Figure 3—Decision Tree: Choosing a Service Model
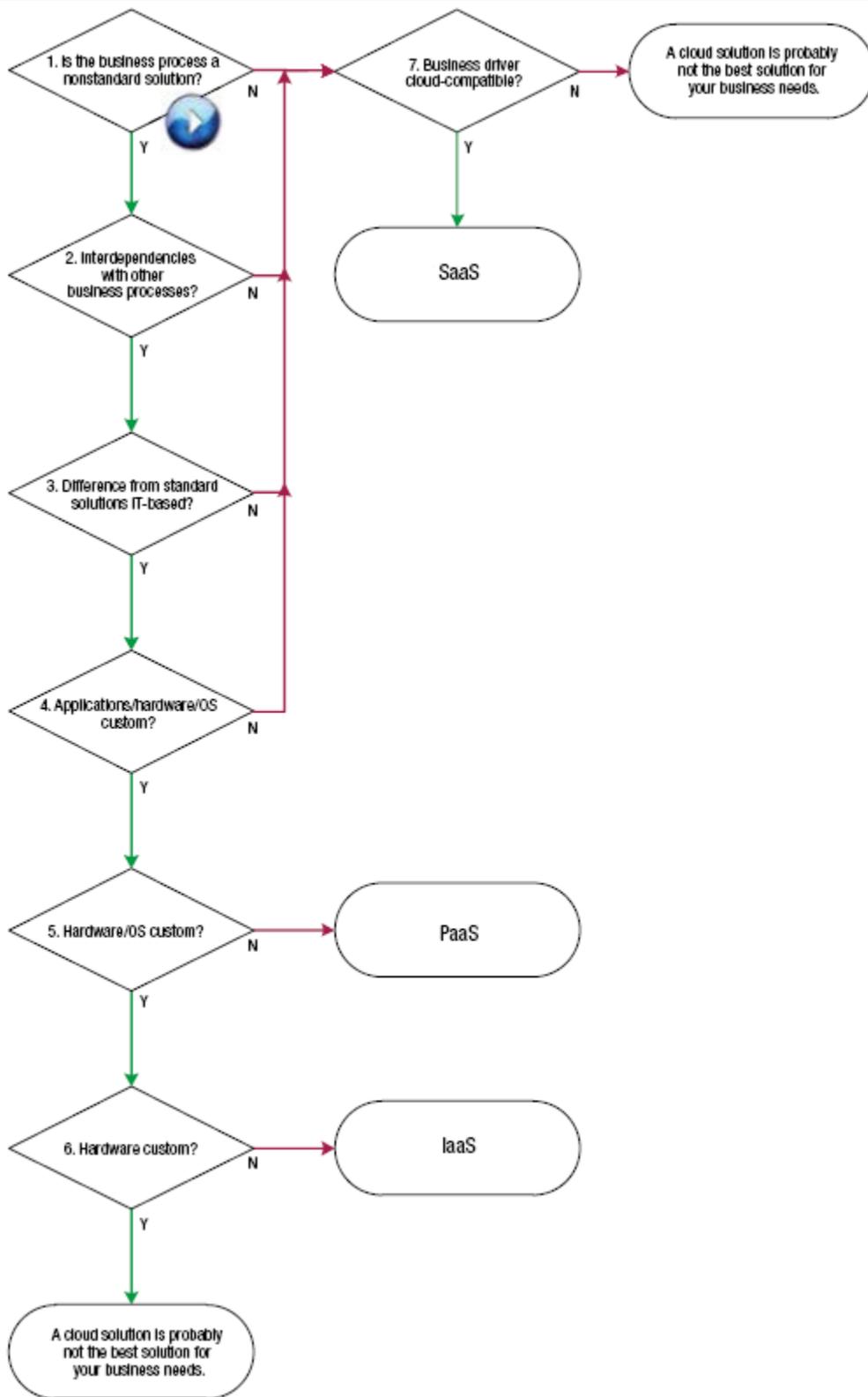
1. Is the business process a nonstandard solution? N

7. Business driver cloud-compatible? N

A cloud solution is probably not the best solution for your business needs.

Y

2. Interdependencies with other business processes? N

SaaS

Y

3. Difference from standard solutions IT-based? N

Y

4. Applications/hardware/OS custom? N

Y

5. Hardware/OS custom? N

PaaS

Y

6. Hardware custom? N

IaaS

Y

A cloud solution is probably not the best solution for your business needs.

Answer	Explanation	Next Question
Figure 4—Breakdown of Cloud Service Model Decision Tree		
1. Is the business process a nonstandard solution?		
Yes	If the business process uses nonstandard solutions, then a further drilling down is needed to determine whether the business process is suitable for a cloud solution.	Question 2: Interdependencies with business processes?
No	If a standard solution is used, then the transition to the cloud is relatively easy and the benefits of adopting a cloud solution will most likely be high.	Question 7: Business driver cloud-compatible?
2. Interdependencies with business processes?		
Yes	If there are interdependencies with different business processes, then any alteration to one of these processes could mean a change to the application implemented in the cloud.	Question 3: Difference from standard solutions IT-based?
No	If there are no interdependencies, then changes will not be required. The chosen cloud solution will, therefore, be independent.	Question 7: Business driver cloud-compatible?
3. Difference from standard solutions IT-based?		
Yes	While interdependency may implicate a change in the IT infrastructure, it is not always a necessity. If interdependency does implicate such a change, however, the cloud application will need to be changed. This fact will largely influence the decision for a cloud service model. Thus, it is important to outline the differences between the current solution and the standard solution provided by a CSP.	Question 4: Applications/hardware/OS custom?
No	If there are no differences between the IT solutions, then the standard offerings of a CSP will adequately address the business needs.	Question 7: Business driver cloud-compatible?
4. Application/hardware/OS custom?		
Yes	Once it is established that there is indeed a gap between the business needs and the cloud service offerings, it is important to define the level on which the difference is situated.	Question 5: Hardware/OS custom?
No	If the differentiation is situated in the configuration of standard applications, then cloud offerings will fulfill the business needs.	Question 7: Business driver cloud-compatible?
5. Hardware/OS custom?		
Yes	After establishing that the difference is not within the application, it is important to establish whether the differentiation is found on the OS level or the physical hardware platform. The answer will alter the possibility for cloud adaptation.	Question 6: Hardware custom?
No	If the differentiation can be done on application level, no further drill-down is needed.	Solution: PaaS
6. Hardware custom?		
Yes	After establishing that the differentiation is located on the physical level, a cloud solution is very unlikely. CSPs are oriented toward standardization within their domain; providing custom hardware is not one of their typical offerings. While a CSP can undoubtedly provide custom hardware platforms, the high cost and the CSP's relative lack of experience in the custom platform eliminate the cloud as a viable solution.	Solution: A cloud solution is probably not the best solution for your business needs.
No	If the differentiation can be done on the OS level, no further drill-down is needed.	Solution: IaaS
7. Business driver cloud-compatible?		
Yes	Viable business drivers for the cloud decision include: • Reduce medium- and/or long-term total cost of ownership (TCO). • Improve cash flow by decreasing investments. • Shift from capital expenditures (CAPEX) to operating expenditures (OPEX). • Improve Quality of Service (QoS) and/or SLAs. • Gain access to functionality and/or domain expertise.	Solution: SaaS
No	While there may be no technical constraints to adopting the cloud as a solution, it is possible that the business drivers are, in fact, not cloud-compatible. Adopting a cloud solution requires a mid- to long-term vision. Therefore, the cloud cannot be used as a solution to cut costs immediately.	Solution: A cloud solution is probably not the best solution for your business needs.