Deltek

5 Reasons Cloud Should Be Your Firm's Next Move

For years, businesses have had to deploy their software solutions on site, which may require extensive hardware setup, storage and maintenance. But, the days of having to spend hours upon hours maintaining your solutions in your office are gone. You've probably heard about the benefits of "moving to the cloud", but what does that phrase mean and why should you even consider it?

What is the Cloud?

A cloud-based solution provides all of the benefits of an on-site solution without the expensive up-front licensing, hardware expense, complicated deployment and costly, time-consuming maintenance. The servers and necessary infrastructure are no longer taking up valuable office space, but are hosted in a secure off-site facility and accessed over the Internet. This frees up internal IT resources to focus on other, more important work.

Cloud services are all around us and often times we don't even realize it. Have you ever shared a document through Dropbox, Box or Drive? Have you streamed movies using Netflix? Or maybe you have your mobile device backed up in the cloud regularly. These are cloud services millions of people use every day. But backing up contacts in the cloud isn't the same as your company's financial information, right? It may not be the same, but it makes just as much sense and here are a few reasons why.

What can the cloud do for my business?

» **Less time on upgrades, equipment maintenance and monitoring**

» **No more hardware costs or unexpected IT expenses**

» **Put your best IT resources where you need them most, not monitoring servers and infrastructure**

» **Secure data, protected off-site, constantly monitored and available where you are**

Why Move to the Cloud?

Here are 5 reasons it may be the right time for your organization.

1. Streamlined Setup

With your software residing on a server outside your office, you are probably wondering how you actually install the software. The simple answer is you don't. By moving your software to the cloud, you have a team of IT experts that do the heavy lifting for you.

Not only do you alleviate the IT headache of setup, but you save significant time and money too. You will not need to purchase new servers or operating systems. Your cloud provider's IT team will ensure that their hardware exceeds the requirements of your solution to run at optimal performance. Leaving the server configuration to the experts can be a huge convenience that also alleviates the potential cash flow hit of a major hardware investment.

While the cloud technical experts may spend time ensuring an optimal setup, your team's time can be spent on more important tasks. Your team doesn't need to spend countless hours assembling and configuring hardware or learning database languages. With your software in the cloud, you can be assured that everything has been deployed properly, can be accessed easily and is available to your team regardless of their location.

2. Fast and Easy Upgrades

Once your solution is up and running, the work doesn't stop. Software must constantly evolve to leverage new technology, improve performance and enhance functionality. Software development leads to more hardware upgrades.

If you manage your own solution with your own servers, you have to keep up with these ever-increasing hardware demands. According to Gordon Moore, co-founder of Intel, the processing power of the average computer will double roughly every two years. How can you keep up with the exponential growth demands of your teams? This is a major expense that can impede firm growth or impact productivity, if not maintained.

Without consistent software updates, you could be putting your business at risk for potential vulnerabilities and security risks. But, upgrading software is often delayed because of steep hardware costs, or lack of resources to manage the upgrade. With your firm's software solution in the cloud, hardware replacement is unnecessary and software updates are handled for you to ensure your firm is leveraging the latest functionality at the optimal performance while maintaining critical security.

3. Enhanced Security and Monitoring

There is a common misconception that relying on the cloud for your firm's vital software resources will put your organization at risk. This idea stems from a natural fear of the unknown – your data resides on a server you can't see or touch. But, just because you do not have direct interaction with the software does not mean it is any less secure than the server in your office.

In fact, cloud solutions are typically far more secure than their on-site counterparts. If your servers are in your office so your IT specialists

can easily reach them, who else can easily get to them? And, what happens when someone mistakenly downloads a malicious file? If you have mission-critical data stored on your local network and encounter a virus, you risk losing this information or even having it stolen. With your data in the cloud, these types of threats have ZERO impact on the security of your firm's critical data.

Many firms struggle with meeting security standards due to a lack of adequate IT resources. And, if firms have the resources, they likely have competing priorities too. A cloud hosting provider offers a dedicated team of security experts that monitor your data 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 52 weeks a year with security safeguards that typically exceed any on-premise solution.

4. Proven Disaster Recovery

A natural disaster can devastate a firm and a firm's IT infrastructure. Preparing for an IT disaster starts with backing up your data, but that step alone is not sufficient. And, while frequent backups are important, they will not do any good if a disaster

claims the device storing the backups too. That's why it is imperative that you not only back up frequently, but also in various geographic locations. Unfortunately, an extensive backup solution comes with a hefty price tag.

Your client and financial data is critical to your firm's success and by moving this imperative information to the cloud, your data will be backed up frequently, redundantly and remotely with ease. Never worry about recovering critical data again. In the event of a disaster, your firm's data will not be impacted so you can continue to deliver successful projects to your clients. Costpoint also allows the setup of cost pools for "what-if" scenarios.

5. Optimize Your Growth

In terms of software and hardware, performance refers to how a system accomplishes its intended tasks with respect to responsiveness and stability under a particular workload. The key attributes used to measure performance are resource usage, scalability and reliability.

Burdened IT administrators are

often forced to scrape by with the minimum requirements instead of recommended configurations because of time and budget constraints, which lead to long load times, freezes and software crashes. Think about just the few extra seconds it may take for a report to run and multiply it by the number of employees in the organization. That time can really begin to add up.

With cloud solutions, the hardware and software are optimized for the application being hosted. This results in performance gains and efficiency for employees that may be too expensive to implement in your own office.

And, with a cloud solution, you are positioned for growth. You can be sure that your solution will scale with your firm. Your IT infrastructure needs to be ready to scale with your firm's projected growth and the cloud takes away this potential business challenge. With frequent audits and performance testing, the cloud servers are prepared to handle your needs and ensure optimal performance as your software needs increase.

To learn more about Deltek Cloud solutions,

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