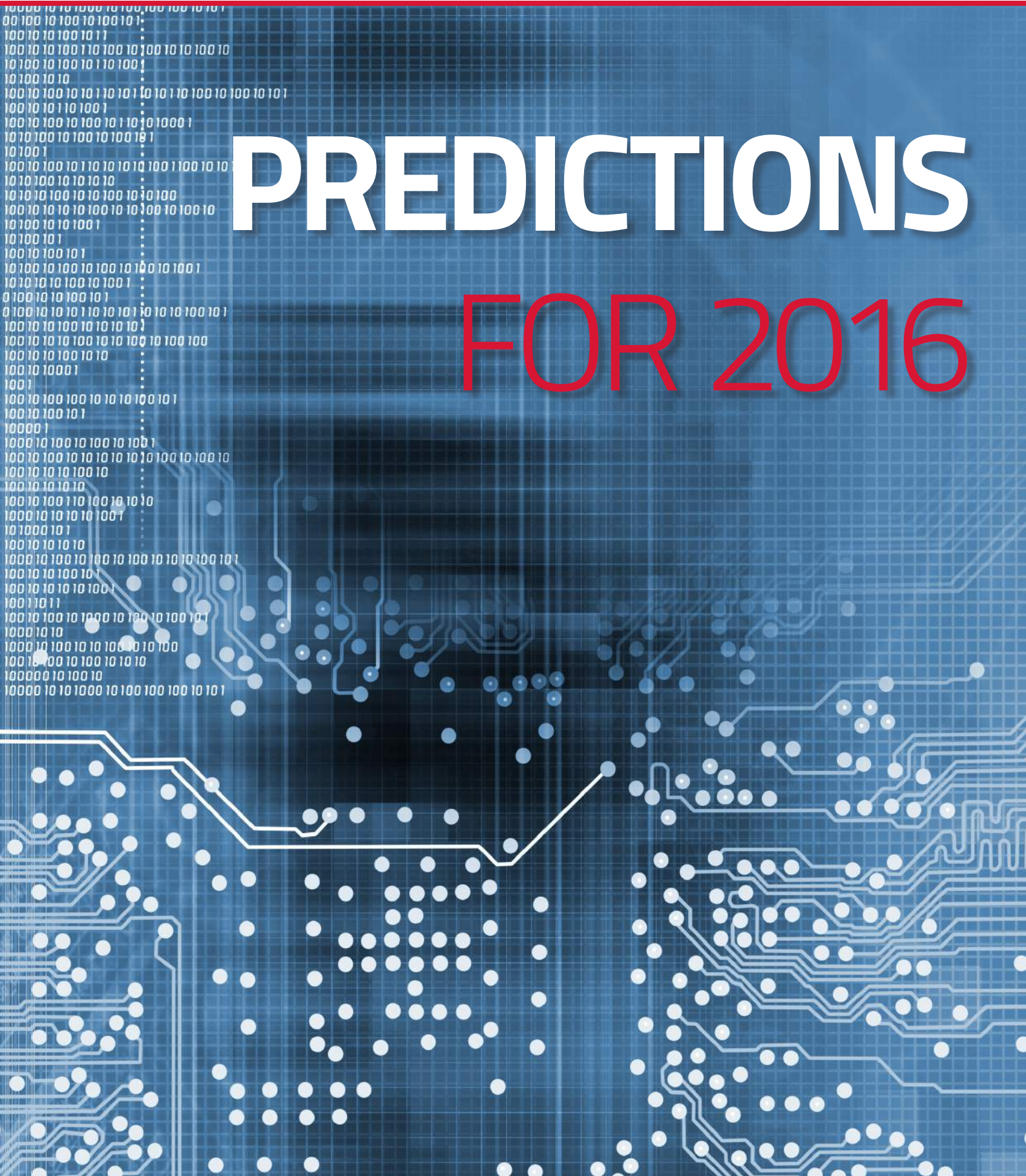




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PREDICTIONS FOR 2016



The data race is on for 2016

Tableau's Bob Middleton spells out his top ten trends for 2016, from cloud price wars to the future for analytics



Bob Middleton

As Product Marketing Manager at Tableau Software, Bob Middleton helps people see and understand their data. After many years of IT marketing he has most recently been immersed in cloud software, mobile, and digital marketing. An expert on all things cloud and Big Data related, Bob focuses on product marketing, product management, marketing strategy and go to market planning.

Over the next twelve months, cloud will alter the data and analytics landscape like never before. With leviathans such as Amazon, Google, and Microsoft stepping up the battle for greater market share, and with the growing need for IT leaders to cut costs and increase access to data, the rise of cloud technology is set to bring a roller coaster of innovation and activity.

