



Your company's journey to the cloud

A roadmap for growing businesses



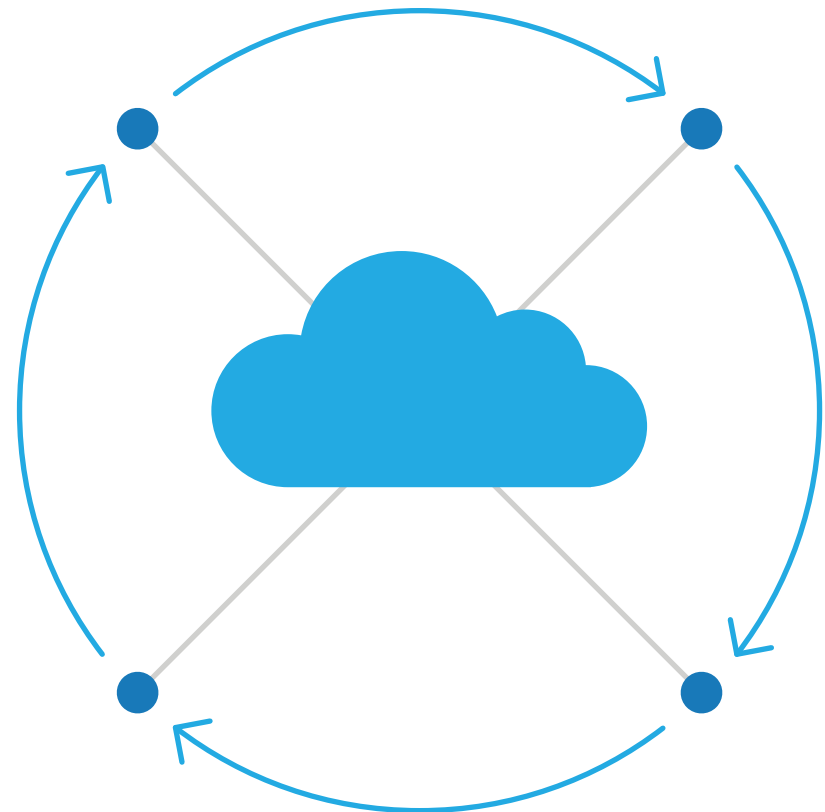
This is big

In most markets, big businesses used to hold all the cards.

- They had economies of scale.
- They had money to invest in R&D and growth.
- And they had the best, most advanced IT systems to automate and streamline their processes.

Today, a major revolution is turning these advantages upside-down as smaller companies disrupt whole markets, build amazing businesses and terrify the big incumbents.

The pattern has repeated itself over and over again – and there's no secret to it anymore. The driver behind all of this change is out there for all to see: new ideas and new technology, powered by the cloud.



INTRODUCTION

This is big

The great equalizer

Today, every business – no matter how small – has access to incredibly agile, easy-to-deploy, secure, affordable IT.

In fact, small and mid-sized companies actually have a big *advantage*: the legacy IT systems of the big companies are holding them back. They're rushing to the cloud too (but it's a lot harder for them).

Today, small companies are leveraging the power of the cloud every day.

And it changes everything.

Start where you are

It's easy for pure startups. They can move all of their IT to the cloud from day one (as many do).

But if you're running an existing company – no matter what size – you have to take it one step at a time, in a sensible, systematic journey that fits your business.

This eBook is about your own cloud journey and how to get the many benefits of cloud – but do it sensibly, at your own pace and with minimal risk, disruption and cost.

We hope it clarifies the road ahead for your business – and, of course, we stand ready to help!

Don't go it alone.

Just because a lot of cloud applications and services are self-service, doesn't mean you have to go it alone. There's a lot to figure out as you move more and more of your IT to the cloud. Thankfully, there's also a lot of help available. Look for a local IT service provider who can offer you expert guidance and manage cloud-based services for you.

Spoiler alert: you just found one!

You're already on your way.

Chances are, you're already on the journey to the cloud. If you have any business apps on your phone, or access any software services online – anything from Gmail to Salesforce CRM, Office 365 or web-based apps for things like HR, timesheets or expenses – you're using the cloud. Think about how easy it was to make that transition. Well, the rest of your cloud journey can be that easy too.

