



Implementing a Cloud Solution

Aligning cloud technology with your business strategy

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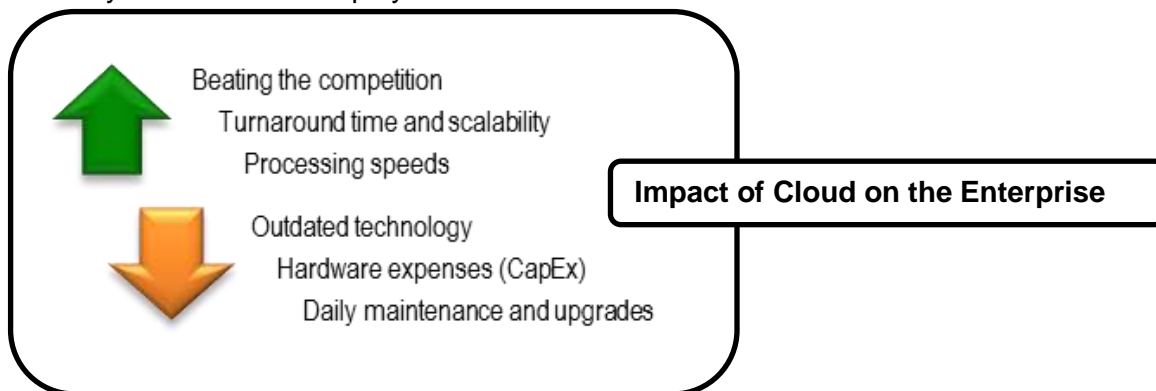
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Aligning technical and operational resources to implement a cloud computing solution can be a large undertaking. With the right guidance, information and cloud provider, you can successfully take your cloud project from planning and design to implementation. Use this guide and best practices to help you through your cloud implementation.

The Economics Behind and Beyond Cloud Computing

More with less. Economics is a key driver to implementing change within organizations. In today's economy there are two terms heard regularly – *do more with less* and *what is the impact to the organization*. The role of the CIO is changing – demands to implement applications, manage more websites and add new software are increasing at an alarming rate. These requests are not only the demands of the customers but internal business units. Meeting these demands quickly and efficiently without adding staff or seeing an increase in budget can put a tax on any CIO and their employees.



CIO's are looking for solutions that deliver successful results – efficiently and at a low cost. Cloud technology is built on such a premise to provide elasticity to allow for increased time to market and a pay for use model – meeting the high demands placed on the IT department.

Identify. Plan. Solve. Every organization has problems or issues that require solvency – the key is correctly identifying the problems. You know you want to implement a cloud solution however, you cannot create a business case to move forward if you are only solving general issues – it won't work. Exactly define each business or technical problem in an honest and upfront fashion. Doing so will help you accurately plan for the best solution within the cloud.

Once you have identified the business and/or technical issues you are solving; plan your cloud strategy. Remember to plan around internal/external resources, business timelines and most importantly, plan for the shift in focus for your IT staff. With the implementation of cloud your IT staff will migrate away from day to day activities and will be able to focus on building and improving business applications and strategy.

Solving for business issues is only a fraction of the cloud implementation. You are solving for technology upgrades, avoiding staff and budget constraints and closing the gap on your competitors. Cloud technology allows you to plan today and solve the issues of tomorrow.

Customizing cloud technology

There are multiple ways to take advantage of cloud technology, choosing the right one will depend on the business issues you are trying to solve. Two popular models exist within the cloud: deployment model and service model.

The deployment model consists of the private, public and hybrid cloud. Through your quest to make the move to the cloud you know that the public cloud can be an economical option for test/development environments while private cloud makes it possible for businesses to meet certain security and compliance requirements while leveraging virtualization. The hybrid cloud option can refer to the combination of physical and virtual environments or combining private and public cloud options.

Increasing in popularity, many businesses have turned to the hybrid cloud to fully customize their IT environment to meet the demands and business challenges ahead. With technology changing, workforce diversity growing and pressure to continually evolve looming – going with a scalable, reliable, and secure infrastructure not only allows for fast deployment and company growth, but can help you attract and retain valuable staff.

Experts predict the following growth rates for cloud in 2015.

50% ↑ for hybrid cloud

35% ↑ for private cloud

25% ↑ for public cloud

The service model is the second model and refers to Infrastructure as a Service (IaaS), Software as a Service (SaaS) and Platform as a Service (PaaS).

SaaS refers to end user applications delivered in an on demand capacity through the cloud, (example: Salesforce) while PaaS refers to a platform within the cloud in which developers can build and deploy custom applications. IaaS is the virtualization of your server infrastructure giving you access to computing resources over the internet in a pay for use model. IaaS turns your existing data center into a fully virtualized machine, typically hosted with a third party and implementing one or multiple deployment models mentioned above.

Infrastructure as a Service (IaaS)	Network	Computing (CPU)
	Security	Memory (GB)

With multiple models available, it is easy to see why cloud takes the guess work out of infrastructure management and turns it into a fully scalable, reliable and secure way to run your IT. Regardless of your business structure, growth plans or highly customized traditional infrastructure, cloud technology can be utilized to help position your company for future growth.



Integration

Research is complete, the plan is in place and now it is time for the final step – integration. In addition to a well ran project management team the following information will help you through your integration phase.

Tips for success

- Set realistic expectations and timelines - don't have too wide of scope or aggressive dates
- Include architecture and design – don't rush development.
- Find the right cloud provider and models to solve your business challenges

How to avoid failure

- Plan for failure. Everything fails at some point, but having a great redundancy plan in place makes the difference between a hard hit and surviving an outage.
- Don't assume cost is the driving factor to a successful cloud implementation – not all business drivers have a printed price tag.
- Not all environments function well within the cloud (i.e. tightly coupled architecture), make sure the infrastructure you are virtualizing is a good fit.

Future Success

Management – Refer to your business plan to ensure you continue to solve challenges and manage the relationship with your cloud provider

Planning – Continually plan for your future including organizational changes, future business drivers and new technology implementations.

Monitoring – Beyond uptime and SLA agreements, watch for bursting and make sure your cloud is scaling up as well as down to avoid budget issues and truly pay for what you use.

Implementing a cloud solution, like many IT projects, requires careful planning, thorough testing, and will require a full assessment once complete. Whether you are implementing cloud for the first time, adding to existing cloud infrastructure or switching cloud providers – finding the right solution is the best solution for your company.

Visit www.fnts.com for additional information on cloud solutions

Contact First National Technology Solutions directly: **800.820.6924** or info@fnts.com