



TRANSPUTEC

Not business as usual: why
migrating to the cloud
is different to anything you've done before

Understand the changes the cloud makes to your business. Includes free business case template.



Executive Summary

For decades businesses have periodically upgraded their software, migrating to newer, better versions of enterprise technology. Until relatively recently the focus was always on moving between on-premises systems. Today, however, more and more companies are moving their enterprise IT to the cloud. The cloud is very different to an on-premises system, so the migration process cannot be treated in the same way.

This whitepaper will look at why the cloud is such a different prospect to on-premises systems. It will then look at how organisation can best prepare for this new model of business computing.



Not business as usual

In less than a decade, the cloud has gone from being a relatively little-known concept to becoming the norm - 42% of UK businesses today use at least some form of cloud services according to the Eurostat¹. More and more companies are becoming convinced of the benefits of the cloud and are planning to move some, if not all, of their operations online. Indeed, Gartner predicts² that by 2021 half of global businesses will be cloud-first.

This is as much an evolution as a revolution. Over the past few decades businesses have been adept at using the latest technology to boost efficiency, productivity and get a competitive edge. From the early business mainframes to personal computers, email, intranets and today's plethora of apps, companies have shown themselves ready to adopt new technology.

However, while the cloud offers many similar services to what businesses already use on-premises (such as email, document storage, productivity tools), it should not be treated as 'the same thing'. The cloud introduces some exciting new opportunities and ways of working for companies, but it also introduces new risks and challenges too. These differences can significantly change how the organisation works and should be prepared for before any move.

In this whitepaper, we will explore how the cloud changes the way your business works and look at strategies you can take to prepare your organisation for this new approach to work.

¹ Eurostat. 2018: https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php?title=Cloud_computing_-_statistics_on_the_use_by_enterprises#Use_of_cloud_computing_highlights

² Gartner. 2017. <https://www.gartner.com/smarterwithgartner/cloud-computing-enters-its-second-decade/>

What is the cloud?

The cloud is a very different model of business computing to what has come before. When companies migrate to the cloud, they place some or all of their IT tools in third-party, off-site servers run by companies like Microsoft, Amazon or Google. They then connect to these servers over the internet.

The cloud offers significant benefits to businesses:

- » **Much lower Total Cost of Ownership:** Forrester³, the IT consultancy, estimate that as much as 80% of the cost of on-premises IT goes on maintenance. Using a cloud subscription model means you don't need to maintain the technology at all, therefore drastically cutting costs.
- » **Flexible working:** The cloud allows your employees to connect to your IT platforms anywhere with an internet connection. This allows for more distance and flexible working.
- » **More powerful computing:** Using the cloud gives you access to highly powerful computers which allow you to perform powerful processing with cutting edge developments such as Artificial Intelligence.
- » **Only pay for what you use:** Unlike in on-premises IT, you only pay for the licenses you actually use, and can add or remove them as you grow.
- » **Always new, always safe:** Using the cloud gives you immediate access to the latest technology, with all patches distributed immediately by the cloud provider.

³ Kenny & Company. 013. <https://michaelskenny.com/points-of-view/evaluating-the-total-cost-of-ownership-for-an-on-premise-application-system/>



Understand how the cloud changes your business

At first sight, the cloud may not appear drastically different to the kind of enterprise IT platform you have previously been using. If, for instance, your organisation has long used Microsoft's SharePoint, the shift to Microsoft's Office 365 will not feel drastically different. Office 365's interface will feel familiar, and most end users will adjust relatively easily.

However, on further examination, working in the cloud is a very different experience to working on-premises. The cloud enables teams to work in very different ways to what's gone before. Used effectively, the cloud allows businesses to be much more productive. But, this change needs to be managed carefully to ensure you genuinely get the most out of the platform.

Below are some of the key ways the cloud changes your business.



App explosion

When your organisation moves to the cloud, your teams are suddenly able to access an enormous number of apps which are designed for a huge range of tasks. Many of these will be provided by the cloud company itself.

Take Microsoft's Office 365. Besides the standard document storage and email tools, there are many new collaboration tools (such as Teams), project management apps, data management tools (like Power BI), CRM tools and much, much more. Employees can also access many apps provided by third-party companies to help with everything from sprucing up PowerPoint presentations to managing email contacts.

There are enormous benefits to giving your employees access to these tools, and they should certainly be embraced. That said, managing this change is also essential:

- » You may want to institute an app approval process to ensure apps are worthwhile
- » Training will be required for some apps
- » For more significant apps (such as Microsoft Teams), it will be important to train staff to use these to get company-wide adoption



Work anywhere

Once you move to the cloud, employees will be able to log in to their work environment from anywhere with an internet connection. Say goodbye to VPN's – any employee can log in from their smartphone, laptop or home computer – or hot desk in a different room in your office.