START

THE PROBLEM

Outdated IT is weighing you down

Make no mistake: information technologies, from PCs and networks to the internet and smartphones, have given a massive boost to growing businesses.

But today, many companies are struggling to manage and maintain all of the technologies they've acquired and inherited over time.

- You've got to choose, deploy and manage desktops, servers and software.
- You've got to support users and their PCs, laptops, smartphones and tablets.
- You've got to update, upgrade, patch and secure the whole set-up, forever.

For a lot of businesses, this is more than just someone's full-time job, it's a major drain on budget and resources.

And it's getting harder.

As work changes, technology accelerates, security threats multiply and data regulations grow, internal IT teams are struggling to keep up.

If you're like the vast majority of growing businesses, you've been forced to throw more and more time, money and resources at IT instead of into your core business – and you end up *less* secure, and *less* productive.

The cloud changes all of that.



The cloud: a new value equation

When it comes to the cloud, there's a lot of hype and misinformation out there.

But it's actually a simple concept:

- **The cloud is internet-based computing that offers processing, storage, applications and services.**
- **It lets authorized users access these resources on demand, from any device.**
- **With a predictable subscription model – without the up-front costs of traditional licensing.**

These simple ideas, powered by some remarkable technologies – dramatically change the way businesses of all sizes approach their IT needs.

The benefits are no longer in dispute:

- **Lower costs**
Enables a move from CapEx to OpEx, lowering barriers to entry so that you have access to technologies that are otherwise unaffordable.
- **Tighter security**
Because you benefit from bank-grade security – everything from full encryption and firewalls to instant updates, patches and 24x7x365 monitoring.
- **Less admin**
Cloud IT is easier and faster to deploy and the management and maintenance are taken care of.
- **Greater agility**
You can spin up new services as needed and close them down when they're not – much more flexible than traditional locked-in licensing.
- **Easier mobility**
Cloud-based data, apps and services are always available to all members of your team, no matter where they are or what device they're using.

In short, the cloud lets you get out of the IT business and focus on what you do best – improving your bottom line. And that's why so many growing companies are eager to accelerate their cloud journeys.

Your market is going cloud right now

Not surprisingly, millions of small and medium-sized businesses are moving more of their IT systems to the cloud every day.

- **Accounting firms** are using cloud accounting software and securing and backing up client files in the cloud.
- **Construction companies** are moving to cloud-based project management for on-site project visibility.
- **Retailers** depend on their cloud-based eCommerce, CRM and customer service tools to grow their customer bases.
- **Regulated industries** are simplifying their compliance processes, as there are now clouds designed specifically for individual compliance objectives, such as FedRamp.

Every industry in every country is going the same way.

Look around: yours is too.

Your cloud journey

It's important to think of your move to the cloud as a planned journey instead of an overnight switch. And, as with all journeys, the key is to establish where you are, where you want to be and how you'll get there.

It's also important to find a travel guide who can help you design a journey that's right for your business. You need a roadmap that takes into account the specifics of your business, your goals, your current IT, your available resources and your staff.

A well-designed journey will pay dividends all along the way:

- **You'll get the benefits of the cloud faster.**
- **You'll improve security and business continuity.**
- **You'll decrease risk and minimize disruption.**
- **You'll decrease and control your costs.**
- **You'll bring your users along with you.**

And that's where your local IT service provider can help. They focus on helping businesses just like yours plan the most sensible and highest-value steps – then help you manage everything and support users.

A natural progression

Wherever you are on your cloud journey, you can benefit from the many companies that have gone before you.

For a lot of them, the journey progresses in three natural steps:

- **Move your files to the cloud**
To secure your files, make them more available, and streamline teamwork.
- **Move your applications to the cloud**
Improving the security, availability and performance of your core business apps.
- **Move your desktops to the cloud**
So you can stop installing and maintaining operating systems, software and applications on every computer.

The three steps don't have to go in order – it's just that this is how many companies have found themselves going. In fact, you can start anywhere and progress each of the three at your own pace.

Let's look at each of these steps, one at a time.

How cloud-ready are you?

