

Free mini guide on cloud computing.



**Five critical facts every business owner must know
about using Cloud Technology**

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The abbreviated content in this document is taken in part from a number of publications by this author including the book “The CEO’s Guide to Cyber Security”.

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NOTE: The information in this guide is of a general nature only. When making decisions about your business it is strongly recommended that you seek qualified advice tailored to your particular needs and business situation

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What most IT consultants don't know won't tell you about moving your company's network to the cloud.

Why did we create this mini guide and who should read it?

Unfortunately we have all heard the commotion about cloud computing and how it is the next big thing, yet despite all the hype no one really seems to understand what cloud computing and cloud technology can be used for or how it will help your business or organisation.

We wanted to set the record straight and provide business owners, board members and executives a simple, easy to read mini guide that will explain:

- What cloud computing is,
- How it can possibly help your business and if it is even a good fit for your business , and
- What you need to know in order to make good decisions about choosing the correct technology and vendor for your business.

Cloud computing and technologies are not a good fit for every company and organisation and if you don't get all the facts or fully understand the pros and cons of cloud computing then you could end up making some very poor and expensive business decisions. Those decisions could deeply affect your customers and your business.

That being said for some businesses and organisations, cloud technology and services can:

- Lower IT costs by 20 to 30%,
- Greatly improve the ability for remote workers to connect and work,
- Simplify the entire IT infrastructure and
- Genuinely solve a number of technological problems that they have been around for years.

By the end of this Mini Guide you will know or at least have a much better understanding of cloud systems and technology and how it could benefit your business.

We are always available as a resource for a second opinion or quick question so please feel free to contact our office directly if you have any points made in this mini guide that need clarifying. We will endeavour to answer any questions you have concerning this and any other technical question. By emailing support@rniconsulting.com.au we will get back to you quickly.

About the author.

Roger Smith is an independent ICT and business security consultant, security trainer, and author that specialises in inexpensive and highly effective business and security strategies for small and medium businesses and not for profit organisations. He has developed and authored the SME Security Framework and the Security Policy Training Course which are considered to be the definitive guides to helping SME's protect their organisation using the principles of Technology, Management, Adaptability and Compliance.

This vast experience has given Roger a broad knowledge of hundreds of ICT and Security tactics used by some of the most successful and well protected organisations in the world.

Five critical facts that you must know before moving to the cloud

In this report I'm going to talk about five very important facts you need to know before you consider moving your company to the cloud. These include:

- What cloud computing is.
- The pros and cons of this new technology.
- The various types of cloud computing options you have - there is more than just one.
- Answer two important frequently asked questions you need to know the answer to. and
- What questions you need to ask your IT pro provider before letting them sell you on moving all or part of your network and applications to the cloud.

I will also include some actual case studies from other business and organisations that have moved to cloud computing along with a sample and simple cost comparison chart so you can see the impact this new technology can have on your IT budget.

At the end of this report there is an invitation for you to request a free cloud readiness assessment to determine if cloud computing is right for your particular business.

I encourage you to take advantage of this before making any decisions. We designed it to take a hard look at the functionality and cost for you as a business and provide you with the specific information you need, not sales and marketing hype, to make a good business decision about this new technology.

What is cloud computing?

Wikipedia defines cloud computing as “the use and access of multiple server based computational resources via a large digital network (the Internet)

So what the hell does that mean?

The easiest way to not only understand what cloud computing is but also gain insight to into why is gaining popularity is to compare it to the evolution of public utilities. For example let's look at the evolution of electricity.

Back in the industrial age, factories had to produce their own power in order to run machines that produce the hard goods they manufactured. Be it textiles or railroad spikes using machines gave these companies enormous competitive advantage by producing more goods with fewer workers and in less time. For many years the production of power was every bit as important to their company's success as the skills of their workers and the quality of their products.

Unfortunately this put factories into two businesses, the business of producing their goods and the business of producing power. Then the concept of delivering power (electricity) as a utility was introduced by Thomas Edison. He developed the first commercial grade replacement for gas lighting and heating using centrally generated and distributed electricity. From there as they say - the rest is history. The concept of electric current being generated in central power plants and deliver to factories as a utility caught on fast.

This meant manufacturers no longer had to be in the business of producing their own power. In fact in a very short period of time it became a competitive necessity for factories to take advantage of

the lower cost option being offered by the public utilities. Almost overnight thousands of steam driven engines and water based electric generators were rendered obsolete and left to rust next of the factories that they use to power.