This approach provides fantastic opportunities. Countless studies⁴ have shown that staff are happier if they can occasionally work from home. The approach also means employees can work when travelling or make final tweaks to work when away from the office. Nonetheless, it also needs a big change in mindset too:

⁴ INC. 2017. <https://www.inc.com/bill-murphy-jr/people-who-work-from-home-are-happier-more-efficient-according-to-this-fascinating-study-theres-only-1-catch.html>

- » Ensuring the security of devices that connect to your platforms will require planning
- » You will need issue management plans too if, for instance, someone leaves their laptop on a train
- » 'Work from home' policies will need to be implemented to ensure fairness (so everyone gets the opportunity) and continued productivity



IT cost management

The cloud is, in theory, significantly less expensive as a business IT model than on-premises alternatives. Businesses pay a monthly fee for access to the technology, adding or removing licenses as and when they need.

Compare the cloud model to the Total Cost of Ownership (TCO) of an on-premises environment. In the past, each time a business wanted to upgrade to the latest technology they would need to buy an expensive new license package and pay for a costly migration. By contrast, the cloud is much less costly, with no up-front implementation fee and a relatively low monthly price per user. At the same time, updates and patches are deployed immediately, so you'll never need to do a big migration project again.

Nevertheless, there are ways that cost management in the cloud may get out of control:

- » With ineffective license management, you may pay for more than you need
- » Additional services can quickly add up to your monthly bill
- » You will need to develop policies to decide when to delete data you are paying for on cloud servers (or migrate it somewhere even cheaper)



A new role for the IT department

In other IT models, the IT department spends significant amounts of time focusing on maintenance, customisation and issue resolution. In the cloud, the purpose of IT is rather different.

Once companies move to the cloud, much of the control you have over the underlying technology is restricted. Cloud providers do not want customers to tweak the code base of their IT platforms, and control much of it centrally. What's more, the environments are maintained externally by the cloud providers themselves – your IT teams won't be able to monitor them.

Does this mean you'll be letting go of your IT team? Not at all. Rather, the way IT employees work, and the skills they'll need, will change. They will now be focusing on:

- » Monitoring and reporting on how the cloud environment is being used
- » Deciding which tech and apps to deploy, and offering training for these
- » Introducing and enforcing security processes



A new relationship with customers and external partners

In previous IT models, customers and external partners (such as an advertising agency or a contractor) would be very much on the outside of your company. Information might be shared using email attachments or visits to your offices. With the cloud however, these third parties can communicate and collaborate much more effectively with you.

Customers and partners can be given access to certain areas of your document management environment and use your collaboration tools (such as Microsoft Teams, Slack or similar) to work in real-time with you. To make the most of this innovative new model you will need to:

- » Establish permissions policies
- » Train employees on how to onboard third parties
- » Manage these additional licenses cost-effectively

As this section has illustrated, moving to the cloud introduces innovative new ways of working for your business, empowering staff and allowing greater flexibility and productivity. However, to get all these benefits, they need to be proactively managed – it is not ‘more of the same’.

In the following sections we will look at how you can prepare your business for the cloud by promoting the concept, overcoming challenges and ensuring long term adoption.

3 different approaches to cloud computing

Broadly speaking there are three models of cloud computing:

Private Cloud

This is when cloud services are provided over an IT infrastructure that is dedicated to one single organisation. The servers are kept off-site, but only your organisation connects to that part of the data centre. This service is often provided by small and medium-sized IT companies.

This is the right option if: You want guaranteed resource availability and need to know exactly where data is being held for regulatory reasons.

Public Cloud

This is when you access cloud services provided over the internet by a large third-party provider such as Microsoft, Amazon or Google, among others. Your data and the services you use are stored in one of their many data centres around the globe.

This is the right option if: You are looking for powerful, yet cost-effective computing and the very latest technology.

Hybrid Cloud

This is when you keep some of your data and IT services ‘in-house’ in a server in your building or even on individual desktops, but then place other parts of your data and services in either a public or private cloud environment. You then connect the on-premises and cloud environments.

This is the right option if: You have reservations about storing certain types of content online. It also gives you flexibility if you use dedicated hardware which is not cloud ready – such as CAD programmes.



Preparing your business for the cloud

If you are convinced that the cloud is the right option for your business, the next steps are to:

1. Convince and convert
2. Select a cloud migration route
3. Communicate the change
4. Ensure long-term adoption

Let's look at each of these steps in more detail.

