



A pragmatic guide for
SME management teams

OWNED VS CLOUD?

Walk through the decision
making process

Written by



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ESSENTIALS



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OWNED VS CLOUD?

A pragmatic guide for SME management teams

When your on-site server comes to the end of its life or it no longer suits your business needs, you face a choice.

- 1) Invest in an upgraded owned server**
- 2) Migrate to the cloud with a server free solution**
- 3) Take a 'hybrid' approach, with a mix of cloud and locally hosted systems or services.**



The choice you make depends on your specific storage needs, approach to IT investment, and growth plans of the business.

In this guide we'll walk you through the decision-making process and suggest key questions the management team should ask before making a decision.

OWNED VS CLOUD?

What's the difference?



Owned:

An owned, on-site server is a physical 'box' purchased or rented entirely for your own business needs. Your firm's IT systems and services are hosted and managed through this server.

Historically the solution of choice for larger businesses or those that require exceptionally high levels of data security, or those who require their servers running 24/7, 365 days a year.

Most servers need upgrading every 5-8 years.



Cloud:

Cloud servers have rapidly become the preferred choice for SME businesses that want to optimise IT performance without the huge costs associated with purchasing and managing an owned server.

With a cloud-based approach, systems and services are hosted and managed online, rather than physically on-site. Computers, including mobile devices and smartphones, now increasingly operate in this way.

CLOUD FACTS

"Many businesses think cloud solutions aren't secure.

*In reality, cloud-based servers are as secure,
if not more secure, than traditional on-site servers."*

Alex Bailey
Managing Partner at Trichromic

A move to the cloud:

- ▼ Can break down barriers you encounter with older systems, such as remote access
- ▼ Can lead to a cost saving
- ▼ Can be more secure
- ▼ Offers low start-up costs
- ▼ Gives constant improvements
- ▼ Delivers improvements in efficiency, security and performance.

CLOUD # 101

'Cloud' refers to the software and services that run across the Internet, rather than locally through your server. Google Drive, Apple iCloud, Netflix, Yahoo Mail, Dropbox and Microsoft OneDrive are well known examples of cloud services we've all grown used to using on a daily basis.

Although it sounds as if these services live in the wind, they don't. Each one still has a terrestrial home and is stored in a powerful network of servers.

Most cloud services can be accessed through a web browser like Firefox or Google Chrome or dedicated mobile apps.

The advantage of the cloud is that you can access your information on any device with an Internet connection.



Iceland, which has a cold climate all year as well as cheap and carbon-neutral geothermal electricity supply, is a popular location for server farms (huge, secure sites where powerful servers are located). Fibre optic cables run from Iceland to North America and Europe to enable companies to use cloud services hosted there.

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A GRADUAL EVOLUTION

There's a good chance you and your team are already using some cloud-based services and have already experienced the benefits of the cloud.



For example:

- ▼ **Back office systems** - including backup, document storage, content, filtering, and user and device management
- ▼ **Communication tools** - including video conferencing, email, instant messaging, email and telephony
- ▼ **Specialist applications** - including HR and finance systems, management information systems (MIS) and industry software and content
- ▼ **Core office applications** - including online collaborative versions of word processor, presentation and spreadsheet software

WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS?

Cloud removes the hassle of maintaining and updating systems, allowing you to invest your time, money and resources into fulfilling your core business aims. Moving to cloud-based services can make it easier to access applications and content, wherever there is an internet connection.

Moving to cloud-based services can reduce costs by:

- ▼ **Reducing licence costs** leading technology providers offer free-to-use cloud services, including communication tools and core office applications
- ▼ **Using cloud only user devices** cost effective and reliable devices, designed to link directly to cloud applications, are widely available and usually cheaper than the systems they replace
- ▼ **Reducing the workload** of local technical support teams. Applications can be automatically updated and managed
- ▼ **Saving money on the energy** required to cool on-site servers

Seamlessly work from any Wi-Fi enabled location

Perfect for those occasions when the team need to work away from the office

Cloud based services could also help **financial planning** as you:

- ▼ Move to predictable annual subscriptions
- ▼ May see a reduction in capital refresh costs - for example, reducing the need to replace old servers every 5-8 years
- ▼ Do not need to replace 'cloud only' devices as often, and it may extend the lifespan of older devices
- ▼ Efficiency – saving workforce time

Improve efficiency:

- ▼ Give staff **flexibility** to access services from wherever they are
- ▼ **Support collaboration** by helping staff to easily share and co-author documents, files, and plans, reducing duplication of effort
- ▼ Reduce the time it takes to **access data and applications anywhere** due to faster log in times
- ▼ Mitigate the risk of files and data being lost

WHAT YOU SHOULD CONSIDER?

