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June 2021

How Does Moving to the Cloud Affect Your Business' Footprint?

The pandemic affected all sectors of the economy both in the US and around the world. For many, it may be time to re-evaluate your business's needs for brick-and-mortar locations. One key element that every organization will be looking to enhance is easy and reliable access to applications and data from anywhere.

The massive transition from office workers to a remote workforce meant that businesses needed to invest more in helping their users work remotely effortlessly. It became clear for many that the Cloud is a necessity rather than a choice. In this article, we look at the things you need to consider when re-evaluating your business' footprint.

Do You Need an Office?

Contrary to what you might be thinking, your business may still need an office. It is important to note that most companies, especially smaller ones, will gain customer credibility with an office. Your clients will view your establishment as a 'bona fide business because you have a more professional face. Having an office(s) allows you to interact with clients in a professional environment. That professional environment plays an essential role in transactions that need a face-to-face meeting.

Not having a physical office does not significantly change the number of computers you will need. Each employee will continue to need a device to connect back to your applications and data. This will likely be a laptop moving forward, but we strongly recommend that the business buys the computer and handles all the maintenance, software updates, and support. BYOD (Bring Your Own Device) has gained some popularity in the past five years, but the IT department that must support the mixed environment that BYOD (Bring Your Own Device) creates has a more complicated task.

Are You in the Cloud?

With cloud computing, you get to choose between two major categories: Infrastructure-as-a-Service (IaaS) and Software-as-a-Service (SaaS). The one that you choose will depend on the needs of your business along with the availability of your applications in SaaS (Software as a Service) form. Maybe even more important, the comfort level that senior management has with the Cloud. Engaging with an outside firm to help you think through your options is something that an outsourced IT firm like TCS does.

SaaS is gaining popularity for software developers. Because it is easier for them to support their application if they own and control everything but the browser on your remote computer.

Upcoming Events

Webinar:
Achieving Data Backup at Microsoft O365 Cloud
June 8, 2021

Lunch & Learn:
Safeguard Your Organization from Growing Cyber Threats
June 22, 2021

For more information on our upcoming events, please visit www.tcsusa.com.

Microsoft Office 365 for email or G-Suite for applications would also qualify as SaaS. You pay monthly for the number of licenses you need, which can rise or fall as your firm grows or shrinks.

IaaS can be looked at in several ways. Colocation is where you own the physical server(s), but they are "hosted" at a data center. You might own the physical server(s), or you might lease them, but either way, they are yours, and you will need to support, patch, and secure them.

Another way is to have a virtual server(s) in a data center. There is no hardware to buy; you lease the computing power that you use each month like your power bill. Typically, you will still need to support, patch, and secure these servers as if they were physical servers in your office.

If you are not in the Cloud yet, it may be time you started looking seriously at moving all or part of your business to cloud computing. Some of the advantages include reliability, flexibility, scalability, data security, and much more.

Which is Better: On-Premise, all Cloud, or a Hybrid?

What is the fundamental difference between on-premises and cloud computing? The answer is straightforward: on-premises are company-owned servers that are physically at the brick-and-mortar office. Cloud can be a SAAS (Software as a Service) application hosted on the software vendor's servers, or you can buy the software and install it on leased virtual servers in a data center. The reliability and redundancy gained from being in the Cloud would be prohibitively expensive to build on-premise. So for many clients that need 24x7x365 access to applications and data, it just makes sense.

On-premise is more comfortable for some organizations because they like knowing their data is on-site, where they can put their hands on it if they want to. An all-Cloud solution is typically more reliable, more flexible, and more secure, than on-premise. Hybrid is an environment that combines both Cloud and On-Premise.

Typically, a cloud-based solution does not include patching, updating, and maintaining your server(s); that is something that you will either need to do yourself or outsource. It would be best to consider where your strengths lie and what it makes the most sense to spend your time on.

Whether you choose cloud, on-premise, or a hybrid option or a hybrid, it comes down to the size of your business, how fast you are changing, and personal preferences. For cloud computing to be a possibility, you need to have a reliable Internet connection.

You will need a solid Internet connection to make cloud computing work for office staff, those at home, and on the road. A cloud solution allows you to have reliable any-time access to your business applications and data via the Internet.

Conclusion

Are you considering changing the amount of Cloud or on-premise computing you will use after the pandemic? You can contact us at any time to discuss business strategy with experienced experts. Total Computer Solutions will design a solution that will provide reliable access to keep your employees productive. We work within your business's needs and constraints to develop the secure, reliable solutions.

Public Cloud vs. Private Cloud: Advantages and Disadvantages

Companies switching to the Cloud may hit a speed bump when they realize they have many unanswered questions. Organizations may ask: What is the Cloud's security level? Who will manage it? How much money will this cost me in the long run? Questions, such as these, pile up to the point where the idea of moving to the Cloud is overwhelming. However, knowing the difference between a public vs. private Cloud can help answer many of these need-to-know questions.

