

# WHICH POSTGRES IS RIGHT FOR ME?



An EDB  
White Paper

November 2015

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# INTRODUCTION

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Enterprise IT organizations are constantly challenged to fulfill bread-and-butter systems requirements – availability, performance, governance and security. But global competition demands investment in innovative applications that strengthen brand and enhance customer engagement. Once the province of tech start-ups, IT innovation has become a strategic imperative for many mid-market and larger organizations. In a climate of declining margins and tight financial controls, IT must look inward to fund new high-value applications through offsetting cost reductions.

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BY 2018, MORE THAN 70% OF NEW IN-HOUSE APPLICATIONS WILL BE DEVELOPED ON AN OPEN SOURCE RDBMS, AND 50% OF EXISTING COMMERCIAL RDBMS INSTANCES WILL HAVE BEEN CONVERTED OR WILL BE IN PROCESS.

GARTNER, INC  
*THE STATE OF OPEN SOURCE RDBMS, 2015*

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Over the past decade, open source adoption has become a cornerstone strategy for reducing core IT costs while maintaining high levels of service and user satisfaction. Successful open source transitions at the operating system (Linux) and middleware (e.g., JBoss) tiers have delivered clear financial wins while proving that adoption risks can be minimized with effective planning, management and commercial partnerships.

A 2015 report published by Gartner, Inc. reveals that many IT organizations are now aggressively evaluating open source relational database management systems (OS RDBMSs), aiming to leverage adoption patterns that have worked successfully at other layers of the technology stack. Database spend is typically a significant line item in the IT budget so open source RDBMS solutions can be used to dramatically reduce infrastructure costs and reallocate funds to strategic, high-value initiatives. Enterprises are now facing a strategic imperative to shift all possible workloads to OSDBMS or risk falling behind to competitors in driving new innovations and applications of engagement with customers.

Gartner goes on to recommend that OS RDBMSs can be safely deployed as the core database backbone for 80% of new enterprise applications – including traditional business apps and innovative systems of engagement.

Within the OS RDBMS realm, PostgreSQL (Postgres, for short) is widely considered the world's most advanced open source database. Where MySQL® is popular for lightweight web apps, Postgres is the open source RDBMS of choice for fast, scalable enterprise applications.

The goal of this paper is to examine four enterprise adoption strategies (and associated risks) for Postgres, and to provide guidance to help readers develop an informed adoption playbook. It is written for all levels of IT management as well as for data architects, application development leaders and anyone involved in database strategy decisions.

The following section gives a brief Postgres overview, along with an introduction to EDB, Inc., the leading global provider of Postgres-based products and services. It offers useful background for the deeper discussion of Postgres adoption strategies.

Later, we will identify common Postgres adoption risks, and discuss the risk/reward trade-offs of each adoption strategy. It is noteworthy that this framework for Postgres adoption has been developed over many years and is based on the input of hundreds of Postgres user organizations.

# POSTGRES AND EDB

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For more than 25 years, Postgres has done the “heavy lifting” for a broad range of sophisticated transactional applications. Industries like financial services, insurance, health care, energy, media, retail, telco and pharma are extensively represented in the Postgres portfolio. And government agencies worldwide depend on Postgres to deliver robust, secure applications for the public sector.

Governments and private enterprises choose Postgres over a myriad of other OS RDBMS products for many reasons, including:

<b>Robust OLTP engine</b>	Postgres' database engine combines ACID transaction guarantees with referential integrity, advanced subquery processing and other enterprise-class features.
<b>Rich, expressive data types</b>	Postgres supports a broad range of data types, including multi-dimensional arrays and user-defined types. Postgres also provides indexing and query operations on JSON data, matching or exceeding the functionality of NoSQL document stores for many use cases.
<b>Advanced concurrency control</b>	Postgres maintains data consistency through multiversion concurrency control (MVCC), allowing database read and write operations to execute optimistically, without blocking each other.
<b>Stored procedure flexibility</b>	Postgres has loadable modules that enable database developers to write stored procedures in popular programming languages such as Java, C, Perl, Python, Ruby and even JavaScript.
<b>Community ecosystem</b>	In addition to delivering bug fixes and enhancements for the core Postgres database, the extended Postgres community provides a broad range of add-on products and services.