Ask your IT service provider to do a Cloud Readiness Assessment of your business. They'll review your current IT, ask questions about your business and come back with a clear evaluation with recommended actions. (Ask us about how we do it!)

Snapshot

A virtual desktop can let your staff access the latest version of Windows 10 securely from nearly any device, saving you hours patching outdated systems.

STEP

01

Cloud file sharing and storage

STEP 01

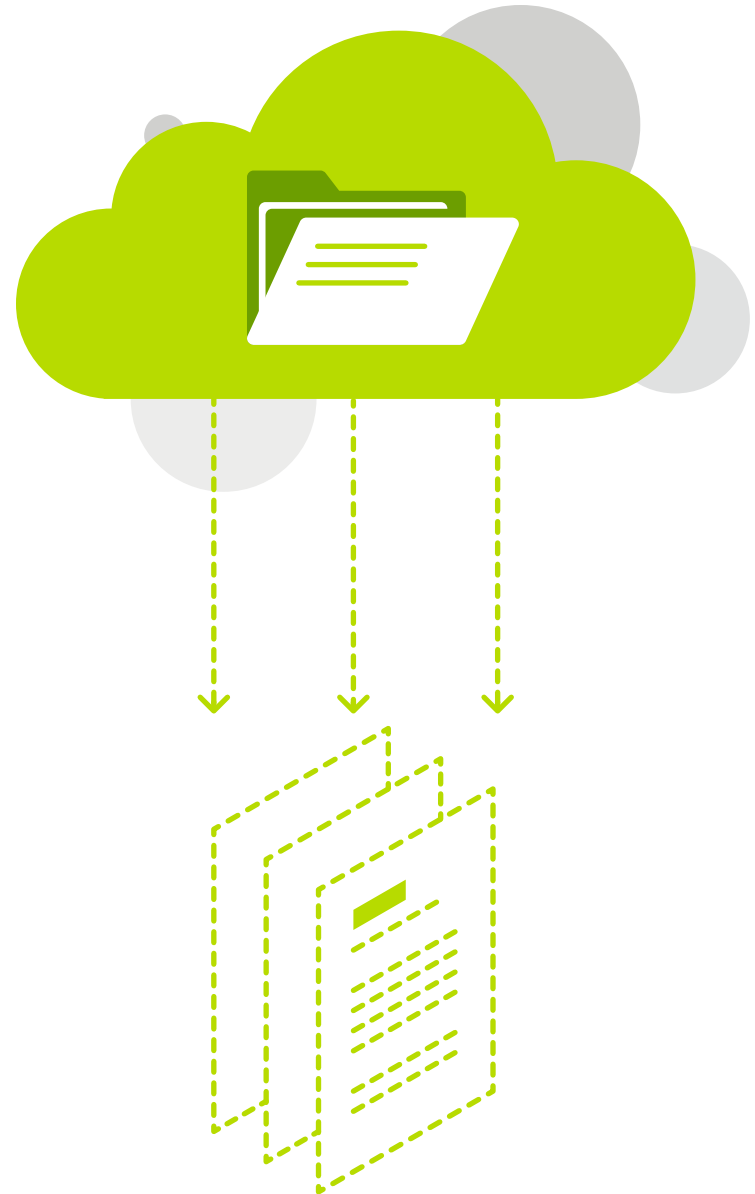
Cloud file sharing and storage

Your business runs on files – but the way they're stored and shared now, in all probability, is outdated, unsecure and inefficient.

That's why cloud-based file sharing is a natural foundation for any company's journey to the cloud. It requires minimal change and you get a fast return on investment. Plus, because file sharing touches every department and process, you make a big impact with very little cost or effort.

Cloud file sharing allows your staff to store and synchronize documents, photos, videos and other files in the cloud – and share them with other people, synchronizing files across multiple devices.

You may know the basic idea from consumer-grade services like DropBox, Box or GoogleDrive. But business-class cloud file sharing is far richer, more secure and better-integrated with the way you work.



STEP 01

The benefits of cloud file sharing

The business case for cloud file sharing writes itself:



Secure your files better

With bank-level encryption, two-factor authentication and remote back-up for fast recovery from disaster. And you won't need to take back-up drives home any more.



Cure email overload

A great way to send and receive large and sensitive files – with no file size restrictions.



