often missing from the DevOps conversation: finances! DevOps relies heavily on cloud technology (as do most companies today, DevOps or not). For all its merits, which are plentiful, you'd be hard-pressed to find a company who hasn't overpaid for a cloud service, particularly when scaling up and figuring out how to customize pricing structures to fit your needs.

Interestingly, most companies who practice DevOps, whether in a full cultural embrace or simply utilizing certain tools, are surprisingly unlikely to have a tool specifically for observing costs related to DevOps. What tools they may use – daily or weekly reporting – are often too little too late. Those reports are often useless when it comes to pinpointing the needle in the DevOps haystack on what specific change caused a pricing anomaly.

Perhaps the next DevOps iteration FinDevOps is a financially-minded approach that seeks to remedy this missing piece by bringing finances into the fold of development and operations. By providing financial metrics in a visual, real-time manner, all departments can better understand specific decisions and their direct impact on finances. It is this key area that the emerging field of FinDevOps seeks to demystify.

(This article is part of our DevOps Guide. Use the right-hand menu to navigate.)

Brief overview of DevOps

DevOps is a theory and set of general best practices that seeks to break down the divisions, or silos, between the traditional IT arms of operations and development. Companies who deploy agile

working environments see an improvement in internal communication and understanding when IT teams encompass both programming and operational activities, perhaps even within a single employee. Practices like feedback loops and a culture of experimentation result in improved in-house relationships that promote successful products, more frequent releases, and, ultimately, innovation.

But a DevOps culture does rely heavily on continuous feedback: this code versus that code, this feature versus that feature, now versus later. One major metric that's been missing? Cost. And for all the popularity and excitability around DevOps, most DevOps tools are missing cost metrics –the key metric for business success.

Finance and DevOps

A combination of financial, development, and operations, FinDevOps may be the next frontier in DevOps culture and technology. For decades, IT and business departments seems to be at philosophical odds: they communicate differently, they work differently, and they prioritize differently. Yet, as technology as pervaded and innovated every area of a business, this philosophical loggerhead is hurting – not helping – business success.

With new FinDevOps tools, the finance team can better and more fully understand how money flows from IT. Armed with granular accuracy and real-time updates, the finance team can determine which DevOps decisions are affecting the bottom line, providing insight into whether the benefit of a change is worth the expense.

So, what does FinDevOps do that traditional cost monitoring can't? Most enterprise cost management options were developed for reasons like reporting, compliance, and governance. But, IT as a whole and DevOps in particular rely heavily on emerging cloud technologies to stay small, flexible, and fast, with real-time solutions on a pay-per-use basis.

Old-school cost management tools produce weekly or monthly reports, often too late to tell whether this change in code or that feature rollout is responsible for an unprecedented uptick in cloud computing. This leaves your finance team in the dark on how to justify that cost and your IT teams unsure how to explain the root cause.

FinDevOps uses real-time cost monitoring to stay on the cutting edge of cloud and DevOps technology. FinDevOps tools might offer features such as cost prediction, continuous cost control, and anomaly detection.

The most interesting feature could just well be collaborative knowledge: a tool like this could track all inventory you maintain in the cloud, measuring resources and costs, to promote a single source of truth. This single truth might sound heavy, but this way of thinking actually promotes DevOps philosophies of dialogue and process. With all team members accessing the same information, the conversation changes from a blame-game into insightful discussion on ROI.