

Amazon helped this Folsom firm deliver \$5 million in new business

BY CATHIE ANDERSON

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Government agencies already had begun migrating to cloud computing by the time [Scott Drossos](#) took the reins as president of Folsom's [Infiniti Consulting Group](#) in October of last year, and he was convinced that, if the firm wanted to remain competitive, it would have to quickly establish a partnership with one of the big cloud service providers.

While government agencies aren't moving as quickly into cloud services as the commercial market is, Drossos told me, the momentum is definitely going in that direction. Consequently, leaders of many small IT consulting firms are considering whether to throw in with Amazon, Microsoft, Google or one of the other titans wrestling for supremacy in a market that analysts at the technology research firm [Gartner](#) estimate will be worth \$67 billion by 2020.

This year, the dominant industry player, [Amazon Web Services](#), estimates it will earn \$10 billion on this business. When the company reported a record profit in the first quarter of this year, the biggest source of that income came not from retail sales but from its fast-growing cloud computing service.

Drossos, who built and sold a multimillion-dollar technology company early in his career, told me that he encouraged Infiniti co-founders [John Gray](#) and [Scott Sanders](#) to establish a partnership with Amazon. They did, and after training employees in the Amazon environment and hiring new staffers who were already familiar with it, the Infiniti team went after \$5 million in business with the [California Community Colleges](#) Technology Center.

The firm won the five-year contract in July and have begun designing a new cloud infrastructure where shared programs such as admissions applications will be stored. Partnering with Amazon Web Services and Seattle-based service provider [2nd Watch](#), they also will be helping the technology center migrate its software applications and manage deployment onto new servers in the cloud.

“The challenge is that most organizations have a lot of sunk costs and a lot of sunk institutional knowledge in their on-premise systems,” Drossos said, “but as they contemplate how to take advantage of the cloud, we’re a great partner because we understand their legacy operations and we understand how to help them move to the cloud in whatever way makes sense to them.”

With cloud computing, companies and government agencies do not have to make a huge initial outlay for hardware, Drossos explained. Instead, they pay only for storing, managing and processing the data they are using.

“The old concept of focusing on your core business, doing what you do best, it’s returned,” Drossos said. “People processed that (concept) in a certain way back when the technology was different, but as technology has changed, it actually makes sense to rethink how you evaluate your core business or your core responsibilities. ... Really, is the IT infrastructure the core part of why you exist?”

There’s a tension for any company or government agency when it comes to buying technology, Drossos said. They want to get maximum depreciation because that’s part of evaluating the return on an investment, but they also want to have the latest, coolest technology. Cloud services can allow them to do both, he said, because providers are constantly adding innovations that improve the experience for end users.