Simplify teamwork

Click. Tap. Share. This is collaboration made easy (even on files bigger than 10GB). Everyone works on the latest version, whether they're in a web browser or mobile device. With secure links that are easy to share by email or instant messaging.



Comply with your industry regulations

Secure, compliant archiving for sensitive records is the foundation of compliance.

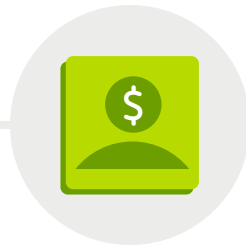
STEP 01

The benefits of cloud file sharing



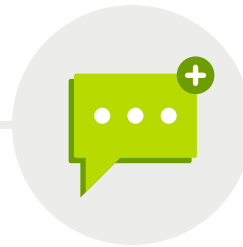
Support mobile workers

With easy access from all mobile devices – and remote locking or wiping if the device is lost.



Save money

No up-front costs – just a predictable subscription price for hardware you don't manage, with the added benefit of continuously improving software.



Help when you need it

Your IT service provider will help you deploy and manage the service and support your users.

That's why cloud file sharing is such an important part of your cloud journey!

Meet ShareFile

The market-leading cloud-based file sharing service we recommend and manage for our clients is called ShareFile by Citrix Systems.

Unlike consumer-oriented cloud storage, ShareFile is packed with the features that businesses need in order to harvest all of the benefits that a cloud solution should deliver.

It's simple, secure, low-cost – and business users love it.

Ask us for a demo and a free trial.

A few use cases

- **A Certified Public Accountant (CPA)** replaces paper and unsecured thumb-drives with digital processes and much more secure client communications.
- **A loan officer** sends secure links to encrypted documents right from Microsoft Outlook, cutting days off the approval process.
- **A physiotherapy clinic** shares confidential patient records and scans between physicians and patients.
- **A marketing agency** speeds up approvals on creative campaigns and keeps clients reviewing the latest versions.



STEP

02 Moving your applications to the cloud

STEP 02

Moving your applications to the cloud

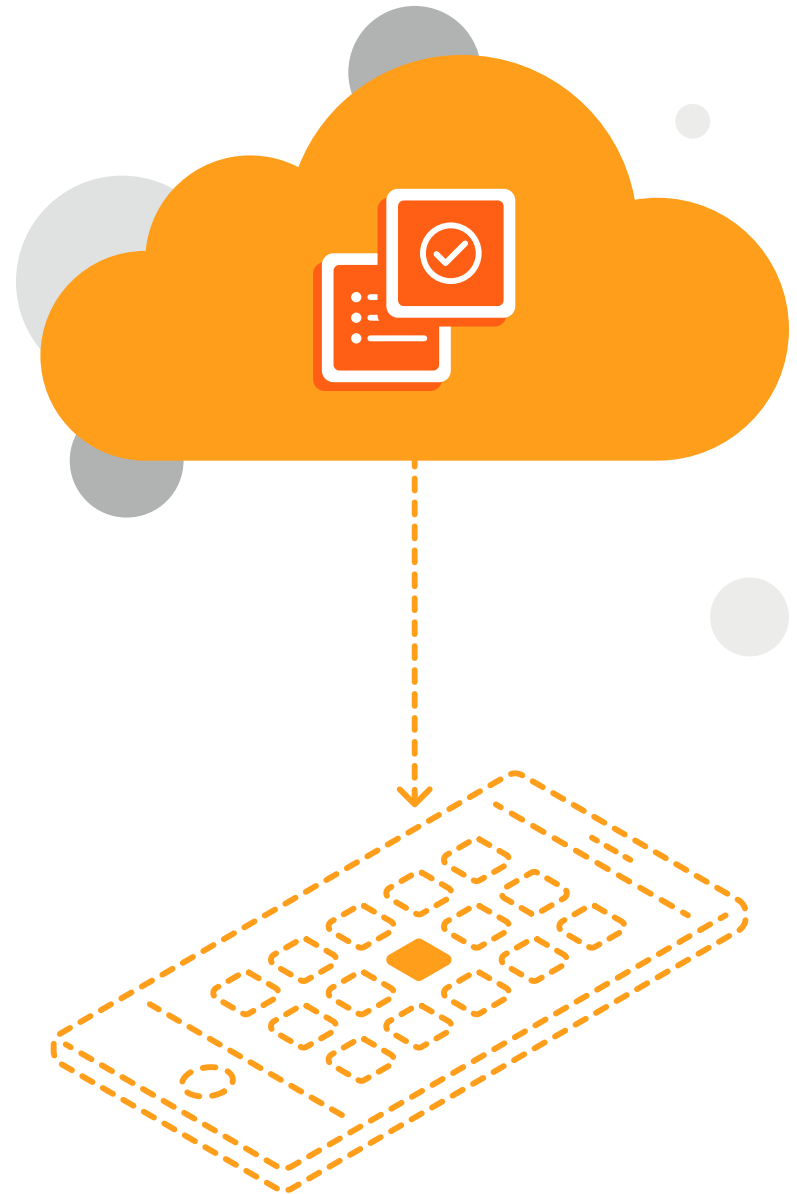
Once your files are secure and accessible from any device, you're ready for the natural next step: cloud-based applications.