Although Postgres uniquely delivers the functionality needed to support sophisticated database applications, many organizations require additional features and enterprise-class support services. EDB is the leading provider of value-added products and services for Postgres users worldwide. For more than a decade, EDB has worked in close harmony with the Postgres community, in many cases funding research projects and contributing core database functionality to the open source code base. EDB is a respected community partner and an important advocate for Postgres users seeking to influence future community directions.

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EDB ALLOWS US TO BRING THE BENEFITS OF OPEN SOURCE TO ALL OUR CUSTOMERS, LARGE AND SMALL, WITHOUT SACRIFICING THE QUALITY OR PERFORMANCE OF OUR RETAIL MANAGEMENT SOLUTION.

ERIC OLAFSON  
CEO, TOMAX

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EDB delivers two Postgres-based product subscriptions:

**EDB Postgres Standard (EPS).** This subscription, based on the open source PostgreSQL database, provides technical support and mission-critical tools needed for enterprise class deployments. EPS is generally geared toward departments and smaller organizations building mixed-workload applications.

**EDB Postgres Enterprise (EPE).** Leveraging the Postgres database core, EPE combines enterprise technical support SLAs and product roadmap influence with a wealth of high-value product features. EPE is geared toward organizations that need to build and manage durable, scalable, high performance database applications. EPE also includes advanced security and performance features in addition to a renowned suite of Oracle® compatibility capabilities that accelerate Postgres adoption in Oracle shops.

[A summary comparison of EPS and EPE can be found here.](#)

