

# Power business transformation with the cloud

Migrating to the cloud gives organizations the ability to innovate fast and gain a competitive advantage in today's ever-changing world

**Business needs and requirements are changing at an unprecedented pace. It naturally follows that the way in which organizations satisfy those new demands must change as well. Old approaches simply can't keep up.**

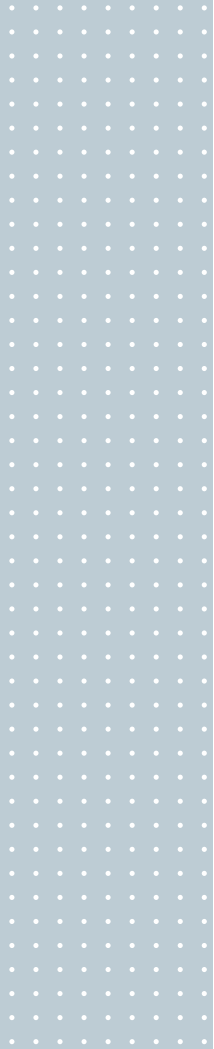
The cloud is central to this. It has capabilities that simply were not available before. It offers the agility to enable an organization to keep pace — and get ahead. The cloud can meet computing, capacity and data storage challenges. It also allows technical and human assets to be targeted narrowly and quickly at emerging challenges or opportunities. And it can do so in orders of magnitude more quickly than legacy on premises networks.

Nonetheless, successfully leveraging the cloud is no simple task. Though attitudes are changing, many organizations are not totally comfortable storing and processing data in the cloud. Beyond that, the cloud changes an organization's workflows, impacts product roadmaps and other technological planning and budgeting. Organizations face tricky choices about which cloud vendor or vendors to choose and which applications to run in the cloud and which to keep on premises. Additionally, best practices and data tools for the cloud are still being developed. But, because the potential benefits are so great, organizations are becoming highly motivated to take on migrating to the cloud.



# Benefits of the cloud

There are three significant reasons that cloud infrastructure is growing more popular with organizations of all sizes: It increases agility, accelerates time to market and reduces costs.



# **39%** of organizations demand more speed from IT

According to IDC's Worldwide Managed Cloud View Survey in 2018

## The cloud increases agility

Businesses increasingly understand the importance of agility and the cloud's ability to deliver it. IDC's "Worldwide Managed CloudView Survey in 2018," provided about 1,500 organizations with a list of commonly cited reasons to move to the cloud and asked them to name their top two. The most cited reason for cloud migration, at 39%, was "demanding more agility and/or speed from IT."

Cloud computing allows organizations to operate at high speed and scale up or down based on the needs of the business. With the ability to provision IT infrastructure in minutes, IT can significantly speed up delivery of business-critical projects, making it easy for organizations to adopt modern, efficient business processes and practices.

Using the cloud, IT can transition to an agile environment and begin to operate in an agile fashion. Engineers can quickly concentrate computing resources and spin up agile environments in the cloud. Clouds can support massive data lakes and empower developers and other personnel to work in unison, whether they are in the same building or spread around the globe. It's like a decentralized development lab on demand.

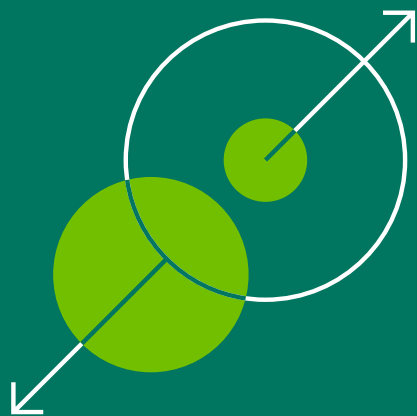
The cloud also enables organizations to create purpose-built environments in which artificial intelligence, machine learning, natural language processing and eventually quantum computing can more directly be brought to bear. While it is possible to employ these and other potent and quickly evolving technologies in on premises scenarios, the cloud's agility, the ease of adding resources and segregation from production networks make it superior.

## The cloud accelerates time to market

Migrating to the cloud does not happen in a vacuum. In many cases, it is part of a broader digital transformation that rests upon DevOps and other agile development strategies. These are fast-paced environments characterized by cross-functional teams that execute overlapping and never ending cycles of development, testing, remediation and improvements. Timeframes run in parallel and are far shorter. This means that organizations are able to bring products to market more quickly and fine tune them — addressing flaws, responding to the competition or exploiting new opportunities — without the cumbersome processes of the past.

In fact, the cloud provides a platform to unleash the organization's brainpower and entrepreneurial spirit. For example, a large financial services firm faced an intense new regulation that mandated the

building of a transactions data warehouse that had to be publicly accessible in real time. The price tag for the project would have been several million dollars using legacy tools and procedures, and on top of that, it would have taken a long time to design, test and execute. However, the flexibility of the cloud and the ability to concentrate resources empowered an ad hoc team — a few folks who thought they had an idea that could meet the challenge — to spin up an application in the cloud, a far less expensive alternative, over a weekend. And it was ready to go live weeks later.



