

Whether we like it or not, many business and IT experts believe the future of industry is online. Many small and medium-sized companies are slowly beginning to realize this, especially with the changes presented themselves due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Thankfully, they are finally making moves and taking steps to have a more streamlined online presence.

Specifically, more companies are beginning to rely more on 'the cloud' to be their operations' home base. Like anything, there are pros and cons to transitioning your business to an online platform. We will get to those, but first, what even is the 'cloud'?

## The Amorphous Cloud

For the most part, the cloud is a network of integrated virtual servers and data storage centers. This is similar in a way to how companies have been operating in the past. However, the difference now is that all those servers are located off-site, are accessed using high-speed data connections, and are protected using encryption. Essentially, you no longer need the physical hardware of lore to store your data and run your business, you just need access to the cloud.

## Characteristics of the Cloud

[Cloud servers are popular options because they usually are always up to date.](#) They rely on software that facilitates updates and upgrades automatically. This keeps the server running in tip-top shape and able to more heavy lifting. No more antiquated servers that stumble and perform lethargically or even completely fail when loaded with too much information.

Cloud servers tend to be easier to operate. For one, moving to the cloud eliminates the necessity of having onsite servers at your business that are loaded with costly software packages. Because of that, they also eliminate the cost of IT experts that are needed to maintain the onsite machinery.

Moving to the cloud can be very cost-effective. The monthly fees attached to utilizing public or private Cloud servers are predictable and easy to manage. On top of that, the costs are scalable. Meaning, you are able to pay just the right amount for your companies needs. As your company grows, you can scale up the space and information you need and pay the related costs.

## Public or Private Clouds

If you choose to update your business by moving online, you will need to decide between using either a public or private cloud server.

Public Cloud servers use a pool of dedicated servers. This allows resources and information to be allocated to each client depending on their business needs. This makes public Clouds popular because they are highly flexible, scalable, and relatively easy to use.

[With private Cloud servers, aka "bare-metal," you do not need to share resources with any other business.](#) It's a singular, private virtual machine for your business. This can mean that bare-metal servers will perform better and tend to have more significant security measures. You can customize its settings for optimal functioning and have your data completely isolated.

Deciding on whether to utilize a public or private cloud server will depend on your business's needs, and the cost you are willing to invest.

## Cloud Security

[Many businesses are choosing to migrate their operations to the cloud because of the additional security measures available.](#) There is something to say about peace of mind when you can physically see and touch the server responsible for being the vessel of all your data and customers data. However, what if that system failed?

Cloud-based servers have backups in place so that your data is always secure. In addition to that, if someone is attempting to hack into your business, they aren't just going up against the security measures your IT guy put in place. Instead, your information is protected by the security team assigned to the cloud hosting provider, who are dedicated to managing these networks at scale.

## Get Help For the Transition

If you've done all the research, contemplated the pros and cons, and have decided that moving to a Cloud-based platform is the right decision for your business— [then make sure to get help.](#)

Connecting to the cloud initially can be a touch complicated. Being advised on the process by professionals will be crucial to ensuring a seamless integration of your business and customer data. Advisors for cloud transitions can help connect you with the appropriate cloud provider for your needs and guide your business on what information can be moved and how.

## Final Thoughts

The thought of moving away from the more traditional brick and mortar operations to the familiar buzz of the server room may be intimidating, but times are rapidly changing. As businesses and services begin to integrate and transition to more web-based operations, it's imperative for you to stay ahead of the curve in order to best remain competitive.

If transitioning to the cloud fits with your business's needs, and you think your business and its customers could benefit from the change, then well, it's time for liftoff.