

Moving Operations To The “Cloud” Saves Time, Money

by *Jim Salviski*

(NAPSA)—The terms “cloud” and “cloud computing” are just about everywhere, but unless you’re in the information technology business, you may not be sure exactly what they mean.

So what exactly is the cloud? It describes computing systems, data and infrastructure running on a server at an off-site data center that your company can rent or lease.

Simply put, the cloud refers to the out-of-sight, out-of-mind computer tasks that happen on someone else’s equipment. It can replace or be an extension of the server—or servers—taking up valuable space in your company’s closet or costing a fortune at your company’s data center.

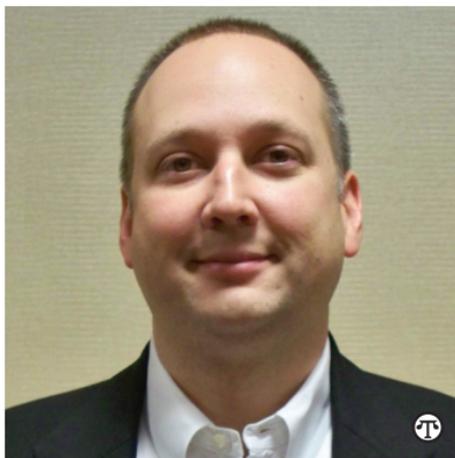
The cloud can also serve as an extension of your company’s IT team, freeing them to focus attention on strategic projects that help your business grow.

With the cloud, IT infrastructure costs are predictable. Capital investments in hardware that becomes obsolete cease to exist. In fact, cloud computing lets your company increase capacity or add capabilities on the fly, without investing in new infrastructure, training new personnel or licensing new software. Plus, your company’s reliability and uptime improve tremendously, leading to better business efficiencies.

In addition, using the cloud enables employees to securely access data from anywhere, at anytime.

While the advantages of moving to the cloud are numerous, many businesses still have questions about safety, security, reliability and accessibility.

Fortunately, reputable cloud providers take great pride in pro-



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viding highly secure and fault-tolerant environments, so you know your company’s proprietary information is safe. Data center environments are specially designed, private environments just for your business data. No one else has access to it. Some providers go further and seek third-party certification from independent auditors.

It should also be noted that there are numerous reports of entire corporate servers being stolen, flooded and more. But the security at data centers is much safer than that at most small-business environments.

If you still have reservations, consider starting with a hybrid model. That way, your company’s older, archived information is stored in the cloud and your most current data is stored on your own private server or servers.

All in all, the cloud offers your company greater agility, less frustration, better cash flow and more time to do what you do best—grow your business.

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