What made this possible was a series of inventions and scientific breakthroughs but what drove the demand was pure economics. Utility companies were able to leveraged economics of scale that manufacturing plants simply could not match in output or in price. In fact, the price of power drop so significantly and quickly became affordable for not only factories but for every single household in the country today.

Today, we are in a similar transformation and change that is following a similar course. The only difference is that instead of cheap plentiful electricity, innovation in technologies and Internet connectivity have driven down the cost of computing power. With cloud computing, businesses can pay for computing power like a utility, without having the exorbitant cost of installing, hosting and supporting it.

In fact, in most cases you are probably leveraging Cloud technologies in your home life. Below are a number of cloud computing applications also called software as a service or S AAS you maybe using:

- Gmail, Hotmail, live or other free email accounts
- Facebook
- NetSuite or salesforce
- Constant contact, AWebber and other email broadcasting service
- Survey monkey for survey tools
- LinkedIn
- Twitter
- All things google – search, adwords, maps.

If you think about it, almost every single application you use today can be or already is being put in the cloud. You can access it and pay for it via your browser for a single monthly fee or utility price. You don't purchase and install software and instead access is via an Internet browser.

What about Office 365 and Google apps.

Office 365 and Google apps are perfect examples of the cloud computing trend. For an inexpensive monthly fee you can get full access and full use of an office applications that use to cost a few hundred dollars to purchase. Since these applications are being powered by the cloud technology provider, you don't need an expensive desktop with lots of power to use them, just a simple Internet connection would do on a laptop, desktop or a tablet.

The office 365 offering for a business can include office 365, Exchange, SharePoint and SQL. All managed and supported by a central portal. There are a number of cloud providers that supply this configuration based on the business requirements of your organisation.

Pros and cons of moving to the cloud.

As you read this section keep in mind there is no perfect solution. All options - be it an in-house network or a cloud solution has both upsides and down sides. The choice has to be determined case-by-case before you can come to a complete conclusion on which option will work for your business or organisation. **Do not let a cloud expert tell you that there is only one way of doing something.** Most businesses and organisations end up with a hybrid solution, where some of the applications are in the cloud and some are still hosted and maintained from an in-house server. We will discuss more of this in a later section: however, here are potential pros and cons of cloud computing:

Pros of cloud computing:

- **Lowered IT cost.** This is probably the single most compelling reason why companies choose to move their network all or in part to the cloud. Not only do you save money on software licenses but hardware servers and workstations as well as IT support and upgrades. In fact we save our client an average of 20 to 30% when moving some or part of their network functionality to the cloud. So if you hate constantly writing big fat cheques for IT upgrades you'll really want to look into the cloud computing. Included in this report are examples of how we have done this for other clients and what the savings have been.
- **Ability to access your desktop and/or applications from anywhere and on any device.** If you travel a lot, have remote workers, prefer to use an iPad while travelling and a laptop at your home then cloud computing will give you the ability to work from any of these devices.
- **Disaster recovery backup are automated.** The server in your office is extremely vulnerable to a number of threats including viruses, human error, hardware failure, software corruption and of course physical damage due to fire flood or other natural disasters. If your servers were in the cloud and your offices was reduced to a pile rubble you could pull out your laptop and be back up and running within the same day. This would not be this case if you are a traditional network and will using tape Drive CDs USB drives are the physical storage devices as a backup system.

Plus, like public utility, cloud platforms are far more robust and secure than your average business network. They can leverage economies of scale to invest heavily in security, redundancy and failover systems making them far less likely to go down.

- **It's faster cheaper and easier to set up new employees.** If you have a seasonal workforce or a lot of staff turnovers, cloud computing will not only lower the cost of setting up new accounts but it will make it indefinitely faster.
- **Use it without having to own it.** More specifically you don't own the responsibility of having to install, update or maintain the infrastructure. Think of it similarly to staying at a hotel, where someone else takes care of the pool, cleaning the room and mowing the lawn but you still have the only key to your room and the facilities. This is particularly attractive to companies and organisations who are new or expanding but don't want the heavy outlay of cash for purchasing and supporting an expensive computer network.
- **It is a greener technology that will save on power and your electricity bill.** For some smaller companies and organisations, the power savings will be too small to measure.

