ASCAMSO

Rating assessment: 3,5
Rating description: Between three and four blades the provider has strong capabilities and/or commitment to provide failure free service even in most of the use cases.

XYZ
ASCAMSO Rating Report (unsolicited)

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Executive Summary

XYZ, founded in YYYY, has been present on the X and global market for more than a decade with its set up in X. Nearly 5 years ago, reaching the capacity of its initial data center, the company introduced second data center to meet its growing demands. Throughout its relatively long history the company has been focusing its effort on hosting customers ranging from start up ventures, established enterprises, independent consultants and individuals, with needs ranging from very small instances to over 100 dedicated servers.

Being created by "passionate geeks", as widely advertised, the company has managed to grow its operations and build a name mostly around the dedicated servers and hybrid hosting backed by a small team of customer support members valued by the customer for their high involvement. Even though, the company positions itself as a global as well as a regional player, in our view their main focus remains within their local market.

In terms of Cloud Security and Compliance, XYZ has their data centers audited under the SOC 2 Type 2 standard. On the technical front the company comes with fabric configuration storage network meaning that failure of one network component, will reduce the effective bandwidth, but with no delay for fail-over. As a distinguishing factor we see the minimum guaranteed CPU power, which we can confirm trough our tests. The guaranteed capacity, does allow more capacity to be used if free, while at the same time ensures guaranteed level of performance, which is very useful for compute-latency-sensitive applications.

We recognize the XYZ commitment to its customers trough its Service Level Agreement. The company guarantees only 99,95% uptime for its servers. In case of a breach a refund is eligible on the future invoices. In our opinion, comparing the SLA with the most common cases in the market and given the fact that the company does not offer any network or latency guarantee, we consider this offering to be under the minimum requirements for corporate usage.

On the pricing side XYZ shows an excellent positioning. The EUR/MASC rate is considerably better compared with the market average across all small, medium and large instances. In its initial offering to the customers, XYZ claims prices at the lower price range. Given the price performance rates, all instance sizes will incur considerable savings.

Recommended use cases: XYZ by showing stable technical capabilities and good pricing levels, in our opinion, is good for complex and general business applications. For European buyers there might be an issue with the cases requiring higher degree of regulatory compliance due to the geographic limitation of the provider.

Detailed Rating Observations

Our model takes into consideration four different dimensions which contain essential features measuring the performance, the capability and the current and the future prospects of every cloud platform. These dimensions explore in details the technical capabilities, the technical performance, the service performance and the "Restainability"[1] of every service provider. In terms of factor importance or weights, the technical aspects count of 60% of the total score while the service and Restainability parts count for 40% of the total score.
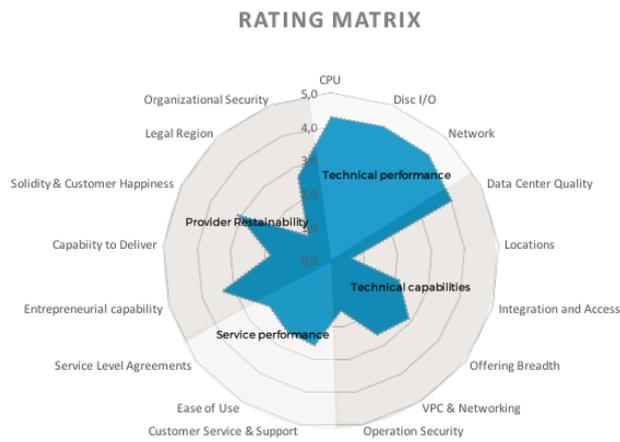
RATING MATRIX