# UNDERSTANDING ADOPTION RISKS

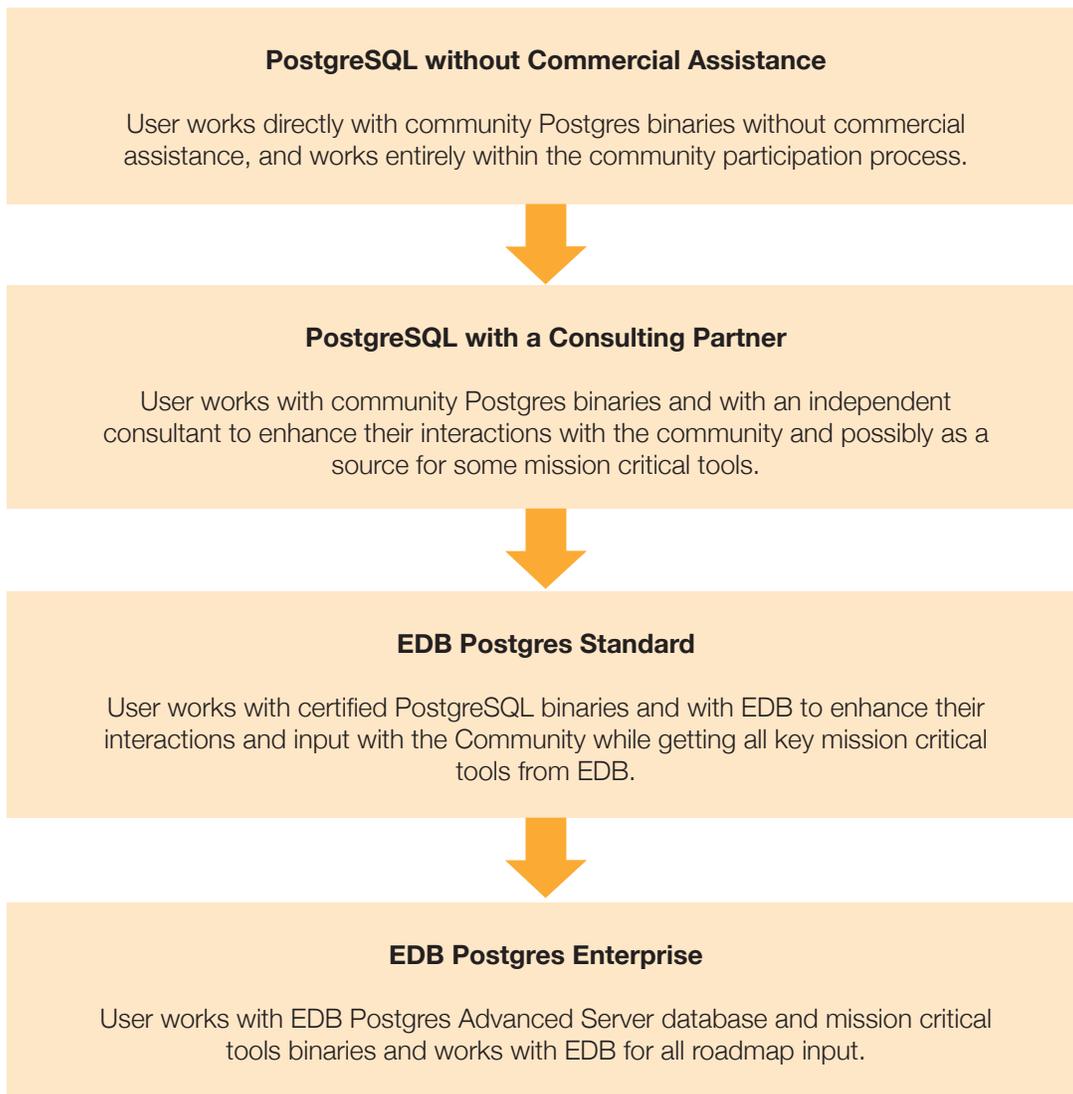
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Organizations quantify opportunities and risks based on many factors, including industry affiliations, regulatory requirements, brand strategies and governance considerations. EDB has worked closely with hundreds of IT teams in transition from closed,proprietary database products to Postgres

Experienced IT leaders divide open source adoption risk into two groups – technical and business – each with additional risk factors:

Technical Risks	
	<b>CAPABILITIES.</b> Measures how effectively open source based product capabilities align with IT's needs, plans and vision.
	<b>ROADMAP.</b> Identifies the degree to which an user organization has visibility into future engineering plans and schedules and, ideally, can influence those plans and schedules.
	<b>TECH SUPPORT.</b> Evaluates the support available from the software provider, as well as from ecosystem and business partner participants.
Business Risks	
	<b>TIME TO MARKET.</b> Identifies the lead time and effort needed to acquire software and train team personnel. The goal is to understand how open source adoption impacts application and service delivery.
	<b>COST.</b> Quantifies the direct and hidden costs of open source adoption alternatives.
	<b>RELATIONSHIPS.</b> Identifies the leverage that vendor relationships (or lack thereof) contribute to the overall risk mitigation profile.
	<b>CONTROL.</b> Identifies the degree to which external forces can impact an organization's delivery plan.

Combining the above risk profiles with industry- and organization-specific factors, IT can evaluate different adoption strategies. In the context of Postgres adoption, most organizations self-select a starting point along a four-part continuum:



The following sections of this paper provide best-practice adoption patterns for Postgres using the risk factors and adoption strategies discussed above. Readers will recognize that adoption starting points and approaches vary based on their organization's specific priorities and operating environment.

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HIGH RISK: ■ MODERATE RISK: ◆ LOW RISK: ●

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# EDB POSTGRES STANDARD

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HIGH RISK: ■ MODERATE RISK: ⬡ LOW RISK: ●

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User works with the EDB Postgres Advanced Server database and mission critical tools binaries and works with EDB for all roadmap input.