However for larger companies with multiple servers, who are cooling a hot server room and are keeping their servers running 24\7\365, the savings can be considerable.

The cons of cloud computing.

- **The Internet goes down.** You can mitigate this risk by using a commercial grade Internet connection and maintaining a second backup connection. There is a chance that you will lose Internet connectivity making it impossible to work.
- **Data security.** Many people feel uncomfortable having business data in some off-site locations. This is a valid concern. Before you choose any cloud provider you need to find out more information about:
 - Where they are storing your data
 - How it is encrypted
 - Who has access to it and
 - How you can get back.

You'll find more information on this under "what to look for when hiring a cloud integrator" later on in this Mini Guide.

- **Certain line of business applications won't work in the cloud.** There are a number of applications that cloud computing are not designed for. The best example of this is the Adobe suite. Yes, the software can be downloaded and you can buy a monthly subscription but you still need to install it on a computer.
- **Compliance issues.** There are a number of laws and regulations, each country has their own, that requires companies and organisations to control and protect their data and certify that they have knowledge and control over:
 - Who can access the data
 - Who uses it and
 - How and where it is stored

In a public cloud environment this can be a problem. Many cloud providers won't tell you specifically where your data is stored.

Most cloud providers have SAS 70 certification which requires them to be able to decide describe exactly:

- What is happening to the data in their environment
- What controls they have on the data when it is being uploaded and downloaded
- What controls are in place over the access to and processing of the data, and
- What the provider does with the data.

As the business owner or manager, it your neck on the line if the data is compromise. It's important that you ask the right questions and ask for some type of validation, that they will be meeting the various compliance with regulations on an ongoing basis.

Cloud versus traditional networks

As I said earlier, each client has a significantly unique set of circumstances and needs and requirements that has to be factor into the cost saving benefits. In order to give you an idea of what you can save when moving your network to the cloud we put together a sample business scenario that we commonly encounter and the savings obtained with cloud computing. Please note we've shown this over a three-year period since that is the normal time span when all workstations and servers need to be replaced and software upgraded. We have also taken into account the fact that you don't have to purchase new hardware as often which is a huge cost saving when moving to the cloud. We need to show this over a three-year period to show you the true and full cost savings.

Example: Acme consulting.

This is a professional services firm that has 25 employees all using Microsoft Office other applications being used include QuickBooks exchange and SharePoint and goldmine.

Item	Traditional Network Costs over 3 years	Cloud network costs over 3 years	
Hardware			
Server 1	14,281.00	14,281.00	
Server 2	14,281.00	Nil	
Server 3	14,281.00	Nil	
Workstations (25)	43,697.00	31,504.00	
Other Devices (50% saturation within the business)	7,375.00	7,375.00	
	93,915.00	53,160.00	
Software			
Microsoft server software	4,712.40	1,570.00	
Microsoft Server CALs	1,787.00	1,787.00	
Microsoft operating systems	Included in Hardware	19,800.00	
Microsoft Office Licenses	16,555.00	Monthly payment \$550.00	
Exchange server	1,800.00		
Exchange server Client access licenses	3,425.00		
SQL Server	1,596.00		
SQL Client access licenses	9,295.00		
SharePoint	12,089.00		
Anti-Virus Software	2,741.00		2,740.00
Spam Filtering	3,600.00		
Other Licenses (QuickBooks x 3 users)	2,500.00	2,268.00	
Goldmine x 3 users	5,085.00	3,780.00	
	65,185.40	31,945.00	
Other Costs			
Internet Connection	7,200.00	12,600.00	
Firewall	700.00	1,800.00	
Backup	3,877.50	1,292.50	
Storage	10,000.00	10,000.00	
UPS	2499.00	999.00	
	24,276.50	26,691.50	
Labour			
Outsourced IT Support*	90,000.00	90,000.00	
Internal IT Support Costs**	135,000.00	90,000.00	
Additional Costs for the Business***	5,000.00	3,000.00	
	230,000.00	183,000.00	
TOTAL COSTS	\$413,376.90	\$294,796.50	
SAVINGS	\$118,580.40	\$3293.90 per month	

*This is a rough figure. The managed services and outsourced component should not change significantly and for this demonstration we have set the cost at \$2500.00 per month for the 36

month period. Depending on your outsource company there should be no additional costs per month.