diagram 1: Rating Overview - all dimensions

The diagram shows the excellent Technical performance XYZ has in terms of CPU, Disc IO and Network. On the other hand, the company shows clearly a weakness in terms of its geographic and legal presence. While this is unlikely to be an obstacle for the individual users, it is definitely an issue for larger organizations having specific legal data security requirements, or aiming for a data center closer for its customers outside the X.
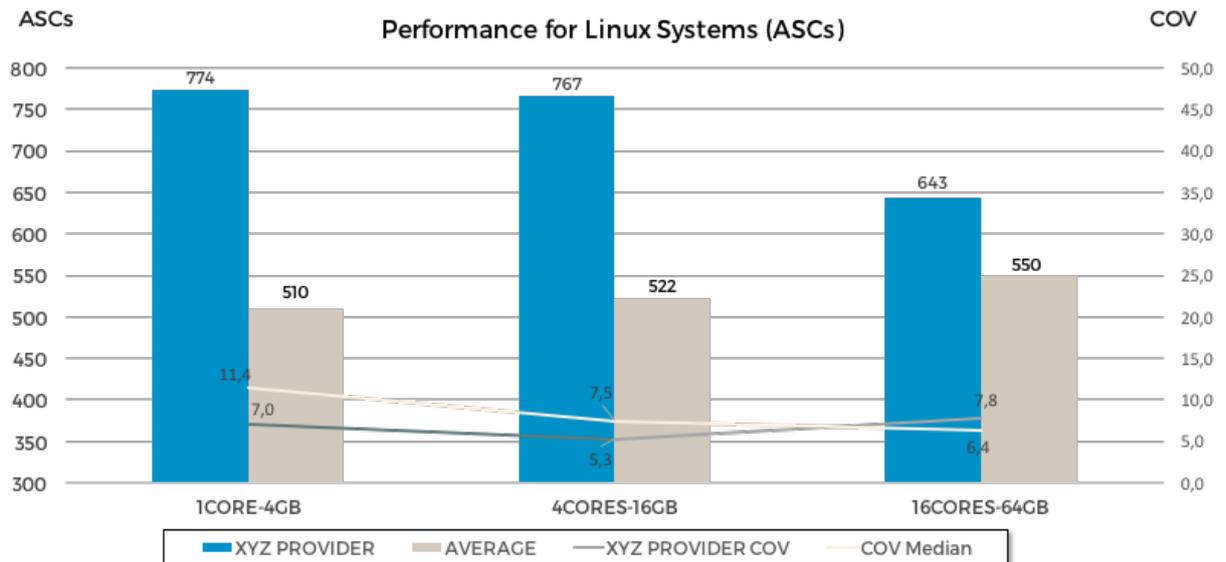

diagram 2: Performance Assessment[2]

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[1] Restainability is a combination of the reliability and sustainability of the provider, in our view equally important features for a suitable partner for a business enterprise.

[2] The analysis is based on the tests carried up to date. Output may vary in the future/ The CPU performance is are presented as ASCs per core for data center location – X.

The Technical performance has been validated using our benchmarking platform, where we have compared a set of providers versus the "Market Average". XYZ outperforms the industry in the instances of all sizes – small (1Core-4GB), medium (4Cores-8GB) and large (16Cores-64GB). The excellent technical performance is further strengthened by very a reliable service showing lower variation between the peaks and the lows.

SWOT Analysis

Assessing the XYZ position, several aspects appear to be worth looking at in grater details. The following table outlines the core strengths and weaknesses, together with the market opportunities and treats we have identified.

STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES
▶ **Strategically positioned data center locations for the X market** - close to the areas where the majority of customers are situated and where resources are needed, thus minimizing the impact of latency caused by distant data centres. ▶ **Excellent technical performance** due to low level of overprovisioning, thus offering consistent minimal capacity, ▶ **Passionate technical support** well suited for novice and inexperienced users.	▶ **Very narrow geographical spread**. This can be seen as an important drawback for attracting customers with particular interest in local presence outside X.

In our view, in order to make full use of the advantages of its solid technical performance, XYZ need to focus more effort on strengthening its position on the restainability front by incorporating detailed organizational polices and increasing its standing on the regulatory compliance. The attraction of more external auditing certifications has the potential to make XYZ much more attractive to the segment of corporate users.

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Compliance and Security

The public awareness stamped "Cloud" and "Security" as two almost incompatible subjects. However, from our point of view this statement does not necessary hold true. Solid Data center design can be achieved on public infrastructure as well as on private one. We do recognize, however, that the public infrastructure is prone to unexpected performance impacts and dedicated attacks, probably on much grader scale than the private infrastructure. Furthermore, as an additional issue, on many occasions the security protocols and true capabilities of the providers are not always transparent to the general public.

We are overcoming this obstacle by providing a number of relevant security certifications. The Certifications can be categorized, in terms of importance as "Important", "ideal" and "nice to have". XYZ has certified its compliance in terms of security by providing the following certifications:

IMPORTANT	IDEAL	NICE TO HAVE
☐ ISO/27001 ☐ EU Model Clauses	☐ CSA	☒ SOC Reports ☒ PCI ☐ COBIIT ☐ ISO/IEC 20000

The two data centres that XYZ has are *SOC -2, type 2* audited.

