



JOURNEY TO THE CLOUD – WHAT DO COMPANIES NEED FOR SUCCESSFUL MIGRATION?

Outsourcing large volumes of data and software applications to the cloud has become common practice in most large companies, and cloud computing has largely replaced the labour and cost-intensive operation of in-house server infrastructure. Nevertheless, some companies – particularly small and medium-sized ones – are standing firm on the principle of having their own physical IT infrastructure and refusing the Internet-based possibilities of “Infrastructure as a service” (IaaS). Why is this the case, and how could migration be made attractive to at least some of these companies? We will explore this in the following article.

FIVE REASONS TO REJECT THE CLOUD OR: WHY SOME PRE- FER TO STAY ON THE GROUND

The refusal to migrate the various levels of IT infrastructure to the cloud is often based on practical considerations: What happens if applications suddenly stop working in the cloud and there is no contact person available who can solve the problem quickly and easily? What are the consequences of data loss or unauthorised access to company data? Who is liable for any damage?

And what is the general situation regarding the security of cloud-based services?

These are all legitimate questions, of course, and managers who ask themselves these questions are actually only complying with their required corporate duty of care. In specific terms, the following five points are considered critical by managing directors and, unless issues are clarified adequately, they are decisive for maintaining in-house IT infrastructure:



- 1. Control of content and access rights:** Concerns about no longer having sole access to internal company data or not knowing whether data could be changed, deleted or compromised without the knowledge and consent of people in authority are a major obstacle to the decision to switch to cloud computing.
- 2. Security & data protection:** There are often major concerns about ensuring security and complying with data protection guidelines for applications that are to run via the cloud provider after migration. Companies have much greater trust in their own IT infrastructure and in people with responsibility who are personally known to them than in an anonymous third-party provider in this sensitive area.
- 3. Service integration, technical support, usability:** The greatest resistance here often does not come from management level, but from employees who are directly affected. Concerns that unsuccessful integration will increase the workload, that processes that they are used to will no longer function smoothly, and that the resulting dissatisfaction among customers will put pressure on employees is understandable. Even after successful migration, there is still the danger that inadequate support or poor usability of the software components offered will cause frustration in the departments in question. For this reason, managing directors often prefer to stick with proven solutions.
- 4. Risk of data loss:** If the backup of existing data volumes is outsourced to an external provider, there is always the question of the trustworthiness of that provider. An irretrievable loss of important company data can jeopardise the existence of small and medium-sized companies in particular – the decision to outsource the entire data volume is then only taken if there is absolute transparency about a provider's security precautions.
- 5. Liability issues and other legal considerations:** The problem areas identified are closely linked to the question of liability for any damage that is the responsibility of the cloud operator. Not only is the question of basic legal responsibility at issue here, but also that of the enforceability of claims in the event of damage. Civil law disputes with operators who have their headquarters outside Switzerland or the European Union may be subject to the legal system of the country in which they mainly carry out their business – in the event of a dispute, this can lead to high costs for legal advice and representation, which can have a negative impact on the cost calculations for a possible cloud computing solution.

DESPITE THE SCEPTICISM: FIVE ARGUMENTS IN FAVOUR OF CLOUD-BASED IT INFRA- STRUCTURE

In addition to the criticisms that have been levelled at cloud-based solutions, a decisive factor for keeping IT in-house is sometimes a simple lack of knowledge – the decision-makers often do not have a precise understanding of what the specific advantages and drawbacks of cloud computing are. Two things are needed in order to convince companies that migration makes sense, however: They need to be given fact-based information about the cloud, and they also need a clear grasp of the benefits that migration can bring to the company if implementation is successful. Even stubborn sceptics can be won over by the following five arguments in favour of migrating to the cloud:

- 1. Cost savings:** Most cloud providers have fixed price packages in their portfolio, enabling customers to calculate their ongoing IT costs more precisely. It does away with unexpected outlay for software and hardware, maintenance costs or costs for new acquisitions. Savings can also be achieved in other ancillary costs incurred, such as those for premises, power supply, personnel requirements and such like.
- 2. Greater flexibility and scalability:** Employees are no longer tied to a particular location; instead, no matter where they are, they can access data, process their tasks and communicate with one another, depending on their requirements and without time restrictions. Most cloud-based solutions also offer individual scalability, enabling companies to make adjustments as and when they are required, or to introduce new tools, such as using a media cloud, at any time.

- 3. Lower administration costs:** By doing away with their own IT infrastructure, companies will also be relieved of a large portion of their administration tasks; maintenance and troubleshooting will be taken over by the cloud solution provider, freeing up more of the company's resources to devote to other tasks. Thanks to this greater agility, the company can respond more quickly to changing requirements; competitive disadvantages resulting from a reduced ability to respond will be eliminated.
- 4. Concentrating the workforce on core business activities:** In contrast to the prevailing concerns among IT workers that migration to the cloud will result in a reduction in their work, it often actually generates



completely new tasks, such as training the workforce in cloud-based services and further support for those platforms. People who were previously only occasionally involved in solving operational hardware or software problems can now focus all their attention on their core tasks.

- 5. Good availability, reliability and connections:** By choosing a professional cloud provider, companies generally benefit from access to a much more efficient, more flexible and consistently operational IT environment following successful migration than they would have if they operated their own physical IT infrastructure. In addition, the reliability of the cloud-based services is almost always higher than that of a physical solution because protection against failure is guaranteed by just about every provider. And last but not least, the better connections create benefits in companies with multiple sites, in particular: Physical proximity to the servers being operated is not a big issue; the cloud provider also ensures here that customers have an excellent interface solution for all the applications they require, and that this can be adapted to reflect the changing requirements, where necessary.

REASONS TO MIGRATE TO SWISS TXT MEDIA CLOUD

- SWISS TXT has operated the cloud solution for SRG and for its television channels SRF, RTS and RSI for over 10 years.
- State-of-the-art network, computing and storage infrastructure is available for all applications (online, nearline, archive).
- All data and computer centres are located in Switzerland and are subject exclusively to Swiss law.
- The infrastructure can be automated via an open API, including DevOps, continuous deployment and integration.
- Personal support around the clock in German, French, Italian and English from the headquarters in Biel.
- Technical data: 2'464 virtual machines, 7.5 PB of storage, 73 ESX hosts with 17 TB RAM.

With the cloud solution, you can increase your IT performance and flexibility, and lower the costs for your IT infrastructure sustainably.

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