The Profitability Impact of Self-Supported Postgres

Introduction

Freedom, flexibility, full control over your own data and cost-efficiency have made PostgreSQL the leading database management system (DBMS) for innovators who are tired of the restrictions imposed by legacy database providers. Many of these same forward-thinking, freedom-loving innovators are self-supporting their database.

You've been self-supporting your Postgres databases and perhaps wondering, "Is there a better way?" Let's explore the advantages and disadvantages.

Self-supporting open source PostgreSQL can be a cost-effective option for organizations that have the necessary expertise and resources. But for those that don't, a self-support strategy can cost more than it saves.

Read on to learn more about the factors to consider in your support decision and gain a better understanding of the best course for supporting your Postgres estate.

Contents

1. DI-Why: Reasons for the DIY journey

Even though expert support for Postgres is readily available, it's not surprising that many businesses are attracted to installing and maintaining Postgres on their own. While it isn't feasible for all businesses, a DIY (Do-It-Yourself) approach makes sense for:

• **A low/no risk use case.** These could include small scale implementations for low-tier applications, or environments in which compliance and uptime are negligible.

• **A built-by-user strategy.** There could be a corporate mandate for in-house development on many or all applications. Or the DIY decision may be tied to open source ownership, like operating a custom fork or compilation for specialized needs.

• **Capability vs cost.** Database technology needs may be minimal, with no compelling requirements for new features. Or all data may be treated as point-in-time, with no storage or scaled queries across persistent datasets.

Businesses choosing DIY have their reasons.

2. DI-Why Not: Challenges of the DIY journey

Now you've seen the reasons businesses opt for self-supported Postgres, let's look at why businesses choose not to go at it alone.

• **Modernization as a distraction.** If you're focused on maintaining your database and fixing bugs and testing and putting out fires, then your team might not have the bandwidth to produce innovative applications or work on other strategic initiatives.

• **DBaaSC (Database-as-a-Sunken-Cost).** Technology investments may require greater database team spend in order to grow business and product roadmaps. This creates a sunken cost, because you've got to ensure you've got the technology you need, the solution you need and the uptime that's required for your overall application or suite of applications. There's a sunken cost toward not just the testing of the application and the database, but the solution itself.

• **DIY = Self-Supported = Risk.** Whether you post a question about your solution or technology on Reddit or in Stack Overflow or Google, you'll receive a variety of answers that may – or may not – work. If your database is unavailable, whether due to an issue with the database or access to it, or a saturation of connections, or an issue with CPU, there can be severe consequences for your business and reputation if you can't fix it quickly.

Without a shared responsibility model with a partner, provider or platform manager who can help you troubleshoot situations as they arise, the burden of risk and revenue is yours alone.

These are a few of the many reasons not to DIY.

> **Gartner estimates that on average, every *minute of downtime can cost a business $5,600*, which quickly adds up to over $300k per hour.**
>
> https://www.computerworld.com/article/3237726/what-cios-can-learn-in-the-wake-of-a-major-it-outage.html

3. Expert Engagement: Consulting partner or platform provider?

The choice isn't just between self-supporting Postgres vs using a third-party . There are other decisions to make, too. If you're leaning toward third-party support, you can engage a consulting partner, a platform provider, or both. Before choosing, you'll want to conduct an analysis of their approach, the risk and their software.

Approach

Consulting partners are generally project focused. A project can range from bringing one application to production state, migrating an application or suite of applications, going through a proof of concept, or another specific need driving a tactical outcome.

Platform partners tend to be focused on support and have scalable, global support processes in place. Beyond picking up the proverbial phone or answering a ticket, platform partners can provide you with assistance such as answering general questions to enable and accelerate success.

Risk

Risk can be unpredictable with consulting partners. That's because consulting partners may not provide 24x7 support for customers. Global compliance expertise isn't a given, because partners' expertise may be limited to a specific local, application , or industry, rather than stretching across the entirety of Postgres use cases.

Platform partners are more focused on scale – not just support, but the availability , right up to five nines. Leading platform partners generally have a host of resources and processes to support database issues, no matter the date or time of day, including follow the sun support. Compliance and capability are built in and accessible to customers in multiple regions, provinces and countries.

Software

Consulting partners may approach large-scale deployments as a tactical initiative or project. Because of their high-level approach they also may lack expertise in Postgres. Approaching problems symptomatically, their focus may be more on break/fix and defects and testing validation.

Platform partners approach open source as a product. The best ones have a presence in the open sources Postgres community. They're generally roadmap oriented, and while they fix symptoms and patch problems, they go beyond to address what the overall tapestry and help you address root cause to prevent future issues. So if you've got a flat tire, instead of merely putting air in it, they work on removing the glass from the road.