**This is based on having original 3 people at an average of \$45,000.00 per year (not including business costs for personal). When going to a cloud solution the on staff IT people can be redeployed to a higher position – business intelligence and reporting.

***Power and cooling for 3 servers compared to 1 over a 3 year period

As you can see the cost savings (40%) are often compelling enough for business owners to overlook the risk of cloud computing. If carefully planned the normal risks of downtime and security are greatly minimised. In fact most organisations and businesses when moving to the cloud save between 30 and 40% of operational expenditure costs. In fact when they move to the cloud they can experience less downtime problems and system crashes than they did with their in-house network.

Different types of cloud solutions explained.

Full cloud

This is where all your applications and data are put on the other side of the main business firewall, in the cloud. Access to the information is through various devices - laptops, desktops, tablets and phones via the Internet.

The hybrid cloud.

Although full cloud computing valid applications, for many it's downright scary. In some cases it's not the smart move due to:

- Compliance issues
- Security restrictions, and
- Performance in issues

The hybrid cloud scenario enables you to put certain pieces of existing IT infrastructure, say storage and email in the cloud and the remainder of the IT infrastructure stays on the business and organisations premise. This gives you the ability to employ cost savings and benefits of cloud computing where it makes the most sense without risking your entire environment.

Similar to the hybrid solution the point solution allows a business to put certain applications, SharePoint, Exchange in the cloud while making everything else on site. Email is usually a critical application that everybody needs and wants access to, on the road, and on various devices Tablets, laptops and smart phones. By moving these components to the cloud this is a great way to get the advanced features of Microsoft exchange without the cost of installing and supporting your own in-house exchange server.

Public cloud

A public cloud is a service that anyone can tap into with a network connection. They are shared infrastructures that any business can tap into and they allow you to pay as you go. Public cloud infrastructure is managed through a self-service web portal.

FAQs about security, where your data is held and Internet connectivity

What if my Internet connection goes down for an extended period of time?

While this is a valid concern we overcome this in the following ways: For our clients in the cloud we recommend having separate connections to the Internet on different providers and different hardware. If possible the redundant link needs to be on different infrastructure.

What happens if the Internet slows to the point where it is difficult to work productively?

We resolve this by keeping a synchronised copy of your data on your on-site server as well as in the cloud. This works using Distributed File System (DFS), a Microsoft technology that synchronises documents and data between cloud servers and local servers in your office. Instead of getting rid of all of your servers, we keep one on site and maintain it with an up to date synchronised copy of your files folders and documents. If the Internet goes down, slows or simply grinds, you simply open a generic folder on your PC and the system will automatically know to pull the documents from the fastest connection be it in the cloud or being a local one. Once a file is modified it syncs it in seconds. You don't have to worry about having multiple versions of the same document. Using this process you receive the benefits of the cloud, with a backup and Business Continuity solution to keep your business and organisation up and running.

What about security? Isn't there a chance of someone accessing my data if it is in the cloud?

In many cases cloud computing it is a more secure way of accessing and storing data. Just because your servers are on site doesn't make it more secure, in fact most organisations and businesses can't justify the cost of securing their network in the same way cloud provider can. Most security breaches are due to human error:

- One of your employees downloads a file contains a virus
- They didn't use a secure password or
- They simply email confidential information out to people we shouldn't see it.

Other security breaches can occur in on-site networks because the organisation or company didn't properly maintain their own in-house network with:

- Security updates
- Software patches or
- up-to-date antivirus software

That's a far more common way for internal networks to get compromised against the probability of a cloud provider getting hacked.

Nearly 75 percent of CIO and IT executives cite security as their number one concern when it comes to cloud computing. Because integrated cloud computing involves moving sensitive data between the cloud and on premise networks, guaranteeing security is vital. When vetting an integration solution, determine which standards are supported for securing the data in transit. Keep in mind

that as enterprises move more processes to the cloud, the volume of sensitive data flowing to and from the cloud increases.

What if you go out of business how will I get my data back?