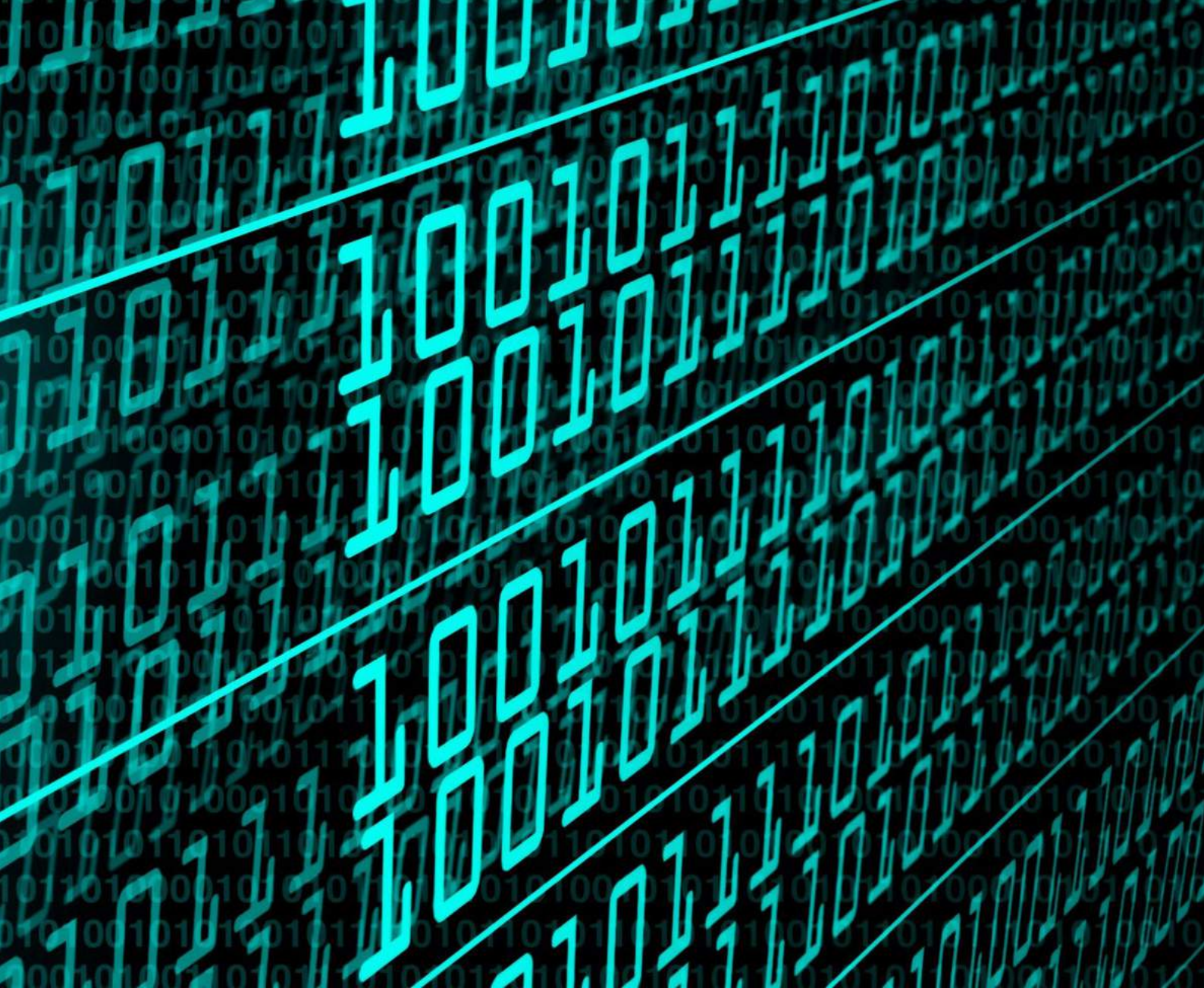
What's more, market demand, combined with new partnerships and mergers will give rise to the opportunity for challengers to compete in the contest for cloud domination!

1. The data race is on

The cloud giants, from Amazon Web Services to Salesforce, want organisations to move their data into their ecosystems. Yet the target for the big players has expanded beyond typical internal data assets to include everything from IoT data from machines and devices, to social media metrics and data from web platforms - all with the intent of building an increasingly connected analytics view of a firm's resources and customers.

This is unsurprising. Data assets are now the equivalent to companies of what oil resources are to nations. Cloud service providers looking to establish





themselves as a vital foundation for businesses must therefore strive for access to all of the firm's data on their platform.

In fact, the trend of businesses moving their data warehouses to the cloud has already taken off. This is an appealing option given the lure of zero capital expenditure for hosted solutions, as well as the affordable storage options that cloud providers offer. Firms that have already started on this journey will be particularly open to easy paths for including non-traditional data sources in ever-scalable platforms.

2. Partners bring a new dimension to the cloud price war

The front line in the battle between major cloud players has largely been customers' wallets. This year, the war on price is set to escalate as key partners get dragged in.

Ultimately, the end game comes down to partners assisting with the onboarding of customers onto preferential cloud platforms. Partners are able to take advantage of the deeper resources of large cloud organisations. Therefore, their ability to in turn offer their own services at a lower cost adds a whole new facet to the cloud contest.

3. Cloud technology is no longer for "start-ups only"

The tipping point has arrived.