## The cloud reduces costs

It's good news that the cloud offers a foundation for business transformation through agile environments, digital transformation and in more incremental ways. The even better news is that utilizing the cloud can reduce costs.

In the traditional capex model, organizations buy and own the equipment they use, but this model is expensive and limits the ability of the organization to evolve as technology changes. There are valid reasons to use this approach and organizations will continue to do so.

But the cloud introduces a new option, the opex model, in which equipment is owned by the cloud provider and the organization pays by use rather than upfront.

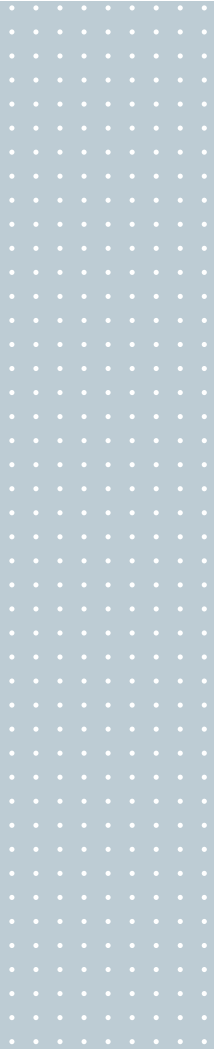
The cloud is generally characterized by far less up-front investment, 24/7 oversight by the cloud provider's dedicated security teams and upgrades to new equipment as it becomes available — which becomes more attractive as technology evolution accelerates.





# Stepping into the cloud

The transition is not a simple one, however. There are important and overlapping steps in the migration to the cloud, from creating organizational buy in to planning carefully in order to make the transition as seamless as possible.





## Gain organizational buy in

Migration to the cloud is a long and winding road that requires careful thought and meticulous planning. There is a lot that is new in terms of equipment, roles, processes and procedures. It is important to fully engage the organization — both the C-suite and those “in the trenches”. Experts seem unanimous in the opinion that the most important element of moving to the cloud is not technology, but rather getting people on board and enthusiastic about the new platform. This is done by education and solid communications, not directives or a “need to know only” approach in which only a few high level executives see the big picture. According to Elias Khnaser, VP Analyst at Gartner, IT must “evangelize the merits of cloud to business leaders to help them develop and extract business benefits that will yield a competitive edge and greater profitability.”<sup>1</sup>

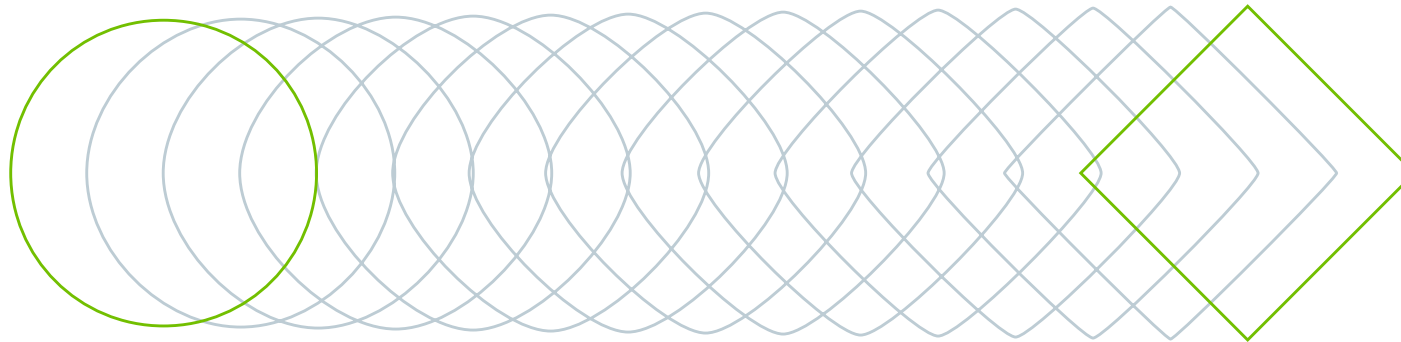


Moving to the cloud demands the organization’s full engagement. Some IT departments create interdisciplinary teams that give all stakeholders ownership in the process. These teams build data awareness, help determine what needs to be accomplished and map the way forward. It is not unheard of to train CEOs, audit, compliance and other high-level executives in an effort to build understanding of and support for moving to the cloud. The move is not incidental or trivial, so it is important that everyone has a realistic view of what needs to be done.

