

CLOUD VS. ON-PREMISE NETWORK

WHAT'S THE DIFFERENCE?

With so much talk about computing “in the cloud” these days, it can be challenging to understand the differences between and benefits of cloud computing versus an on-site server. What is the cloud? Simply put, the cloud is a metaphor for the Internet. **Cloud computing means storing and accessing data and programs over the Internet instead of on the hard drive of a computer, or computers, located in your office.**

There can be many benefits of moving to the cloud, including:

- Lower hardware and IT support costs
- The ability to access applications and your desktop from any device, anytime.
- Built-in disaster recovery and business continuity
- Utility pricing; you pay only for what you need and use

However, even with all of those benefits and more, there are important things to consider when determining the best approach for your organization.

Consideration	Cloud	On-Premise
IT Infrastructure	Fewer or no internal resources, specialization or infrastructure	Established IT support required with a solid security and backup solution in place
Access	Via a web browser or other mobile device	Client server workstations for onsite or Citrix for remote
Company Profile and Costs	May be good for startups, companies wanting to lower or eliminate infrastructure capital expenditures, and those needing an affordable “pay as needed” model for computing resources (operating expense)	May be good for established organizations with the ability to make IT investments (capital expense) in software and infrastructure
Workforce	Companies with a high turnover or seasonal workforce wanting a “pay as you go” model – adding/reducing services and capacity as the workforce fluctuates	Companies with a relatively stable workforce with little turnover, expansion or contraction
Office Setup	Allows for a remote workforce, may reduce overhead of large office. May be good for companies with workers “in the field”	Established office location with workers who are not in remote offices or working offsite
Ongoing Support Services	Minimal; Business process consulting may be required	Security and back-ups must be maintained and monitored consistently and continually. Software upgrades needed an average of every 24-36 months
Implementation Time and Costs	Varies by project. Tends to be faster than on-premise. New users and resources can generally be turned “on” or “off” more quickly and easily	Varies by project. Tends to be more involved with a longer implementation time
Backup and Disaster Recovery	Built in. Instant business continuity	Backup must be a separate, offsite component. Security must be maintained on-premise