Pricing Analysis

Besides all functional aspects, the pricing model plays an important role on grasping a cloud providers true standing. To provide reasonable decision support information we are considering two separate aspects – on one hand, we explore the analysis of the price/performance ratio, on the other hand, the price sensitivity for outgoing traffic.

To judge the first aspect – the price/performance ratio, we measure a fixed amount of work to be executed. This is represented by the "Meta ASC". Knowing the computing capacity (ASC) a particular system configuration provides, the EUR/hour price can be nominated and therefore measured.

The overview of the selected system classes shows consistently better EUR/MASC levels than the market average. Yet it is with the smaller systems where the most savings can be realized. The 1 Core instance offers more than 3 times better price performance. The medium instances offer 2 times better price performance and lower variance, which is a good solution for applications where the consistency of the CPU capacity is important.
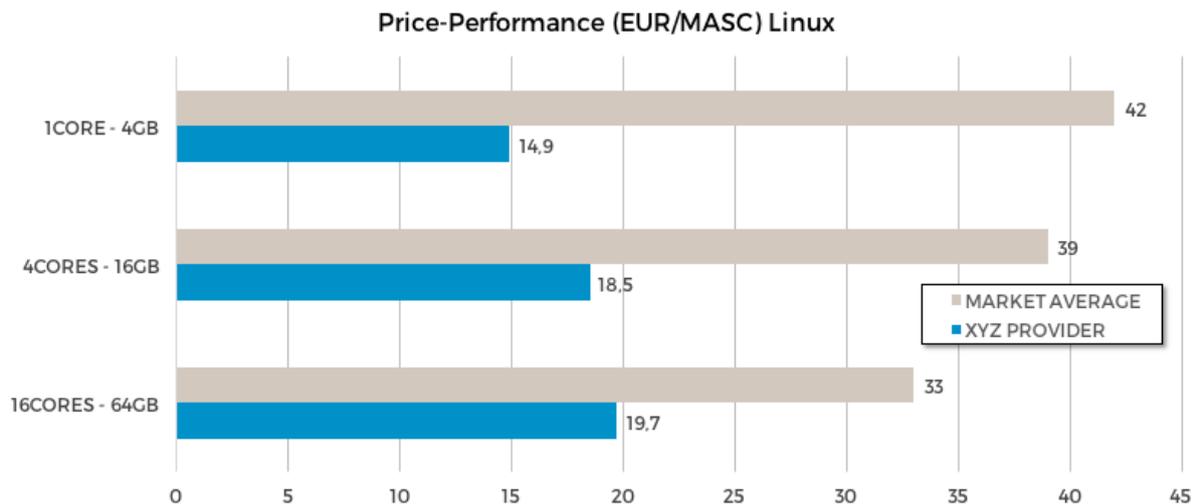
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diagram 3 : Price-Performance Comparison

Rating Card

The Rating Card has been introduced to give a detailed overview of a particular provider capabilities in a concise and understandable manner. To get a grip on the dimensions and criteria rated on this card you may refer to the whitepaper on our Rating Model.

		<- Very poor (0)	Average (2.5)	(5.0) Excellent ->	
Technical Performance	CPU			4,3	Excelent technical performance results achieving more ASCs/Core compared with the market average
	Disk I/O			4,3	
	Network			4,3	

		<- Very poor (0)	Average (2.5)	(5.0) Excellent ->	
Service Performance	Customer Service & Support		2,6		Service performance in line with the industry accepted average.
	Service Level Agreements		2,3		
	Ease of Use				

		<- Very poor (0)	Average (2.5)	(5.0) Excellent ->	
Technical capabilities	Data Center Quality			4,0	Uptime institute Tier 3 data centers with guaranteed 99.95% uptime
	Locations	0,6			All data centers located in Z
	Integration and Access		2,1		Integration and Access capabilitiesslightly under the market average
	Offering Breadth		2,9		Offering Breadth slightly above the market average
	VPC & Networking		2,3		Basic features aligned with the average market standards
	Operation Security		1,5		Operational security lagging behind the industry average

		<- Very poor (0)	Average (2.5)	(5.0) Excellent ->	
Provider "Restainability"	Entrepreneurial capability			3,4	Good strategic vision and market fit
	Capability to Deliver		1,8		Capability to deliver capacity slightly under the market average
	Solidity & Customer Happiness		3,1		Customer happines in line with the market average
	Legal Region	1,0			As all data center are located in Z - it is the only legal region that the company offers
	Organizational Security		2,7		Organizational security lacks stringent & formal procedures

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