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 <b>ROADMAP</b>	<p>The amount of insight into engineering activities to assess risk and influence database and tools roadmaps.</p> <table border="0" style="width: 100%;"> <tr> <td style="width: 50%; vertical-align: top;"> <p><b>PROS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Deep insight into database and tools engineering</li> <li>High degree of influence over database and tools roadmaps</li> </ul> </td> <td style="width: 50%; vertical-align: top;"> <p><b>CONS</b></p> <p>NONE (EDB has full control over EDB Postgres Enterprise and tools roadmaps)</p> </td> </tr> </table>	<p><b>PROS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Deep insight into database and tools engineering</li> <li>High degree of influence over database and tools roadmaps</li> </ul>	<p><b>CONS</b></p> <p>NONE (EDB has full control over EDB Postgres Enterprise and tools roadmaps)</p>
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 <p><b>TIME TO MARKET</b></p>	<p>The time for your organization to learn, adopt, implement or migrate and deploy new Postgres applications.</p> <table border="1"> <tr> <td> <p><b>PROS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Setup and configuration assistance</li> <li>• Expert support, training and consulting</li> <li>• Bundled with integrated suite of mission critical tools</li> <li>• Enterprise grade security &amp; performance</li> <li>• Oracle compatibility speeds migrations and reduces training time for Oracle staff</li> </ul> </td> <td> <p><b>CONS</b></p> <p>Procurement time needed to source vendor and build working relationship</p> </td> </tr> </table>	<p><b>PROS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Setup and configuration assistance</li> <li>• Expert support, training and consulting</li> <li>• Bundled with integrated suite of mission critical tools</li> <li>• Enterprise grade security &amp; performance</li> <li>• Oracle compatibility speeds migrations and reduces training time for Oracle staff</li> </ul>	<p><b>CONS</b></p> <p>Procurement time needed to source vendor and build working relationship</p>
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 <p><b>COST</b></p>	<p>Costs for software, hardware, support, personnel costs, as well as hidden costs.</p> <table border="1"> <tr> <td> <p><b>PROS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No upfront license fees or additional support/maintenance costs</li> <li>• Flexibility to support alternative pricing</li> <li>• Significant savings compared to traditional RDBMS vendors</li> </ul> </td> <td> <p><b>CONS</b></p> <p>Subscription fee to cover database license, support, expertise, mission critical features, productivity tools, Oracle compatibility, and a partner with deep insight into the open source Postgres community</p> </td> </tr> </table>	<p><b>PROS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No upfront license fees or additional support/maintenance costs</li> <li>• Flexibility to support alternative pricing</li> <li>• Significant savings compared to traditional RDBMS vendors</li> </ul>	<p><b>CONS</b></p> <p>Subscription fee to cover database license, support, expertise, mission critical features, productivity tools, Oracle compatibility, and a partner with deep insight into the open source Postgres community</p>
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 <p><b>RELATIONSHIPS</b></p>	<p>The ability to leverage a business relationship to receive high quality products, timely support and assistance.</p> <table border="1"> <tr> <td> <p><b>PROS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Commercial vendor responsiveness</li> <li>• Access to highest quality Postgres expertise</li> <li>• Full service provider for software, support, maintenance, tools, training and consulting</li> <li>• Expertise supporting global brands with 24x7 “follow the sun” availability</li> <li>• Extensive Postgres partner network</li> <li>• Gartner Magic Quadrant leader</li> </ul> </td> <td> <p><b>CONS</b></p> <p>Dependence on EDB for advanced features not available in the community version of Postgres including security, performance, DBA and developer features, mission critical tools, and Oracle compatibility.</p> </td> </tr> </table>	<p><b>PROS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Commercial vendor responsiveness</li> <li>• Access to highest quality Postgres expertise</li> <li>• Full service provider for software, support, maintenance, tools, training and consulting</li> <li>• Expertise supporting global brands with 24x7 “follow the sun” availability</li> <li>• Extensive Postgres partner network</li> <li>• Gartner Magic Quadrant leader</li> </ul>	<p><b>CONS</b></p> <p>Dependence on EDB for advanced features not available in the community version of Postgres including security, performance, DBA and developer features, mission critical tools, and Oracle compatibility.</p>
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 <p><b>CONTROL</b></p>	<p>The control your organization has over release schedules, public scrutiny into initiatives, software maintenance and upgrades, general management of tools and extended lifecycle support.</p> <table border="1"> <tr> <td> <p><b>PROS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Influence over release schedules for database and mission critical tools</li> <li>• Reliable and documented testing of all database and tools releases</li> <li>• Automated updates, alerting &amp; management</li> <li>• Coordinated, consistent product releases</li> <li>• Extended lifecycle support</li> </ul> </td> <td> <p><b>CONS</b></p> <p>No access to source code for value-added database software and tools</p> </td> </tr> </table>	<p><b>PROS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Influence over release schedules for database and mission critical tools</li> <li>• Reliable and documented testing of all database and tools releases</li> <li>• Automated updates, alerting &amp; management</li> <li>• Coordinated, consistent product releases</li> <li>• Extended lifecycle support</li> </ul>	<p><b>CONS</b></p> <p>No access to source code for value-added database software and tools</p>
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# SUMMARY