1. Convince and Convert

While the cloud offers many advantages over traditional business IT models, this does not immediately mean all your organisation will be supportive of a migration. There will almost inevitably be push back against introducing a new IT model, such as:

- » **The “if it ain’t broke, don’t fix it” argument**
Counter this with evidence of the advantages of the cloud, showing how it will save money and improve productivity
- » **Data security concerns – fears that information is out of your control**
Counter this with the argument that firms like Microsoft and Amazon have far bigger budgets for protecting your data than any in-house approach
- » **Reliability and availability concerns**
All major cloud providers now guarantee at least 99.99% uptime, if not higher. Remind colleagues that storing content on-site might be riskier in the case of, for instance, a fire or flood.

There are plenty of resources available to use to promote the cloud (including this whitepaper). To begin, consider using the business case template below.

Building a business case for the cloud

This business case structure will let you build a compelling case for the cloud:

1. **Executive summary**
Explain what the business case intends to show in one paragraph.
2. **Introduction and statement of the problem**
Describe the problem your business is facing. This might be depressed productivity, inability to work from home or simply being 'behind the curve' on enterprise technology such as Artificial Intelligence or modern collaboration tools.
3. **Analysis**
Explore the problem in detail. Show why your current IT set up is proving an obstacle to optimal productivity, flexibility or staff morale. Use data from staff surveys as well as information on current IT costs and productivity.
4. **Discuss your options**
Compare the pros and cons of keeping what you already have versus migrating to the different cloud environments available. Summarise the time-scale of the project and the risks of each approach.
5. **Recommendation**
Describe which option you think is best and why. Use data to back up your case.
6. **Conclusion**
Summarise your points

2. Select a cloud migration route

There are multiple options for migrating to the cloud. Market leaders like AWS, Google and Microsoft all offer comprehensive cloud packages for businesses of all sizes. But, you don't need to put all your eggs in one basket – organisations migrate to the cloud in very different ways. The following scenarios describe some of the more popular routes for migrating to the cloud:

- » **'All in' with one provider**
Are you generally happy using Microsoft technology? In this case, going 'all in' with Office 365 might be the way to go (the same goes for other providers too). You can shift your entire IT estate to one platform in one go and say 'goodbye' to the on-premises world forever.
- » **Mix and match**
In this approach, you choose the best features of different cloud providers. For document storage you might choose one provider due to their lower costs, for collaboration you might choose a different cloud app for chat and email.
- » **Test the waters**
In this model, you might keep much of your processes on-premises, but shift certain teams, projects or types of content online. This can give you a taste of the cloud at relatively low risk.

3. Communication is key

Once you have selected the model that's right for your business, it's invaluable to communicate your plans to colleagues. As described earlier, working in the cloud is very different to traditional on-premises productivity, and so staff will need to understand how this migration is going to affect them. Offer training and explanations on the following kinds of topics:

- » What the new environment is, and how it will help them
- » How their day to day tasks might change
- » Information about new security practices
- » When the migration will be happening