Private Cloud

The main difference between a Private and Public Cloud is the location. A Private Cloud resides on an organization's intranet or data center, optimizing storage capacity and processor power. Essentially, this kind of Cloud is like modifying a car's engine, so that it runs faster and more efficiently than normal.

However, also like an expensive car, Private Cloud computing requires the organization to handle all the management and updates to the data center. Therefore, the company is solely responsible for the Cloud, which can be challenging for organizations that do not have an in-house IT staff member.

Most organizations that choose this type of Cloud utilize a data center or internal network infrastructure. There are additional expenses for Private Cloud computing, such as purchasing new equipment when the original hardware stops working. Maintaining this kind of Cloud could cost more than a Public Cloud, in the long run.

One huge advantage to this type of Cloud is its security. Unlike a Public Cloud, a Private Cloud stores only the data from the organization that owns or leases the servers. Meaning, there is almost never a possibility that the organization's data mixes or leaks into another company's set of information.

Lastly, this type of Cloud has the perk of being customizable. Essentially, it could be as large as a company can afford and physically arranged to the organization's desires.

Public Cloud

Unlike a Private Cloud, a Public Cloud stores data in the provider's data center. In other words, an organization's information is stored remotely and tends only to be accessible to the IT providers themselves.

Since a company cannot access the data center equipment, the Cloud hosting provider is responsible for its maintenance, management, and updates. Essentially, a Public Cloud is similar to placing children under the watchful eye of a careful babysitter or daycare center, meaning an organization hands this responsibility over to someone with expertise.

A company pays for Public Cloud computing differently than they would with Private Cloud computing. Public Cloud is on a pay-per-use basis, with expenses varying depending on the amount of service required by the company and the amount of data stored on the provider's servers. Over time, this kind of Cloud can be cheaper because of the shared nature of the public cloud.

For many organizations, the only worry they have with the Public Cloud is security. The owner of the data does not control the information's direct security; however, most providers take extreme caution. Each company's information is separate from other customers, which maintains protection against security breaches or a mixing of data.

Lastly, one perk with this type of Cloud is that it cuts down lead times in testing and setting up new products, allowing more time for an organization to finish what they need to do most.

Which Cloud Should You Choose?

Unfortunately, there is not a quick and easy answer to which Cloud is better for an organization. The answer comes down to what a company wants more of: the access and customizability of a Private Cloud, or fewer expenses and responsibility of a Public Cloud. Though moving to the Cloud can be a confusing process, deciding on which type of Cloud is best for your organization will help simplify the task.

If you would like to receive our newsletter digitally, please email alimbers@tcsusa.com.



Achieving Data Backup at Microsoft O365 Cloud

Date: Tuesday, June 8th

Time: 11:00 AM ET

Presenter: *Al Murray, Client Strategy Manager, Total Computer Solutions*

Registration: Visit tcsusa.com/events/ or call 336.804.8449

You are invited to join us for our upcoming webinar, "**Achieving Data Backup at Microsoft O365 Cloud**," presented by *Al Murray, Client Strategy Manager, Total Computer Solutions*.

Most organizations do a great job moving their data to the cloud, but no one asks these crucial questions, "What is the backup strategy in the cloud, and why is it important?" Companies assume the cloud provider has the sole responsibility of protecting and backing up data. Driving factors for managing data are legal recovery, HR issues, cyber threats, and compliance

Key Topics

- Common Vulnerabilities of Data
- Value of Company Information
- Microsoft O365 Standard Backup Policy
- Data & Cybersecurity Misconceptions in the Cloud

Attend this webinar to gain insight on why a backup strategy in the cloud is essential.

On-Demand Webinar: Cyber Insurance to Protect Your Business

During this informational Q&A session with Marsh & McLennan Agency we discuss the new cyber liability insurance requirements and why cyber insurance has become essential for all businesses.

Host: Andy Purcell, Business Consultant, Total Computer Solutions

Guest: Murphy Holderness, Business Insurance Consultant, Marsh & McLennan

Visit landingpages.tcsusa.com/webinars to watch this and other webinars available on-demand.



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On-Demand Webinar

*Safeguard Your Organization
from Growing Cyber Threats*



Safeguard Your Organization from Growing Cyber Threats

Join us for our upcoming Lunch & Learn!

Date: Tuesday, June 22nd

Time: 11:45 AM ET

Cost: Free

Location: Fleming's Prime Steakhouse, Greensboro, NC 27410

Registration: Visit tcsusa.com/events/ or call 336.804.8449

This past year, the world has seen the most significant increase in cyber-attacks on companies, government, and individuals. The sophistication of these threats is continuing to increase. The costs of cleaning up a breach can be devastating, both from a financial and a PR standpoint. Therefore, it is essential to protect your data proactively by effectively educating your workforce about the security threats and ensuring they understand how to protect their computers and your company from those threats.

Key Topics for Discussion

- Prioritizing Your Overdue IT Projects
- Maximizing Your Cybersecurity
- Refreshing and Updating Your Hardware
- Expanding Your Cloud Usage

Attend this lunch & learn to understand better how to protect your organization from cyberattacks and increase your security awareness.