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Enterprise IT organizations are increasingly challenged to deliver innovative applications that strengthen brand and enhance customer engagement. In a climate of declining margins and tight financial controls, however, IT must look inward to fund new high-value applications through offsetting cost reductions.

Database spend is typically a significant line item in the IT budget. Thus, open source RDBMS solutions can be used to dramatically reduce infrastructure costs and reallocate funds to strategic, high-value initiatives. Enterprises are now facing a strategic imperative to shift all possible workloads to OS DBMSs or risk falling behind to competitors in driving new innovations and applications of engagement with customers.

According to Gartner, Inc., many IT organizations are now aggressively evaluating OS RDBMSs. Gartner and other IT

thought leaders now advise that OS RDBMSs are at parity with commercial RDBMS's for 80% of enterprise workloads.

Postgres is widely considered the world's most powerful OS RDBMS, and EDB is the leading global provider of value-added products and services for Postgres users. Over the course of a decade, EDB has helped hundreds of organizations define and implement their Postgres adoption initiatives.

This paper identifies common risk factors in software adoption, and examines those risks in the context of four common Postgres adoption strategies. The goal of this paper is to help readers identify the strategy that best fits their needs to maximize enterprise-wide deployment of Postgres for savings, and provide a framework for mitigating risks over an extended adoption horizon.

# NEXT STEPS

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There is no better time than now to get started. Download a free trial of the EDB Postgres Advanced Server database and begin to explore your path to IT transformation. Experience first-hand the enterprise-class performance, security and database compatibility for Oracle features as well as tools for monitoring, management, tuning, HA, DR, replication provided by the EDB Postgres platform. Let us to help you

explore what EDB Postgres has to offer with a guided demo.

Contact us at [sales@enterprisedb.com](mailto:sales@enterprisedb.com) to arrange for a product demonstration and technical discussion that factors in the specifics and nuances of how to deploy EDB Postgres within your environment.

# ABOUT EDB

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EDB is the leading worldwide provider of Postgres software and services that enable enterprises to reduce their reliance on costly traditional solutions and slash their database spend by 80% or more. With powerful performance and security enhancements for PostgreSQL, sophisticated management tools for global deployments and database compatibility for Oracle, EDB software supports both mission and non-

mission critical enterprise applications. More than 3,000 enterprises, governments and other organizations worldwide use EDB software, support, training and professional services to integrate open source software into their existing data infrastructures. Based in Bedford, MA, EDB is backed by private investors.