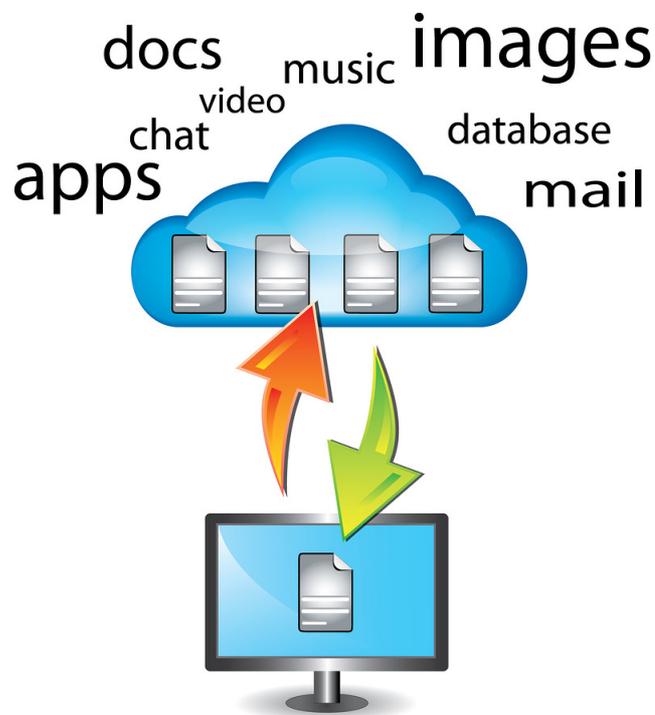
We give every client complete network documentation. This clearly outlines:

- Where the data is located
- How they can get it back in the event of an emergency (this includes the data and information on emergency contact numbers)
- How to access your data and infrastructure without needing our assistance (although our plan is always to be there to support you)
- A copy of our insurance policy and information regarding your backups and licensing.

We also give your copy of our disaster recovery plan. This shows what we have put in place to make sure we stay up-to-date, and running. *In fact you should never have any IT professional that won't give you that that information.* We also deliver a copy of your data on disk every month they so you have a physical copy and backup of the entire network to ensure that you have a complete business continuity program in place.

Do I have to purchase new hardware (servers, workstations) when I move to the cloud?

No that is one of the selling points of cloud computing. Cloud allows you to use older workstations, laptops and servers because the computing power is in the cloud. Cloud allows you to keep and use hardware longer. Cloud also allows you to buy cheaper hardware (workstations and laptops) because you don't need expensive computing power like what was required in the past.



What to look for when hiring a cloud integrator.

A “cloud integrator” is a fancy name for an IT consultant who helps you set up and integrate the various software and solutions into a cloud service specifically for your business. BUT buyer beware. The cloud is brand-new technology and you don't want just anyone setting it up for you.

Unfortunately the computer repairer consulting industry along with many others has its own share of incompetent and unethical people. They will try to take advantage of trusting businesses and business owners who simply do not have the ability to determine whether or not they know what they are doing. Sometimes this is out of greed, more often it is simply because they don't have the skills or competency to do the job right. They won't tell you that upfront because they have to make the sale.

From misleading information, unqualified technicians, poor management or terrible customer service, we have seen it all. We know that they exist in abundance because we have had a number of customers come to us to clean up the disasters they have caused.

Automotive repair shops, electricians, plumbers, lawyers, Realtors, dentists, Doctors, accountants et cetera are heavily regulated to protect the consumer from receiving substandard work or getting ripped off. The computer industry is still highly unregulated and there are few laws in existence to protect consumers. This is why it is so important for you to really research the company or person you are considering as your cloud integrator to make sure they have this experience to set up, migrate and support your network in the cloud.

Anyone, who can hang out a shingle, can promote themselves as a cloud expert. They may in fact be honestly trying to do a good job for you. Their inexperience can cost you dearly in:

- Network speed and performance
- Loss of computing power
- Corrupting of your critical data

There are six questions you should ask your IT professional before letting them migrate your network to the cloud.

There are 6 Critical questions any business or organisation should ask their IT company or computer consultant before letting them move your network to the cloud.

How many clients have you provided cloud service for to date and can you provide references?

You don't want someone practising on your network at a minimum make sure they have three years of experience and a number of clients you can talk to

How quickly do they guarantee to have technicians working on an outage or other problem?

Anyone you pay to support your network should give you a written Service Level Agreement (SLA) that outlines exactly how IT issues get resolved and in what timeframe. I suggest that they reveal:

- What the average resolution time has been with current clients over the last 3 to 6 months. They should also answer their phones live from 0800 to 1700.
- Provide you with an emergency after hour's number they you may call if a problem arises out of normal working hours including weekends.

