

# What migration to the cloud means for small businesses

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Running a small business is no easy task, especially during the digital migration. We have seen many companies switch from fixed business IT infrastructure to mobile, more easily accessible cloud options. But what does this change mean for small businesses?



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## Migration to the cloud

Not too long ago, remote working was inaccessible or inconvenient for many businesses. A VPN client was required to access the system if you couldn't be in the office. The fixed, office-based system was created to facilitate office working and not remotely accessible business operations.

As more businesses take advantage of cloud technology, this is no longer the case. Small businesses are starting to harness the cloud and make the most of cost-effective, flexible and scalable solutions that allow them to streamline their business processes. Cloud-based quoting and invoicing, payroll software, website and mail management as well as HR solutions have made it easier to manage all aspects of your business – anytime, anywhere.

*“ Gone are the days where you need a dedicated IT person on-site to maintain and upgrade equipment and software. As long as there's a reliable internet connection, of course! ”*

As a result, the small business landscape seems primed to reap the benefits of cloud technology. But to truly take

advantages of the opportunities that the cloud provides, small businesses need to be aware of best practices that will mitigate data loss and other risks.

### **Staying safe on the cloud and ensuring business continuity**

While cloud services give businesses the tools needed to accelerate business development, they also come with certain risks. The cloud is a central hub for business communications and data and as such needs to be responsibly managed by the cloud user. This can only be done when partnering with a trusted, reliable service provider. Be sure to do your research beforehand and make sure your provider treats security seriously.

Business owners need to keep their login details safe to prevent unauthorised access to the company cloud. Further encryption may be required to protect sensitive data and prevent security breaches. This is the first step to securing your cloud services.

The next step is to use secure software to identify suspicious behaviour and limit access for unwanted 'visitors'. It is important to ensure that your security software is up to date and capable of protecting your business.

To determine the risk associated with your business's cloud usage, it's recommended that you check your firewall, web proxy and SIEM logs to identify the cloud services that are most used and by whom. This usage data will allow your cloud service provider to tailor a secure solution to fit the needs of your business.

*“ Of course, it's not just business owners who access the cloud – employees do too. Two-factor verification assists in ensuring that only authorised users can access your cloud, for example, with a one-time pin sent to the user's email address or phone. ”*

Regular software updates also play an important part in making sure that you can use cloud technology safely and effectively. This includes malware software and other programmes you have installed. If they aren't updated regularly, they could make you vulnerable to a data breach.

Managing file backups is essential for ensuring that no data is lost in the event of hardware theft, upgraded devices or data breaches. To prevent unnecessary data taking up space on the cloud, it's important to audit your files regularly, removing documents or files that are no longer essential to business operations.

### **Ensuring safe, streamlined business operations**

Cloud technology allows small businesses to access software resources and data without extensive overhead costs weighing them down. But for this to be successful in the long term, all parties involved need to do their due diligence to protect business data. Always look for a cloud partner who takes your security just as seriously as you do.

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