Applications are where your users meet your business processes and your files.

They're the building blocks of your entire business – everything from Office apps like Word and Excel to specialized software for accounting, video editing or graphic design.

Applications deliver great functionality – but in the cloud, their management is centralized instead of distributed. That means they can be patched once for all users and updated quickly and easily to enhance security and ensure compliance.

And depending on the age, implementation and management practices currently in place, the applications hosted on your local servers can present new performance and security challenges every day. Choosing the right IT service provider will address these challenges, allowing you to focus on your core business.



STEP 02

Moving your applications to the cloud

Two kinds of cloud apps

There are two ways to use cloud-based applications:

01

Cloud-native apps

Also called Software-as-a-Service, these are cloud applications that replace the ones you'd otherwise have to install on local servers or on your staff's computers. Examples include Salesforce CRM and Microsoft Office 365.

Instead of an annual, multi-user license, you pay monthly, per user.

02

Virtual cloud apps

These are traditional applications that you or someone else moves to the cloud, making them available 'as a service' – just like cloud-native apps.

You get the apps you know and love centrally managed and made available to all users on all devices – without having to install, secure and maintain them on each one.

In other words, you don't have to wait for the applications your business depends on to offer a cloud version: you can work with your local service provider to 'cloudify' it for you: hosting, supporting, securing and managing the app for you.

STEP 02

The benefits of cloud apps

The benefits of cloud computing in general and the ones listed in the file sharing section are all true of cloud-based applications. But moving entire apps to the cloud has other benefits too:



Reduce your IT overhead

Focusing your time, money and resources on things that impact your core business – like improving processes or creating new products.



Support every worker, everywhere

Your office-based users and your road warriors or home-based workers: they all get instant, secure access to the apps they need to do their jobs.



Protect your business

From disaster, attacks, ransomware, data leaks and regulatory breaches.

STEP 02

The benefits of cloud apps



Control your budget

Some businesses overspend on licensing software they never use. Cloud apps mean you only pay for what you use.



Improve application performance

Local servers may be under-powered and not optimized to support lots of users. Hosting your apps in the cloud can significantly improve performance and availability.

Meet Citrix XenApp

XenApp by Citrix is the world's leading application virtualization software. It dramatically simplifies the deployment and management of apps for all users, delivering the same real-time experience they'd get from a local app.

With XenApp, your IT service provider can turn any application into a cloud app — then host and manage it for you!



Snapshot

Hosting your apps in the cloud ensures your apps are running on the latest, high-performance hardware. No more disruptive costly updates.



