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Ever-ready for every opportunity

How European companies can unlock
competitiveness on the Cloud Continuum

Executive Summary

The race to the cloud is at a turning point. In 2020, European companies took the global lead in basic cloud migration. According to our research of 4,000 global executives, European companies moved four out of 10 workloads to the cloud compared to three out of 10 for North American companies. Companies in Europe moved workloads to the cloud in months, rather than years, as COVID-19 upended businesses around the globe. But while European companies may have won this spring, they risk losing the cloud marathon.

Still, our research shows European companies have limited views of the cloud. A vast majority of these companies view cloud merely as shared, public data centers that can reduce costs. Meanwhile, many struggle to navigate a complex regulatory landscape of data sovereignty and trust that prevents them from embracing cloud in more significant ways. In addition, European companies aren't investing appropriately in cloud to achieve a wider range of business goals. In North America and China, companies expect to more than double their rate of investment in cloud between 2020 and 2024. In Europe, on the other hand, business leaders say they will spend 25% less than they did during the previous four years.

Many European companies risk falling behind when it comes to gaining the cloud's full value, but there's a subset of companies in Europe (one in 10) that show us the way forward. They approach cloud as a continuum of capabilities and opportunities that can make them both globally competitive and locally responsible. These European "Continuum Competitors" see the cloud as a critical enabler of advanced digital capabilities to achieve financial goals while meeting or exceeding Europe's climate-neutral targets.

Continuum Competitors quickly adapt to changes by capturing feedback on products and services on an on-going basis. In fact, 81% of Continuum Competitors believe they are well prepared even for future tighter regulations around data residency and sovereignty requirements and will be compliant very quickly.

They distinguish themselves from their peers by following advanced practices for the Cloud Continuum. As a result, they achieve 3x more in cost reduction and have a 2x higher reduction in their carbon footprint with the cloud.

Moving forward, what will propel European companies to advance on the Cloud Continuum?

There are four keys to Europe's cloud success:

- Build a business case that engages leaders and accelerates cloud investment to achieve bigger goals.
- Architect for unique preferences with balance, control and trust.
- Don't let technology languish. Augment it with human potential.
- Accelerate innovation to deliver exceptional experiences.

Europe's advancement depends on leaders who experience the cloud's full opportunities. Continuum Competitors make choices from across the Cloud Continuum to create a seamless technology and capability foundation that best serves their business needs—now and into the future.