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.gartner.com/smarterwithgartner/6-steps-for-planning-a-cloud-strategy/>

## Prioritize objectives and create a plan

The cloud is an umbrella term that covers a tremendous number of platforms, technologies, processes and procedures. An organization planning a move to the cloud must have a clear and precise roadmap of what it wants to achieve and how it expects to do so.



# Here are 5 steps to take when moving to the cloud

## 1. Establish your cloud strategy

Some organizations may want to move all applications and data to the cloud, while others want to take a hybrid approach. The first step is to understand and define the long-term goal for your organization in order to help prioritize investments and create a plan.

## 2. Determine which applications and data to migrate

Before defining a plan, organizations need to deeply understand the state of their IT infrastructure and the location of data. They also need to understand the business and IT impacts of moving any application or data to the cloud. A deep analysis of these factors will determine what makes the most sense for your organization to migrate.

## 3. Design your data migration plan

Many organizations take a step-by-step approach to migration. Some identify early projects that will be of value but are not mission-critical and would not cause too big a problem if they were disrupted.

They also establish a system to capture and retain what is learned from early implementations. Another strategy is to first focus on applications that play to clouds' strength, which is to bring high levels of computing resources to large data sets in an agile and flexible manner.

## 4. Choose the right cloud provider

Pick a cloud provider who supports the cloud environments you are looking to build, provides you with the tools you need to be successful and has demonstrated proven experience.

## 5. Finally, execute your cloud migration!

Moving to the cloud is ambitious and will fundamentally change the company. The good news, however, is that taking these steps can help you plan properly so that you avoid any major issues and make it a smooth and successful transition for all.

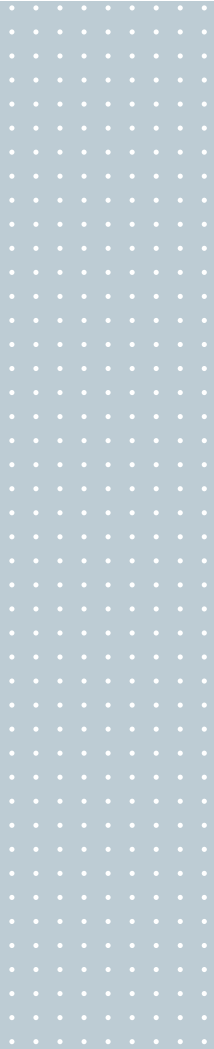
## Other important considerations

On the technical side, it is a significant change in how data is managed. The transition from on premises to the cloud fundamentally changes data governance. Data stewardship becomes more important and more complex. More attention must be paid to understanding where data is at every point in time, who has access to it and how it is used. Data lineage, data analytics, metadata management and data quality become even more important than they were before. Collibra can help you take advantage of the cloud with minimal risks by providing a unified view of data across your enterprise, lineage to help you better understand your data, and governance capabilities to ensure compliance and build trust in data.



# Confidence and security

The benefit of the cloud for an organization in general and its data in particular is clear. There is one deal breaker that must be navigated, however — organizations won't move to the cloud if they are not totally confident of its security.



## Confidence in cloud security grows

Not getting an A-plus on the issue of security will take the cloud off the table, regardless of how many benefits it offers. However, the original thinking — that corporate data is unsecure in the cloud and on premises is inherently more secure — is changing. Clouds are protected by dedicated and proactive cloud vendor personnel using specialized and constantly updated tools. And this profile compares favorably to how most enterprises handle on premises security. Many organizations — especially those not in the very top tier in terms of size, manpower, budgets and public profile — don't dedicate the necessary level of resources or follow every best practice to ensure high levels of security. For instance, many don't comprehensively encrypt data end to end, and others don't do due diligence on key management. But, reputable cloud providers do both these things.



Indeed, proponents say that the closer security practices are scrutinized, the better the cloud looks. The reason is simple — cloud providers rigorously do the basic blocking and tackling of security because skimping on it directly imperils their future. Security is the first priority, and cloud providers invest significantly on controls and practices for security, reliability and performance. In fact, they work closely in cross-functional teams with their customers to build in security from the earliest development stages.

## Cloud providers are taking on a greater role

Cloud providers are growing more sophisticated. They are increasingly taking on services formerly done by the client, such as text analysis and analytics and sentiment analysis. It can also extend to patch management and other security tasks. The applications and services that organizations across industries want are similar to each other. Cloud providers therefore are packaging these services and offering them to organizations instead of simply providing core cloud capabilities.

Additionally, the big cloud providers have grown so popular that there is no shortage of proficient engineers and other professionals that can be hired. This means that personnel within the company are conversant with how the various clouds work and their capabilities.



# Conclusion

The journey to the cloud is transformational and offers significant advantages in agility, time to market, cost and other areas. Reaping these benefits requires a deep commitment, however the bottom line is that organizations that want to thrive must take this leap.



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