Consulting partners vs platform providers

	Consulting Partner	Platform Partner
Risk	**Risk is unpredictable** • 24x7 is per customer x daily rates • Compliance isn't a given	**Resilient and scales** • Scales from development to 99.999% • Capability and compliance by design
Approach	**Project-oriented** • Project-capable • Team scale	**Support focused with support processes** • Scalable model, globally-capable • Organizational scale
Software	**Tourniquet to tactical** • Limited in break/fix and test validation • Symptom-driven	**Open source as a product** • Community-strong, roadmap oriented • Fixes symptoms and scaled cause

4. Support your team with expert people

When you opt for a platform provider instead of self-supporting Postgres, you've got deep, extensible expertise on your side. Sure, you can support Postgres on your own, but with PostgreSQL experts on standby 24x7 for enterprise-grade troubleshooting and guidance, why should you?

The right platform provider will extend your capabilities with a circle of protection consisting of:

• **Postgres experts** – Your support team has to be Postgres experts with 10+ years' experience.
No compromising here.

• **24x7 coverage** – Support should be driven by a global or globally available model. No database administrator should have to get out of bed at two in the morning.

• **Response and remedy SLOs** – our platform provider should provide ultra-responsive support such as 15 minute initial response and 4 hour remedy on critical issues on service level objectives. Make sure you're getting what you need in terms of remedy, long-term solutions, and responses.

• **A global follow the sun approach** – There shouldn't be any gap in issue resolution. Your Postgres issues should be worked on round-the-clock with experts in every major geography. Support should be seamless, no matter where team members are located.

• **Best practices and guidance** – The best platform providers offer recommendations and guidance before you actually produce outcomes that might have problems.

> "We wanted to give the best possible support to our customers, so we wanted to select the leader supporting Postgres open source database technology. This is why we decided to work with EDB."
> - Arnaud de Chavagnac, Head of Cloud, Technology and Services Marketing, Murex

5. Achieve better outcomes and performance from Postgres

An experienced platform provider can work with you to maximize the freedom and flexibility of Postgres and reduce unplanned downtime and performance issues. By eliminating wasted time, you can focus on strategic initiatives that matter.

Ultimately, you'll want to choose a platform provider who can help you:

• **Reduce risk** – By leveraging expert guidance, you can make the best decisions and approaches for your deployments, migrations, and operations. Your platform provider should also help you comply with regulations and requirements and implement enhanced security features.

• **Decrease downtime** – The right partner will minimize downtime during planned upgrades and unplanned outages. They'll leverage tools and best practices to ensure quick migrations, deployments and upgrades and fast-track Postgres adoption so you can maximize your ROI.

• **Reduce overhead** – Leveraging the experience of Postgres experts on an ongoing or on-demand basis can reduce the overhead on your team.

• **Reallocate resources** – A platform provider can drive better outcomes around solution availability, patching, and testing and ensure the ongoing performance of your Postgres estate so your team can focus on other innovative projects.

Ask questions!

To better understand what type of platform provider you'll be working with, make sure to ask questions like:

"Who do you have working in the Postgres community?"
"How many contributors do you have that are active in that community?"
"What are your Service Level Objectives for Severity-1 issues?
"What is the size of your Postgres support team?

6. Postgres support model checklist

Here are some questions to help you determine if you should take the self-supported route or if a platform provider is a better option for your business.

1. Do you run business-critical applications on Postgres?

2. What is the risk to your company in the event of a critical outage (productivity, revenue, reputation, etc.)?

3. Does your organization have the skills and experience to support Postgres?

4. Do you have the expert resources to provide 24x7 Postgres support? ?

5. Are strategic initiatives falling by the wayside because your team is spending time troubleshooting your database?

6. Do you have compliance requirements (SOX, FIPS, ISO, etc.) which require you to disclose self-supported systems?

If you answered yes to any of these questions, and determined there's a tangible risk to your company in the event of a critical outrage, then you owe it to yourself and your team to take a look at engaging a Postgres platform provider.

