Abstract - In this paper, we evaluate the possibility of using Microsoft Windows Azure as a platform for HPC applications. Since most HPC applications are based on the Unix programming model, their source code has to be ported to the Windows programming model in addition to porting it to the Azure platform. We outline the challenges we encountered during porting applications and their resolutions. Our research work is based on Azure in which a metro app is to be implemented having feature of platform independence, supporting web as well as desktop application and work on hybrid cloud.

Keywords – Azure Development, IOS Programming, Cloud, Hybrid Cloud

I. INTRODUCTION

In the cloud computing field, the development of cloud services by different companies has impacted the scientific community. Several companies, such as Amazon, Google, IBM and Microsoft, are providing scalable cloud computing services that can potentially replace private cluster and grid systems [1]. Among these, the Amazon cloud has been extensively evaluated in the scientific community [2][3]. The reason for this popularity is that it uses the Infrastructure as a Service (IaaS) model [4]. In this model, developers have more flexibility to adapt the programming and execution environment to the needs of their applications. Deployment on IaaS is made using virtual machines, where the developer can choose the operating system and support libraries, among others. Cyber infrastructure makes applications dramatically easier to develop and deploy, thus expanding the feasible scope of applications possible within budget and organizational constraints, and shifting the scientist’s and engineer’s effort away from information technology development and concentrating it on scientific and engineering research.

Cyber infrastructure also increases efficiency, quality, and reliability by capturing commonalities among application needs, and facilitates the efficient sharing of equipment and services. Today, almost any business or major activity uses or relies in some form on IT and IT services. SOA is not a new concept, although it again has been receiving considerable attention in recent years. Examples of some of the first network-based service-oriented architectures are remote procedure calls (RPC), DCOM and Object Request Brokers (ORBs) based on the CORBA specifications. A more recent example are the so-called “Grid Computing” architectures and solutions.

On the other hand, the Windows Azure platform is based on the Platform as a Service (PaaS) model, and evaluating its performance using standard HPC applications and benchmarks presents some challenges. In the PaaS model, the developer does not have control over the cloud infrastructure and the operating system, and has to use the tools and libraries supplied by the service provider. More specifically, the PaaS model leads to two challenges for the execution of HPC applications on Azure. First, since the source code of HPC applications is usually aimed at operating systems compatible with Unix, it needs to be converted to the Windows Programming model supported by Azure. This is difficult in many cases, especially if support libraries (such as parallelization APIs or I/O libraries) are needed or if the build system or compiler are not compatible with Windows. Second, there are additional modifications necessary to adapt the application to the requirements of the Azure PaaS, such as the transformation of the source code into a library executable on Azure. For these reasons, there are few studies evaluating the performance of HPC applications on Windows Azure. Previous research in HPC on Azure focuses on writing new applications specifically for Azure [5][6], which leads to duplication of work and lack of comparability between different solutions. The goal of this paper is to port a set of well known HPC benchmarks, the NAS Parallel Benchmarks (NPB) [7], to the Azure PaaS and evaluate their performance. Our work has three main contributions. First, we analyze the complexity of porting existing HPC applications to the Azure platform, detailing the challenges and their resolutions. Second, we introduce a metric which compares the price and performance of different cloud computing solutions, which leads to the notion of efficiency of a cloud computing solution. Finally, we evaluate the performance and efficiency of Azure by comparing it to a real machine and to an Amazon IaaS cloud.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Related work in this area can be divided into three categories: research on running HPC applications on Windows Azure, performance evaluation of clouds, and migration of applications into the cloud. In this section, we will give a brief overview over this research and compare it to our work. Lu et al. [6] and Li et al. [5] evaluate the possibility of writing scientific applications to run on the Azure platform. They conclude that it is a viable solution for scientific applications that involve large data sets. In contrast to these works, we do not write new applications in Azure, but rather port existing HPC applications to the Azure platform and evaluate the possibility and the difficulties of doing so. The article of Walker [8] evaluates the performance degradation of Amazon EC2 instances. He compares the performance of the NAS Parallel Benchmarks with their performance on a real machine and analyzes the network efficiency by executing the mptest [9] MPI benchmark. Both computing and network performance proved to be challenges for the cloud solution. In this paper, we perform similar experiments with the Azure cloud and compare the
performance and efficiency to the Amazon cloud and a real machine. Deelman et al. [2] evaluate the cost of Amazon EC2 by porting a real-life astronomy application to the cloud and execute it using different resource provisioning plans. They conclude that the cloud is a cost-effective option since the scientific application provider does not need to buy an entire cluster for a few runs of the application. Many clusters are underused as the hardware quickly becomes obsolete. The cloud solves this problem as it is a responsibility of the cloud provider to keep upgrading the hardware and provide an up-to-date service to the users. In our research, we compare Azure and EC2 and evaluate the relation between cost and performance of both clouds.

III. PROBLEM FORMULATION

In this section, we explain the porting process for an HPC application to the Azure PaaS platform. First, we give a short overview of the platform. Afterwards, we explain in detail the challenges and solutions of porting the application to the Win32 programming model and to the Azure platform. The Web Role is the instance that provides the web interface to the user, allowing interactivity with the OS in order to program and execute code. The Worker Role is the instance that actually runs the code. By allocating multiple Worker Role instances it is possible to scale the execution. The VM Role allows users to create IaaS systems. However, the IaaS service is still in the beta development stage, and is unavailable to regular users.

- To create a native service app for SQL that having Saas as a window azure which includes:
  - Restore and replication with Saas service.
  - Dial up dial down.
- To make a desktop implementation of the app in exe format that will work properly as a remote app:
  - For hybrid application.
  - Access from windows, iOS, mac and android platform.
  - Microsoft remote desktop protocol.

The methodology we are using in our work are:

- Tools
  - Visual studio 2013
  - .net framework 4.5
  - MVC implementation
- Requirements
  - Remote app

Azure RemoteApp helps employees stay productive anywhere, and on variety of devices - Windows, Mac OS X, iOS, or android. Your company’s applications run on Windows Server in the Azure cloud, where they’re easier to scale and update.

IV. CONCLUSION
Fig 1:- Window Azure platform

Fig 2:- Selection of remote app programs
Select the program on which you want to run your remote app
Our research work is based on Azure in which a metro app is to be implemented having feature of platform independence, supporting web as well as desktop application and work on hybrid cloud. In this paper, we evaluated the Windows Azure platform as a platform to run general HPC applications. We showed how to port applications written for the UNIX

V. REFERENCES