

What Is Cloud Computing And Why Your Business Needs It

by Phil Bush

Anyone who has ever owned a computer and has lost all their work knows how horrible it is when you realize you haven't backed up your data. For many people who have small to medium-sized businesses "cloud computing" could be the help you've been looking for when it comes to data backup and more. In the past, this technology was only available to Fortune 100 companies and government agencies but now it is available to everyone.

Cloud computing boils down to managing technology resources to reduce costs while increasing productivity and uptime. One of the more popular uses of cloud computing is data backup (e.g. documents, photos, e-mails). Files are copied from your computer to the Internet so that if and when your computer stops letting you access those files, they can be "recovered." In the background, this information is being securely stored in multiple and geographically dispersed data centers with rooms of servers, multiple connections to the power grid (electricity), multiple Internet connections and numerous technicians keeping those servers running.

Users of cloud-based solutions do not need to know about the millions of dollars invested and resources given behind the scenes; they are only interested in their information being secure, always available and easy to access.

Examples of popular current cloud services include: Salesforce.com, QuickBooks online and hosted e-mail Exchange. Cloud services seamlessly provide simple and complex services — on demand — to people anywhere on the Internet. This is available for reasonable fees because each individual user only pays for their small slice of a tremendous pool of shared resources. We never need to consider the servers, electricity, hard drives, storage, technicians and applications that run our e-mail and hold our documents. We only need to choose the



right cloud partners to assure the security of our files.

Importance Of The Right Fit

While advertising makes it sound simple to move to cloud solutions, be aware that there is a structured process to go through in determining the right fit(s) for your businesses and that is best discussed with your technology partner.

Financial savings and efficiency benefits of cloud computing are important to small and medium-sized businesses over building your own network of servers and storage devices. Benefits include reducing capital investments by not paying for the myriad hardware and software framework necessities associated with on-premise infrastructure solutions; cheaper management (easier for your IT support to manage). Not to mention the 24/7 security, re-

dundant server backup as well as multiple channels of electrical service to assure your information doesn't "disappear." Often a hybrid solution (on premise and cloud) is necessary to provide faster computing. With all of those headaches gone, the ease of predictable fees is usually the central point of decision.

It is important for a business owner to understand that cloud computing and solutions aren't something that can "just be

done" without forethought. It is a common temptation to think the cloud solution you are considering is smarter than it really is so it's important to keep in mind that it is a program, a tool. It has as much ability to be productive as it does to be destructive if chosen and implemented with a cavalier, laissez-faire approach. They must be designed and implemented with the same strategic planning that the more traditional systems require.

CMIT Can Help

Cloud integrators, like CMIT Solutions of Denver, keep current on the many providers, tools and systems starting up every day as well as your issues of security, connectivity and easy access with a foundational focus on the natural businesses processes for your staff, vendors and clients. Your system must be designed and built to

work now and in the future to better your business.

There are business benefits along with technical intricacies hovering on and around the management and security of these systems that are too filled with minutia to risk losing every reader by addressing here. By managing technology resources we enable you to do work from as close as your smartphone, hotel business center, home computer, office or even gaming consoles like an Xbox. Employees can have secured access to business tools and information independent of the devices available.

If this article has intrigued you about the workflow simplicity that comes to life with cloud-based solutions, search out the right partnerships that will open the window to potential cloud integrators and make the sun shine on your business by leveraging cloud solutions.

President of CMIT Solutions of Denver Phil Bush and his team have been implementing, integrating and supporting "cloud" solutions since 2005. CMIT Solutions is a nationwide IT services and consulting



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company with a presence of 120 offices in more than 30 states. For more information call 303-756-2648 or visit www.computersupportdenver.com/services/cloud-services. For more information on "The Hype Around the Cloud" webinar that will take place on May 26 from noon until 1 p.m. visit <http://cmitsolutions.com/denver/webinars>.