If you cannot access your network because the Internet at the office is down or due to some other problem you can't be waiting around for hours for someone to call you back or more importantly start working on resolving the issue. Make sure you get this in writing! In most cases cheaper and / or less experienced consultants won't have this or will be will try to convince you that are not important or that they don't can't do this. Don't buy that excuse they are in the business of providing IT support so they should have some guarantees of standards around this and they should share this with you.

What is their plan for transitioning your network to the cloud to minimise problems and down time.

We run a simultaneous cloud environment during the transition and don't turn off the old network until everybody is 100% confident that everything has been transition and is working effortlessly. You don't want someone to switch overnight without setting up a test environment first.

Do you provide a no risk trial our network in the cloud to test the proof of concept before you commit to a long-term contract?

We provide all our clients with a free 30 day cloud "test drive" using your servers, applications and data so you can see firsthand what it will be like for you and your staff to move your service to the cloud. While this isn't a full migration it will give you a true feel for what cloud computing will be like before connecting to the cloud and committing to a long-term contract. There is no charge to this and no obligation to buy anything at the end of the 30 days you'll know whether or not the cloud is right for you or you would prefer to keep your current on-site network.

Do they take the time to explain what they are doing and answer your questions in terms of what you can understand or do they come across as arrogant and make you feel stupid for asking simple questions.

Our technicians are trained to have the “heart of the teacher” and will take time to answer your questions and explain everything in simple terms.

We believe that there are no stupid questions and that is why we will answer any questions in easy to understand language and we try not to speak “tech”. As moving to the cloud is a whole of business process you need to be sure that the advice that you are getting will help you make that decision. Moving to the cloud is also a process where everyone needs to know what will happen and how it will happen this cannot be achieved by technical explanations. You need to have the process explained in business language that CEO, Managers and Board members will understand.

Where will your data be stored?

You should receive full documentation about:

- Where your data is
- How it's being securely backed up and
- How you could get access to it, if necessary without going through your provider.

Essentially you don't want your cloud provider to be of the whole your data and your company hostage

How will your data be secured and backed up?

If they tell you that your data will be stored in their own Co-Located servers at the back of their office, what happens if they get destroyed by fire, flood or other disaster? What are they doing to secure access to the office and the servers? Are they backing it up somewhere else?

Make sure that they are your country certified and have a failover plan in place to ensure continuous service in the event that their local location goes down. If they are building on another platform you still want to be find out where your data is how it will was going to be backed up.

What is their disaster recovery plan?

What happens if they go out of business after talking your data? A good cloud provider will have a number of redundant processes and systems in place to ensure 100% access to your data. These should include backing up to alternative geological locations and redundant links to the internet. Without these it is not possible to give a true 100% guarantee if business continuity.

All of this information should be documented and should be delivered to you in either their terms and conditions (T's and C's) or their service level agreement (SLA).

Do they have all of the relevant Insurance protection in place?

Something else to think about is – what protections have they got in place to ensure your intellectual property is protected? You have adequate errors and omissions insurance as well as workers compensation insurance that to protect you answer is something to consider if they cause a problem with your network that causes you to to be down for hours or days or Toulouse starter who is responsible? Is another question to consider if one of the technicians gets hurt your office who is

paying? In this litigation visiting litigious society we live in you better make sure down sure that whether you hire is adequately insured with both error and omission insurance and workers compensation and don't be shy about asking to see their in latest insurance policies.

A few years ago Geek squad was slapped with a multimillion dollar lawsuit from customers for their bad behaviour of their technicians in some cases their technicians were accused accessing coppers and copying and distributing personal information they gained access to on customers PCs and laptops boarding for repairs in other cases they lost clients laptops or subsequently all of the data ROM and tried to cover it up bottom-line make sure the company you are hiring has proper insurance to protect you.

Is it standard procedure for them to provide you with written network documentation detailing what software licenses you own your critical password user information hardware inventory et cetera or are they only person with the keys to the kingdom.

All clients receive this in written and electronic form at no additional cost. We also perform a quarterly update on this material and make sure certainty people from your organisation have this information and know how to use it, giving you complete control over your network.

