

Quick guide to Cloud Computing for small to medium-sized businesses

Optimise your operations to transform your business



Now more than ever, technology is the backbone of a successful business. Outdated or obsolete IT limits a business's ability to address key challenges and opportunities in today's digital world.

This Quick Guide is one in a series of Satalyst's information products for small to medium sized businesses (SMBs). It is designed to help business owners and decision makers like yourself to better understand and take advantage of new information technologies. The focus of this Guide is on cloud computing solutions.

Why the cloud matters to small and medium-sized businesses

Cloud adoption by SMBs is trending upwards at industry record rates – but why? What exactly does cloud computing offer SMBs that is so compelling?

The benefits can be understood from two perspectives:

- **Capability** – cloud computing enables you to gain access to technologies (infrastructure, platforms, and software) that otherwise you'd need sophisticated and expensive IT support to obtain.
- **Serviceability** – the cloud will give you access to service levels at a fraction of the cost (especially for reliability and performance) that are much higher than what you'd receive with a typical on-premises installation.

For example, few small businesses have the knowledge and expertise to perform ongoing management of dedicated servers, storage and backups to run commercially available software packages. By leveraging the cloud, your company can stop worrying about the details of installing, running and backing up software and instead simply consume these offerings as services.

In short, leveraging cloud solutions as a service allows your company to focus efforts on the most important aspects of running your business, and it allows technology to be simply one of many services that supports your company. Importantly, this translates into a financial benefit. Our experience is that for a large percentage of SMBs, the ability to move large portions (or all) of the company's IT needs to the cloud leads to significant cost savings.

What is cloud computing?

Cloud Computing is software, storage or infrastructure that is accessed over the internet. It is different from on-premises computing where you run applications or programs from software downloaded on a physical computer or server in your building. Cloud computing allows you to access the same kinds of applications through the internet and is characterised by the following features:

- You access computing resources as a service instead of upfront outlay for infrastructure or software products which you need to install, manage and keep updated yourself.
- The ability to rapidly scale computing resources to match fluctuations in business demand (up and down).
- Consumption-based pricing where you only pay for computing resources used. You can monitor usage and remain current with automatic software updates (no more large software licencing bills or infrastructure costs).



Cloud Computing

Having access to all your applications and data from any internet enabled device

At Satalyst, we operate fully in the cloud. We trust our business to Microsoft's Azure cloud as the most comprehensive and trusted cloud services around the globe.

Cloud computing is not new

When you update your Facebook status, you're using cloud computing. Checking your bank balance on your phone? You're in the cloud again. Chances are you rely on cloud computing to solve the challenges faced by small and medium sized businesses. You may already use Microsoft Office Apps, Salesforce.com, Google Drive, Hotmail, Hightail, LinkedIn, Dropbox, eBay, Skype, etc. Over the last couple of years, cloud computing services specifically targeted at SMBs have grown rapidly and are becoming a popular alternative to businesses managing their own in-house IT.

Benefits of cloud computing for your business

In our experience, the three biggest hurdles businesses face daily with IT is: **SECURITY**; **ACCESS**; and **TIME**. Adopting cloud computing solutions into your IT operations will alleviate those challenges and save you money.

SECURITY

Unmatched security & privacy

Invisible doesn't mean less secure! Microsoft is the leader in cloud security and invests billions of dollars on cloud infrastructure and software security and truly excels at data resiliency and privacy.

Identity and access management

With Azure cloud, you can have secure single sign-on for thousands of cloud apps and web apps you run on-premises. You control who has access and employees have self-service password change and reset.

More control

With a few clicks you can control who has access to which documents and what parts of your business. Remotely manage employee-owned and company devices more efficiently with cloud management services.

Always have the latest software

No need to worry about updating software. Cloud-based applications automatically refresh and update themselves. Threats are continuously monitored and security and feature updates are delivered automatically.

ACCESS

Mobility

If you have an internet connection, you can always access your work. Keep files automatically synchronised and accessible from anywhere from any device at any time. Empower your workforce with mobility.

High availability

With a failover strategy to suit your business needs, your cloud accessibility can be guaranteed at 99.95 percent. It can be business as usual during a disaster minimising any downtime and loss of productivity.

Quick deployment

Traditional IT systems take time to implement. Cloud infrastructure can be provisioned in a matter of hours and software purchased and deployed immediately. You can self-service or let Satalyst do it for you.

Store data cost-effectively

Cloud storage gives you almost unlimited storage capacity for any type of data. Retain and access all the data from your business applications, and have storage that can expand to fit your needs for a fraction of the cost.

TIME

Flexibility

Scale up or down as needed. Flex technology capability to support business growth. Alternatively, turn off what you don't need and only pay for what you use. No onerous contracts to commit to.

Reduced up-front costs

Reduce your total cost of ownership by cutting out the cost of hardware and moving to subscription based licences for software and services. You only pay for what you use and costs are spread out over time.

Reduce need for in-house IT

Don't worry about maintaining servers - outsource to Satalyst! Let us manage the environment, including storage, server performance, backups and system patches. You can get all your cloud subscriptions through us too.

It's not all or nothing

Not everything makes sense to move to the cloud. With Azure cloud, you can maximise your existing IT investments by blending on-premises and cloud solutions in a hybrid environment without costly workarounds.

How we can help

Satalyst is a cloud-first digital transformation company leveraging Microsoft and open source technology to build, integrate and support solutions. Our mission is to empower our clients with a competitive advantage by leveraging technology to modernise and optimise business processes. We will collaborate with you to really understand your business and strive for optimal business outcomes rather than just focusing on the technology.

Let's do business together

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