STEP

03 Putting your desktops in the cloud

STEP 03

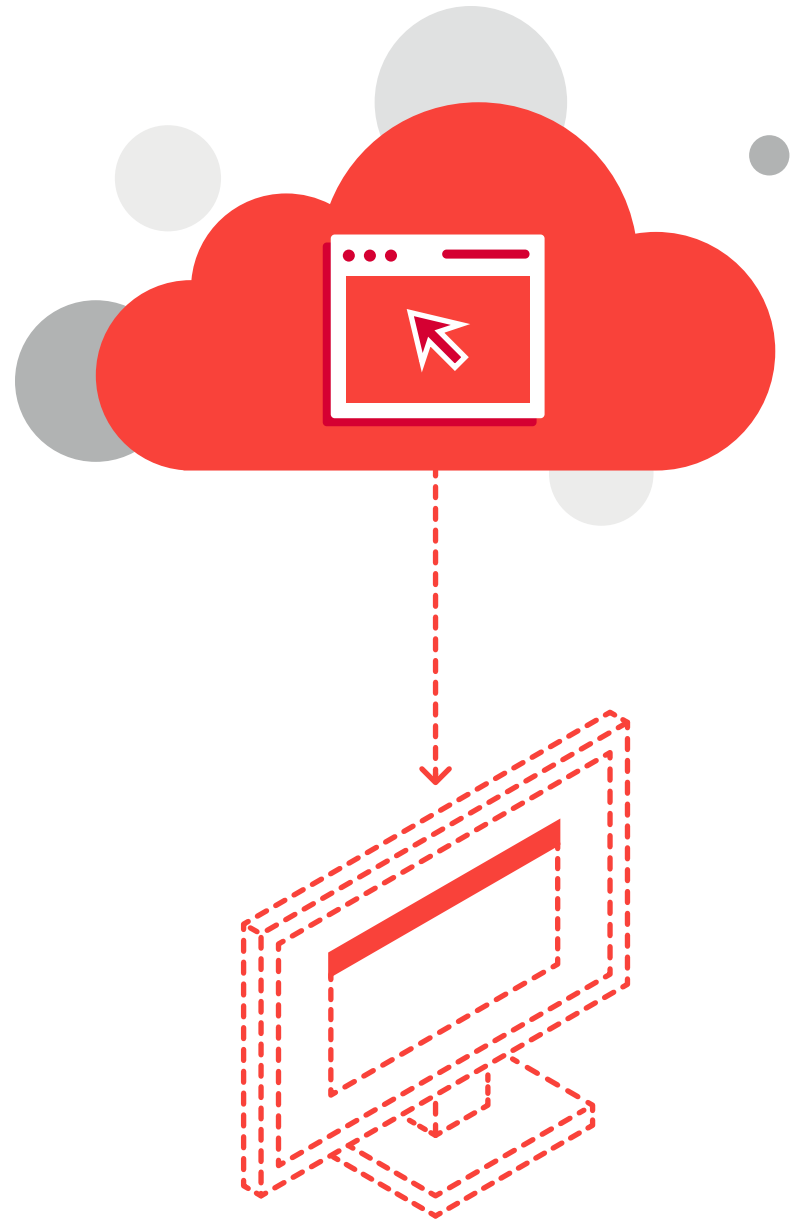
Putting your desktops in the cloud

Once you're getting the benefits of moving your files and applications to the cloud, you're ready for cloud desktops (sometimes called 'virtual desktops' or 'hosted desktops').

A desktop is all the things that load when you fire up a PC: the operating system (the latest version of Windows), all your applications and all your files. In short, it's your whole computer – as you've personally set it up – presented on any device you happen to have.

Once you get your users' desktops to the cloud, you've pretty much become a cloud company, with little or no in-house infrastructure to buy, manage, maintain and secure.

You've arrived.



STEP 03

The benefits of cloud desktops

Cloud desktops accrue all the benefits listed under cloud file sharing and cloud applications, but with even greater returns.



Simplify your entire IT estate

Truly getting out of the IT business so you can focus all your energy on your customers and your staff.



Centralize and outsource IT management

Your IT service provider runs your whole tech stack for you – updating and securing everything, backing it up and supporting your users, saving you both time and money.



Transition easily to the Windows 10

Virtual desktops make the transition super-simple, with no disruption to your users or the business (and no going around installing Windows one PC at a time).



Give secure access to from anywhere

Even if someone loses their PC, there's nothing to steal from it, so there's no security breach. Just give them a replacement – and their personal desktop is there, ready for action.

STEP 03

The benefits of cloud desktops



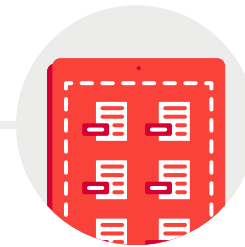
Drive down IT costs

With no up-front capital expense, just a predictable subscription model suited to your team.