If you're thinking about moving to cloud-based services, you should consider the following questions.

How are you using the cloud already?

- ▼ What cloud-based services you're already using
- ▼ Whether your workforce may be using unofficial services
- ▼ If you're using services to their full potential
- ▼ Your current mix of old and new systems
- ▼ What benefits you've seen by using these services – such as efficiency, access, security and online safety

Could you use more cloud-based services?

- ▼ What other functions you could use in the cloud
- ▼ How you would introduce this functionality to staff, partners and customers
- ▼ How using cloud-based services would support your overall business strategy
- ▼ How much you could save and how to reinvest it
- ▼ What you can learn from existing developments and expertise

Do you have the right infrastructure?

- ▼ Is current internet speed enough – many businesses will need a full fibre connection
- ▼ Business network offers the right level of connectivity – many firms will use both wired and wireless infrastructure
- ▼ If existing licencing allows your software to be hosted via the cloud? If not, how could you go about changing this?
- ▼ If your data is fully backed up? What about your systems? Will they stand up to migration and if not, how quickly could you get back up and running?

“The migration to cloud creates an ideal opportunity to pinpoint potential points of failure. Use this opportunity to make your new system as resilient as possible.”

Lloyd Reid
Technical Partner at Trichromic

SECURITY & CLOUD

How should your business consider data security when moving services and information onto the cloud?

When your on-site server comes to the end of its life or it no longer suits your business needs, you face a choice. The Data Protection Act 2018 (DPA) sets out the legal framework in relation to the processing of personal data.

Compliance with the DPA is enforced and overseen by the Information Commissioners Office (ICO).

Anyone who processes personal information must comply with the eight principles of the DPA, which make sure that personal information is:

- ▼ Fairly and lawfully processed
- ▼ Processed for specific purposes
- ▼ Adequate, relevant and not excessive
- ▼ Accurate and up to date
- ▼ Not kept for longer than is necessary
- ▼ Processed in line with individuals' rights
- ▼ Secure
- ▼ Not transferred to other countries without adequate protection

When considering data protection alongside potential take-up of cloud solutions, your business should be aware of the various challenges and responsibilities in respect of personal data that still remain.

Whilst data may be stored and controlled in the cloud by a supplier*, responsibility for all areas of data protection, compliance still rests with your business.

Data protection obligations

"Take time to understand your specific data protection obligations. This will ensure you make an informed choice of cloud service provider."

** Trichromic is the data processor and our customers' are the data controllers.*

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CLOUD MIGRATION

Best Practice

"We helped Top Legal 500 law firm Gillhams switch to cloud services, enabling them to boost productivity, empower flexible working, and give key fee earners a healthier work/life balance."

John Sawyer
Commercial Partner

"Trichromic's service is brilliant. They know and understand our business inside out. They're our IT department and appreciate their advice, support and guidance through the migration to cloud".

Christopher Poxamatis
Partner at Gillhams

MAKING A DECISION

Working through a simple series of steps will help you to identify whether an upgraded on-site server, switch to cloud, or hybrid owned/cloud approach is best for your business.

1) Know your business requirements

Consider issues such as availability and connectivity. Identify those risks which would be unacceptable to your organisation should they be realised, and those that would not.

2) Understand your information

Identify the information that will be processed, stored or transported. Understand the legal and regulatory requirements. For example, if personal data is to be stored or processed, then the Data Protection Act should be considered.

3) Determine relevant security principles

Once you've got to grips with your business requirements and have identified the risks you are/aren't willing to take, you can understand which security principles should be considered within your decision.

OUR FREE IT ACTION PLAN

It's a great place to start

What you'll receive:

- ▼ In-depth Owned vs Cloud consultation with one of our expert Trichromic Partners
- ▼ The chance to scope out your specific Owned vs Cloud considerations
- ▼ An opportunity to review software, devices, red tape, cybercrime vulnerabilities and team performance.
- ▼ Tailored IT Action Plan, with your Owned vs Cloud recommendations.
- ▼ Clarity on why and when you should fix, improve or manage existing system.


If your on-site server is coming to the end of its life or it no longer suits your business needs our IT Action Plan is a great place to start.

Afterall, nothing's scarier than the unknown

£0.00

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Let us help you with your owned vs cloud challenge.



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