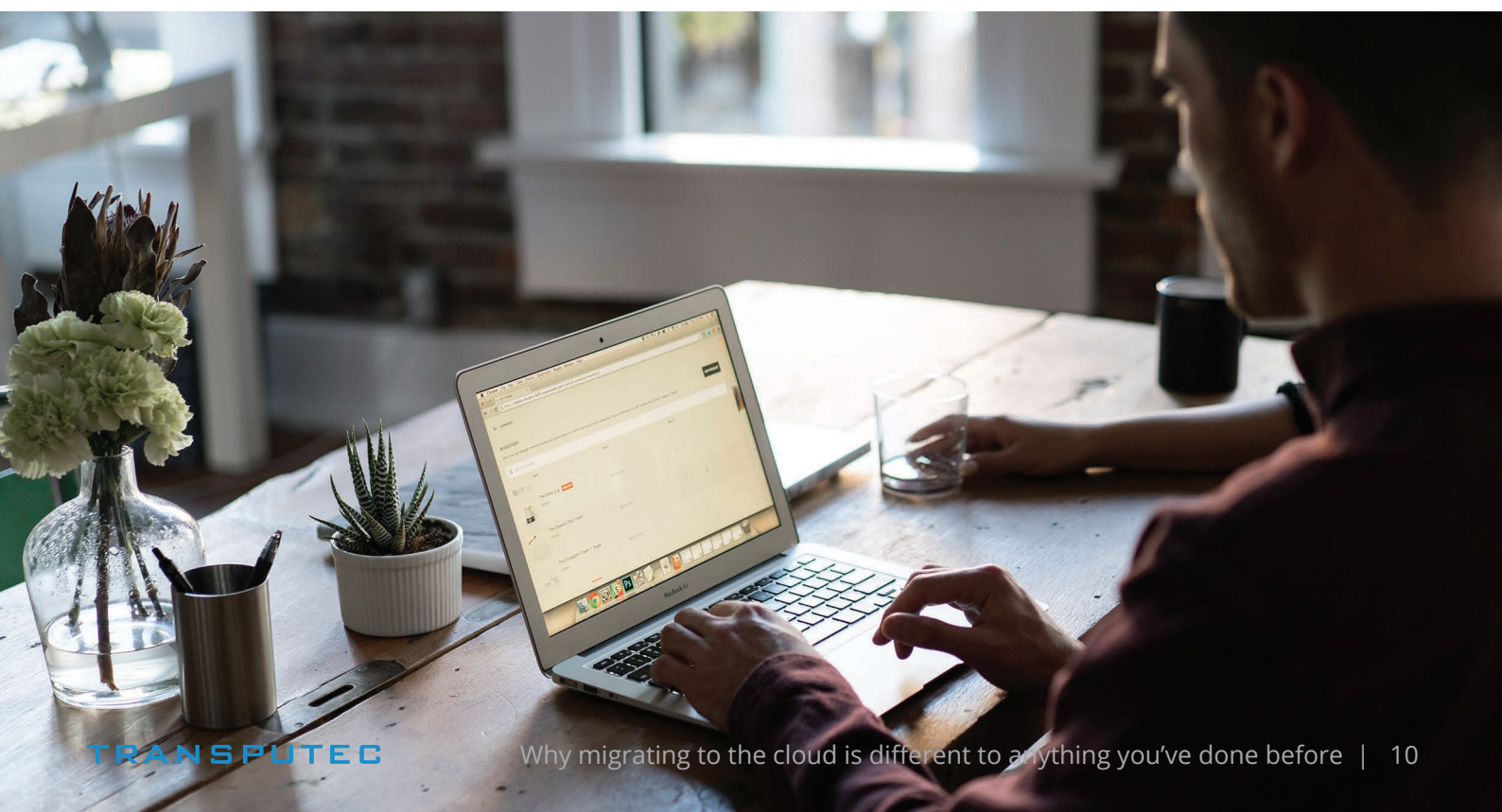
4. Set your organisation up for high levels of adoption

A final stage in preparing for the cloud is to ensure adoption of the new technology – and avoiding the risk that staff reject it.

Adoption can be surprisingly tricky, even when new the technology is significantly more effective than old tools. You can make adoption more likely by taking some of the following steps:

- » Get staff involved in decisions about the tech they want to use. If people feel a sense of ownership over the technology, they're more likely to adopt it
- » Select 'evangelists' – staff who enjoy using new technology and who can promote it to their colleagues
- » Ensure C-suite participation. Leadership from the top is invaluable, so your senior leadership team must be seen to be using the technology
- » Training and education. Offering staff training and tips on how to use their new technology means they'll get more out of it.

By implementing the steps described in this section, you can prepare your organisation for the cloud and ensure the greatest success.





Cloud ready

It is increasingly becoming the norm for businesses to use the cloud for some – if not all – of their business IT services. It offers so many advantages to businesses of all sizes and its potential impact on costs, productivity and staff morale cannot be ignored.

As this whitepaper has shown, there can be resistance to the cloud and teething problems implementing it. The cloud does require a change in mentality as it asks your teams to work in new ways. While this is generally a positive, the cloud is a very different prospect to previous forms of business IT, and so it's essential to prepare your colleagues for this change.

This whitepaper has described how you can begin preparing for the change that the cloud introduces to your business processes. To learn more and see how it could be used at your organisation, contact Transputec today.

ABOUT TRANSPUTEC

Transputec is an established Information Technology Services and Solutions company with more than 30 years of IT innovation and excellent customer service.

Transputec was founded by two computer science students from Imperial College in their dorms. Developing applications for the banking industry and then migrating to a full IT services organisation.

We believe in flexibility, quality, agility. We see this simply as the ability for us to grow our services as quickly and with the speed our clients expect, whether they are enterprises or small/medium sized organisations.

Transputec is a Certified N-able NOC and Service Desk partner.

For more information, contact Transputec's friendly enquiries team:



www.transputec.com



+44 (0) 20 8584 1400 (Enquiries)

+44 (0) 20 8584 1440 (Support Desk)



enquiries@transputec.com

support@transputec.com



Transputec Ltd, Transputec House, 19 Heather Park Drive, Wembley, London HA0 1SS

© Transputec 2019