You should never allow an IT person (both internal and external) or an IT Service provider to have that much control over you and your organisation. If you get the suspicion that your current IT provider or internal IT Person is keeping this under their control as a means of job security get rid of them (we can help you make sure that you don't suffer any ill effects). This is downright unethical and dangerous to your organisation. **DO NOT TOLERATE IT!!!**

Do they have other technicians on staff who are familiar with your network in case your regular technician takes goes on vacation or get sick?

Yes and since we keep detailed network documentation (basically a blueprint of your computer network) and updates on every client's account any of our technicians can pick up where another left off.

Do they insist on doing test restores of your backups to make sure the data is not corrupt and could be restored in the event of a disaster?

We perform a monthly fire drill and perform the test restore from backup for all of our clients to make sure that their data can be recovered in the event of an emergency. Upon completion, we give our clients a report showing this test restore was conducted and that it all systems are a go. If there is a problem we notify clients immediately and start working to resolve it in the same day, after all the worst time to test the backup is when you decide you need it.

Is their helpdesk locally based or outsourced to an overseas company or third party.

We provide our own in-house helpdesk as well as an online ticket management system, as well as an SMS system to make sure that the people helping you are friendly and helpful. We consider this one of the most important aspects of our customer service plus we feel if an important step in keeping your data secure.

Do their technicians maintain current vendor certifications and participate in ongoing training or are they learning on your system?

Our technicians are required to have the most up-to-date vendor certifications on all of the software supported plus our hiring process is stringent that 99% of the technicians will apply don't make it through.

Are they familiar with your unique line of business applications?

We own the problems with all line of business applications for our clients. That doesn't mean we can't fix faulty software but we will be the liaison between you and your vendor to resolve problems you are having and make sure that the application works smoothly for your organisation. Instead of pointing fingers and putting you in the middle, if there is something wrong with the software we own the problem till it is resolved.

When something goes wrong with your Internet service provider, your phone system, a printer or other IT services do they own the problem – or do they say it's not their problem?.

We feel we should own all the ICT problem for our clients. That so they don't have to try and resolve any of these issues on their own. That just makes good fashion service and something many computer guys won't do.

A Final Word...

I hope you have found this guide helpful in shedding some light on cloud computing. As I stated at the opening of this mini guide, my purpose in providing this information was to help you to make an informed decision and avoid getting buried by other incompetent firms offering their services.

Below you will find information on how to request a FREE cloud readiness Assessment. This is of course provided for free with no obligation and no expectations on our part.

I want to be clear that that this is not a bait and switch offer or a trick to get you to buy something. My reputation for running an honest and trustworthy business is something I hold very dear. I would never jeopardise that in any way.

So why are we offering something like this for free?

Two reasons

1. We are simply offering this service as a risk-free, get to know us offer to people we haven't had the pleasure of doing business with. Again, our goal is to allow you to make an informed and confident decision, offering this service is one way we can help you better evaluate our services.
2. This will allow us to determine if we can even help you! Obviously we can't help everybody and cloud computing might not be good fit for your particular circumstances. Conducting this assessment enables us to perform a small service to you and give you a risk-free way of determining whether or not we're the right company for you without risking your money

Looking forward to your call:

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Free cloud readiness assessment.

As a prospective customer we would like to offer you a free cloud readiness assessment and cost analysis for your organisation. This assessment has three parts:

1. **Cost analysis and inventory:** Our first step is to look at what your current network consists of in hardware, licensing, data and applications. Next we compile an IT cost assessment to reveal your total spend on IT including Internet connectivity, support and other features. Most business owners have never really looked at their entire IT costs in this way and often this report alone is an eye-opener. Why do we do this? Because our goal is to find ways we can significantly lower these costs while simplifying and improving your workflow.
2. **Health check:** We will perform a 23 point audit on your entire network to look for potential problems, security loopholes, spyware and other hidden problems - you might not yet know about these problems. Often we find faulty backups, out of date antivirus software, faulty firewalls or missing security patches. If left unaddressed these problems could end up costing you more in new hardware, support, business downtime and data loss. and
3. **Cloud readiness:** After we have looked at the above areas we then look at how you and your employees work and share information and see what applications or processes we can safely move to the cloud to improve ease-of-use and of course lower costs.

When completed we will give you a cloud action pack that shows you how you can save money and resolve a number of workarounds and problems you may not have known or experience to date. Even if you decide not to hire us, having a third-party conduct this type of assessment will give you some good information on saving money and the security and health of your computer network.

How to request your FREE Cloud Readiness Assessment

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