Cloud technology is no longer seen as something limited to the realm of start-ups and small businesses. Now, large enterprises from even the most change-resistant sectors are waking up to the value it offers and migrating their entire infrastructure and data ecosystems to the cloud.

Adopting a cloud strategy delivers a range of benefits to businesses of all sizes, whether it's enabling retailers to offer better in-store customer service or manufacturing firms to fully leverage advances in the industry. It also provides firms with significant benefits in terms of cutting cost and reducing risk. That message is impossible to ignore, especially as CIO's look to the



future and the alternative of massive unsustainable overheads stares threateningly back.

4. Cloud analytics minimises costs for IT

Keeping cloud deployment costs to a minimum will lead IT leaders to rely on powerful analytics solutions that are available 24/7, 365 days a year. As cloud analytics solutions allow for digging into both usage and billing data, they enable IT leaders to quickly identify expensive services and avoid exceeding allocated budgets. What's more, as cloud and mobile analytics become ever more accessible, IT leaders will be able to do it all from their mobile devices, whether they are travelling, working from home, or even in a meeting.

5. Hardware giants get creative

In a world dominated by cloud players, titans of the hardware world must avoid being commoditised into the background. To do so, they must continue to make smart, strategic gambles such as mergers, splits and acquisitions.

The cloud revolution has led the ties these giants had with customers to be severed at an alarming rate. The consequence? An increased dependence on business from the likes of Amazon, Google, and Microsoft.

6. Moving data to the cloud becomes simpler than ever

2016 will be all about easy methods for pushing data from inside organisations as well as from web platforms onto cloud data ecosystems.

With self-service cloud analytics and data prep now a reality, the opportunity for individuals (without a technical background) to move their data into a cloud ecosystem quickly and easily is on the way. Straightforward tools that reduce the complexity of data integration, staging, and transformation and focus on letting everyday business users drop data into preferred cloud databases and warehouses are just around the corner...

7. Data privacy will remain a key priority

In light of the invalidation of the

Safe Harbour Principles, commitments to data protection will remain at the forefront of the agenda. American companies moving customer data across the Atlantic will need to be transparent with their stance on data privacy, or risk losing their customers' faith.

Following the ruling of the Court of Justice of the European Union on Safe Harbour, cloud leaders were quick to respond, issuing statements reiterating their dedication to customer data privacy. For organisations large enough to already have dedicated infrastructure in Europe the message is clear. For those that haven't, 2016 will be a trial. Do they gamble and hope that a new agreement is rolled out that permits them to continue to operate solely in the U.S., or do they opt to proactively commit to European data infrastructure and safeguard their customer loyalty?

8. Cloud marketplaces alter the relationship between customers

In recent years, cloud marketplaces that give customers direct access to third party solutions have seen vast



growth. The upshot of this means marketplace sellers are now faced with a customer loyalty conundrum.

For software and services companies, the option to partner with smart, technology adoptive users makes marketplaces offered by the major cloud players a no-brainer. Nevertheless it poses a challenge when it comes to brand and loyalty by altering the direct relationship these companies are used to having with customers.

Will the gain in revenue at the loss of direct customer engagement prove worth it for software organisations? The next year will be telling. Smart firms will strive to reject this choice altogether and seek alternative ways to leverage cloud marketplaces to their fullest while still building strong, committed relationships with their customers directly.

9. Hybrid cloud becomes mainstream

Adopting a hybrid cloud solution has lost the 'playing it safe' stigma and is now recognised as the right strategy for some companies. When it comes to cloud adoption, it's not always

possible for companies to be 'all-in'. Legacy solutions, compliance, and a host of issues can keep elements of an IT roadmap anchored on premise. As a result, this year, solutions and services built to support this model are set to flourish.

The cloud club has relaxed its 'if you're not all cloud you're doing wrong' attitude, choosing instead to build practices which support hybrid deployments. This shift in approach reflects their confidence in the existing momentum already in their favour, and validates smaller players already catering to this demand. This, in turn, will encourage new entrants in the space.

10. The 'how' of cloud and mobile analytics will cease to matter

In 2016, words like 'mobile' and 'cloud' will cease to matter. Instead, this year will simply be about answering questions quickly and communicating the results.

For instance, imagine it is the first football match of the season and a team executive sits in the stands

watching as fans stream into stadium. Curious to find out how many people have entered the gates so far, she uses her smartphone to open an app that connects her to a dashboard. This dashboard is fed by live data from a high capacity database in the cloud, which in turn, is capturing results streaming directly from handheld ticket scanning devices at every entry point.

Mobile analytics? Check. Cloud analytics? Also check. Yet, this 'how' of cloud and mobile analytics is unimportant. What matters to the executive is that it works and she can quickly and easily compare the current numbers against previous seasons and then share that discovery with the team members. What is key is the simplicity of cloud and mobile working together as a unified solution.

In the cloud landscape, change is the constant. Over the next twelve months, the providers, forms, and purposes of the cloud will continue to evolve and adapt. Yet what we will be able to rely on is more people than ever doing the same thing in the cloud: storing and working with data fast and efficiently.