

Utilising 'The Cloud' for business

CLOUD COMPUTING

In its broadest sense, Cloud Computing describes something apparent to anybody who uses the Internet: Information is stored and processed on computers somewhere else -- "in the clouds" -- and brought back to your screen.

On a practical level, The Cloud is providing new ways of accessing technology and storing data.

This opens up new opportunities, replaces traditional networking technology/Servers, and other infrastructure that was required in the past and gives access to technology.

STRATEGIC SOLUTION

The good news is that Strategically The Cloud can provides business opportunities to simplify IT infrastructure, access software at low-cost, and obtain flexibility for their business, even for non-technical people.

On the down side, ignoring what The Cloud offers could leave a business with higher costs than needed and affect their profitability.

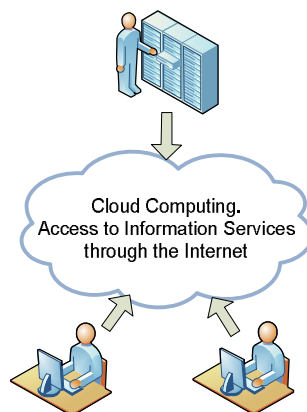
What is 'The Cloud'?

The term 'The Cloud', or the 'Internet Cloud', is one of the hottest technology phrases around. But, technology terms and buzz words can come and go with only some leaving any lasting legacy or benefit, so should you and your business be taking notice of 'The Cloud'? If you don't yet know the answer to this question, it may be costing you money on your bottom line every day, so read on.

Wikipedia states *"Cloud computing is a style of computing in which dynamically scalable and often virtualized resources are provided as a service over the Internet. Users need not have knowledge of, expertise in, or control over the technology infrastructure "in the cloud" that supports them."*

OK, but what does this mean? Firstly, let's explain where the term The Cloud comes from. The Cloud takes its name from how the Internet is represented on Computer Network diagrams by an abstract cloud image. The term 'Cloud Computing' was first brought into the public domain by Google Inc. Chief Executive Eric Schmidt in 2006 and, although few in the tech industry can agree completely on the terms definition, the term has stuck.

In its broadest sense, Cloud Computing describes something apparent to anybody who uses the Internet: Information is stored and processed on computers somewhere else -- "in the clouds" -- and brought back to your screen.



The term incorporates technical Infrastructure services such as email, Software as a Service (SaaS), and any Information Service where the data and networks accessed by a user are held somewhere in The Cloud. Users of these services only require a web-browser and Internet access. Meaning non-technical people can make use of an ever growing range of services and powerful technology for both personal and business purposes.

The Growth of The Cloud

In the last decade, Internet users by the millions have seeded the growth of The Cloud by utilising social networks, photo sharing sites, blogs, e-mail, e-commerce, software services, and search sites with personal information. Companies such as Face-Book, Amazon, Google, and Microsoft are established drivers of the growth of Cloud Computing. There are also numerous 'Silicon Valley' type companies feeding off, and contributing to, the growth of The Cloud.

As Internet speeds increase and the devices available for connecting to the Internet expand (e.g. PC's, Gaming consoles, phones, TV's etc), accessibility to, and usability of, services improves day by day. As bandwidth and data storage costs for suppliers decrease services also become cheaper (or in many cases free). All of which is fuelling the development of new ways of accessing technology and storing data which replaces traditional networking technology, network Servers, and other infrastructure that was required in the past to locally store and manage data.

This growth is set to continue with new developments such as The Grid (a spin-off from the Cern Large Hadron Collider project - LHC), set to increase the Internet speeds by 10, 000 times faster than standard Broadband. The Cloud is developing and evolving at an increasing rate of speed and changing the way we use technology and access data in both our personal and business lives.

CLOUD SOLUTIONS

DOCUMENT SHARING

The Cloud provides the infrastructure and technology to simplify Document sharing and management. Reducing costs and improving efficiency. Free services such as MS Office Live and Google Apps are the main players in this market.

EMAIL SERVERS

Gone are the days when your email server needed to be stored and managed in your own office. There are now countless email products and services available on the Internet that do the job better and cheaper.

BUSINESS SYSTEMS

Utilising Business systems provided on a Software as a Service (SaaS) basis provide secure and functionally rich solutions for recruitment businesses without the IT support overheads.

VOIP TELEPHONY

Voice over IP (VoIP) Telephony has also now evolved and is being provided on a hosted basis through The Cloud. Giving flexible and professional telephone systems with free calls, and at lower running costs than traditional telephony.

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Does the Cloud effect your business?

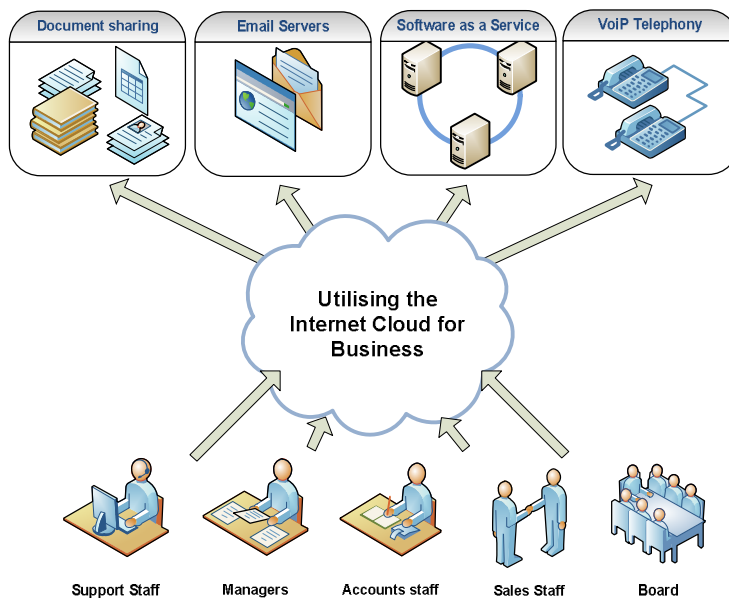
In our personal lives Cloud Computing services are having an impact on people's lives. But, does the growth of The Cloud have any real effect on the way business's run and operate? In recruitment businesses for instance is there any real impact from Cloud Computing technologies, or are these only really something that impact on the personal lives of home Internet users?

The answer is a definite yes! Even the most non IT literate companies already use The Cloud for purposes such as Internet research, visiting Social Networking sites for Candidate information and/or networking, Job-Posting, and their own company website. Some are already extending their use to other areas such as utilising Software as a Service recruitment systems, email hosting and other technologies for business efficiency.

The Internet Cloud is providing a fundamental change in how a Recruitment business can manage its technology. Start-up's now have opportunities to access software and services that equal those used by the largest established companies, but at a fraction of the cost and without the need to employ IT staff for support.

Even the largest of Agencies are also being presented with new IT options. The nature of Cloud Computing where users are connected to shared data and technology services just by using an Internet connection offer much potential. Branches, Home Workers, and Head Office users can all be connected without traditional Networks and infrastructure, and improved flexibility and cost-reduction for the business is also provided.

The Cloud it seems is here to stay but offers new challenges for recruitment businesses to explore.



Utilising The Cloud gives recruitment businesses the ability to adopt new IT services from Front and Back-Office systems accessible through the Internet, to fully Hosted VOIP Telephony solutions. These changes provide opportunities to simplify their IT infrastructure, reduce IT maintenance & support costs, and in many cases access technology that would normally be out of their technical reach and/or budget.