IBM and Intel bring new security features to the cloud

September 9 2014, by Scott Cook

IBM today announced that SoftLayer it will be the first cloud platform to offer its customers bare metal servers powered by Intel Cloud Technology that provides monitoring and security down to the microchip level.

Intel Trusted Execution Technology (Intel TXT) provides hardware monitoring and security controls that help assure businesses that a workload from a known location on SoftLayer infrastructure is running on trusted hardware. This assurance provides an essential level of confidence—and even compliance certification—for organizations moving sensitive and mission-critical operations to the cloud.

These new security capabilities put IBM at the forefront of security innovation helping organizations develop solutions around areas such as governance, compliance, audit, application security, privacy, identity and access management and incident response. IBM will also be offering services to help customers implement this new capability into their applications and platforms.

"Security perception remains the biggest hurdle for wide-spread enterprise cloud adoption," said Marc Jones, CTO for SoftLayer. "SoftLayer is the only bare-metal cloud platform offering Intel TXT, leading the industry in enabling customers to build hybrid and cloud environments that can be trusted from end-to-end."

Intel TXT is especially advantageous for large enterprises subject to

compliance and audit regulations, such as healthcare, financial services and government organizations. It helps ensure that trusted resources can be integrated, managed and reported on with the relevant compliance frameworks (HIPAA, PCI, FedRAMP, ISO, FISMA, SSAE16). With IBM Cloud and SoftLayer infrastructure, these organizations will be able to certify a cloud computing pool is appropriately secured for workloads with exposures such as governance and enterprise risk, information and life-cycle management, compliance and audit, application security, identity and access management and incident response.

"It is becoming increasingly important to provide cloud environments with the same, if not greater levels of security as your on premise technology environments," said Rick Echevarria, Vice President of Intel Security Group, General Manager, Intel Security Platform and Solutions Divisions. "By building on IBM's history of security innovation, with this solution based on Intel TXT, SoftLayer is demonstrating that such levels of cloud security are now possible and available."

Intel TXT verifies the components of a computing system from its operating system or hypervisor all the way to its boot firmware and hardware. Combined with attestation (root of trust software) this verification is then used to permit or deny a workload from running on that select server system. Hybrid cloud solutions can leverage partner software and Intel TXT, to limit data decryption to specific geo-located servers, in support of local data privacy laws. And because Intel TXT is activated during boot up, this added security does not add any performance overhead to applications.

To use Intel TXT, SoftLayer customers need only order bare metal servers available with a Trusted Platform module (TPM) installed. Once activated and deployed with attestation software Intel TXT allows clients to build trusted computing pools of IT resources in the cloud with an added level of visibility and control. Designed to measure the execution

environment and protect sensitive information from software-based attacks Intel TXT operates with TPM, an industry-standard device that can securely store the measurement artifacts, to verify the integrity of the hardware, firmware and software. This assurance provides an essential level of confidence—and even certification—for organizations moving sensitive and mission-critical operations to the SoftLayer Infrastructure.

Softlayer is a member of the Intel Cloud Technology program which identifies CSPs using Intel processors for reliable industry-leading performance and quality. Intel TXT is available today on SoftLayer bare metal servers with the following Intel processors:

- Intel Xeon E5-2600 v2
- Intel Xeon E3-1200 v3
- Intel Xeon E5-4600

More SoftLayer bare metal server configurations will be available with the technology in the future. For more information about Intel TXT on SoftLayer bare metal servers, please visit softlayer.com/intel-txt" target="_blank">www.softlayer.com/intel-txt.

Provided by IBM

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