7. EDB support services are purpose fit for the journey
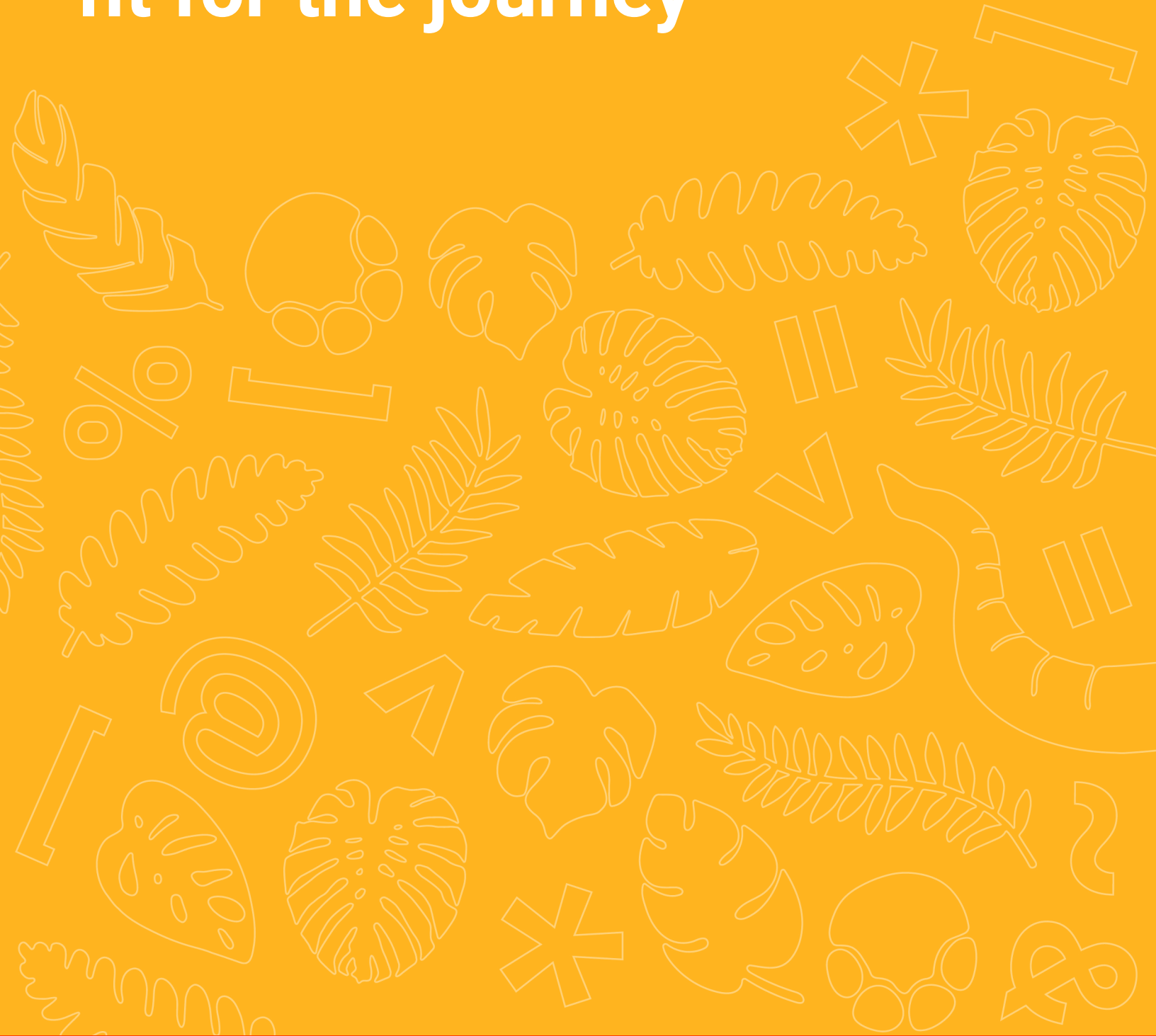
The desire for freedom, flexibility and savings drive innovators to PostgreSQL. But why stop there? Why not achieve full sovereignty over your data and your database with the support of a platform partner?

Our enterprise-grade EDB Community 360 support offers a direct line to those who build and maintain PostgreSQL, 24x7x365 days a year. If you prefer fully managed Postgres, check out BigAnimal.

Both offer around the clock support coverage with response times as quick as 15 minutes for critical issues and the ability to remedy problems much faster than self-support, so that unplanned downtime is dramatically reduced. And you can even avoid much unplanned downtime altogether with proactive EDB Remote DBA.

EDB support can also help you escape risk disclosure and maintain compliance with SOX, ISO and other regulations for the ultimate peace of mind.

At EDB, we understand why some innovators choose the DIY path to support. It's a viable option for some businesses. But when you can't risk taking a wrong turn, a platform provider is the ideal choice. Because they won't just provide a map for your journey. They'll actually take you there.

EDB Support Services in 2022

- 96% customer satisfaction
- 569 Sev-1 issues
- 300+ Postgres engineers
- 1500+ customers globally
- 7,653 unique cases
- 738 zoom engaged
- 41 Postgres contributors
- 700+ Fortune 500 customers

To learn more, watch the webinar: **The Profitability Impact of Self-Supported Postgres**

For more information about the differences between self-supported PostgreSQL and EDB platform support, visit enterprisedb.com/c360

EDB

About EDB

EDB provides enterprise-class software and services that enable businesses and governments to harness the full power of Postgres, the world's leading open source database. With offices worldwide, EDB serves more than 1,500 customers, including leading financial services, government, media and communications and information technology organizations. As one of the leading contributors to the vibrant and fast-growing Postgres community, EDB is committed to driving technology innovation. With deep database expertise, EDB ensures high availability, reliability, security, 24x7 global support and advanced professional services, both on premises and in the cloud. This empowers enterprises to control risk, manage costs and scale efficiently. For more information, visit **www.enterprisedb.com**.

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