Work even when you're offline

With options that let you hold the desktop locally and work even when there's no internet connection.



Access files on demand

Maintain access to all your files even in a virtual environment

Meet Citrix XenDesktop

XenDesktop is the world's leading virtual desktop solution from Citrix. Growing companies use it to drive down IT cost and complexity while making the business more agile and secure.

Your local IT service provider (us, we hope!) will use XenDesktop to host and manage your desktops – keeping them available, up to date and running at peak performance.

A close-up, slightly blurred photograph of a person's hands holding a tablet computer. The person is wearing a dark long-sleeved shirt. The background shows a modern office environment with a large window and some office furniture. The lighting is bright and natural.

Snapshot

A virtual desktop is installed and hosted in the cloud. Users can access the desktop from any device and it looks, feels and acts like it's locally installed.

CONCLUSION

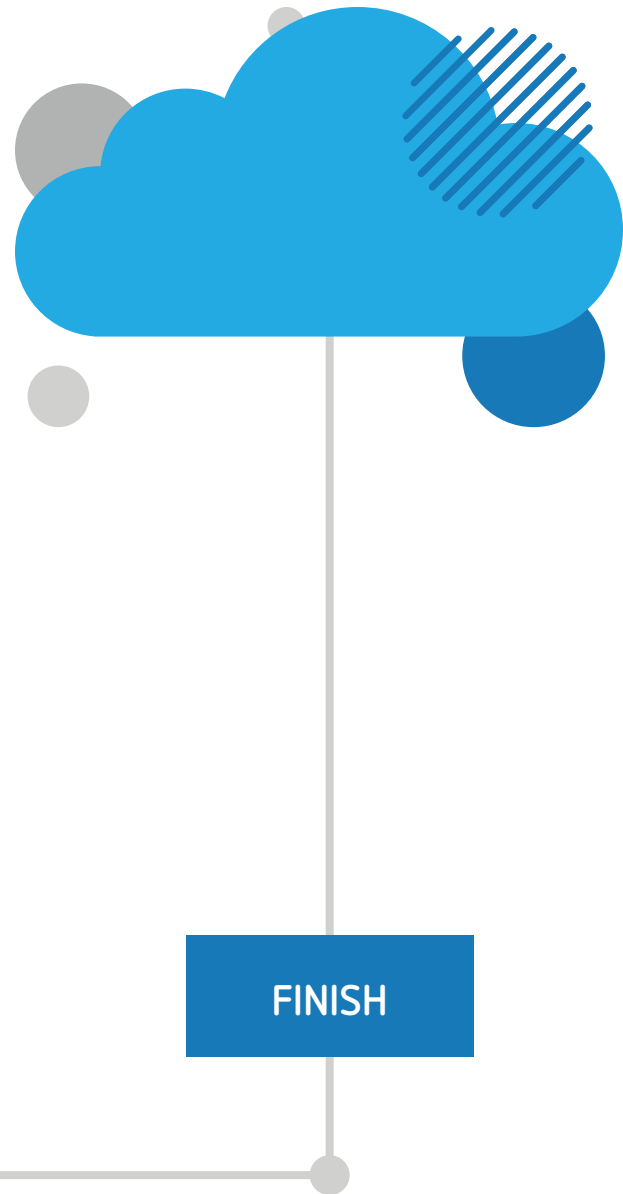
You're ready: let's go

In the past, making changes to your business IT systems was a recipe for pain and disruption.

With the cloud, the opposite is true. When you move from a high-maintenance model to a no-maintenance model, everything gets easier, faster and more flexible.

That's why so many businesses – of all sizes and across all industries – are accelerating their journeys to the cloud.

Each step of your cloud journey pays for itself, in business benefits, security and real, hard savings.



Let's talk

We can work together to plan the right journey at the right pace for your business.



We do it for companies just like yours and we're ready to do it for you.

- We'll take the time to get to know you
- Design your best path
- Take away all the deployment and management hassles
- Report regularly on how everything is working
- Support your users
- And keep your systems up to date – always

So you and your team can focus on better, more strategic things – like driving growth and increasing profit.

Contact

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