

TECH BRIEF

Moving to the cloud:
Small- to medium-size
businesses increasingly
turning to cloud storage.



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MOVING TO THE CLOUD

SMALL- TO MEDIUM-SIZE BUSINESSES INCREASINGLY TURNING TO CLOUD STORAGE.

By Cameron Camp, ESET Security Researcher

3 reasons people use the cloud

1. Simple computing.

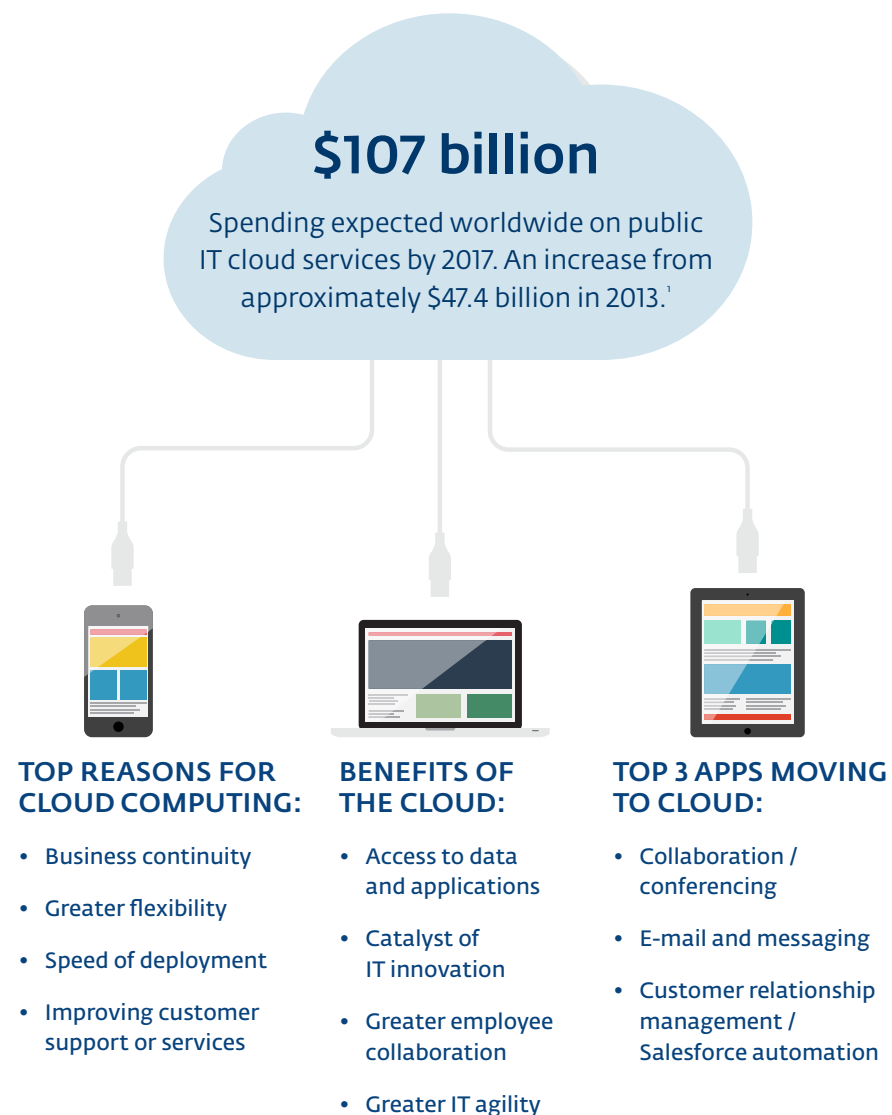
The cloud is a simplified way of using the Internet. A third-party provider maintains a space to store your stuff, work on your documents, run your business software, host your website, and various other options.

2. Someone else fixes it.

The cloud means you may not need to install software, keep it up to date, or figure out how to fix it if it breaks. It just happens “somewhere in the cloud.”

3. Simple backup.

Can't figure out backups? You're not alone. The cloud means you can back up files offsite, then if something bad happens at your office – from computer theft to a malware attack – you can click a few buttons and restore your data across the Internet.



¹ Source: 2013 IDG Enterprise Cloud Computing Research

Cloud security – how to keep this all safe

The cloud makes a lot of the tasks your small business does go much more smoothly. But what about security? Here, the answers are more complex, because the cloud doesn't provide security; it transfers, expands, and changes security. What happens if your cloud provider gets hacked, for example? Who pays for the fallout from the breach? Sure, your cloud provider can restore your machines and services, but that doesn't really restore your lost data, work, and time. Remember, no one feels as strongly about the safety of your data as you, so in the end it's up to you.

Keeping that same data in-house doesn't mean you get a free pass, either. With hackers and malicious software spread across the Internet, you – or a hapless co-worker – could accidentally be clicking your way to allowing the bad guys to get your company's deep secrets anyway, whether they are located in the back room or in someone else's cloud servers.

Most small businesses follow these guidelines to create a mixed security solution:

Use the cloud.

Think Salesforce, NetSuite, and the rest of the specialty pieces of the puzzle that someone else does better than you. Reputable companies in this space have a shelf full of techies and security folks, and are ramping up security every day.

Hire a techie.

A techie can handle simple security questions and big security emergencies. Hopefully, by having a techie help you with the simple steps, you can avert the need for the second eventuality, but it's good to know you can get help quick, if needed.

Deploy security software.

One that works quietly behind the scenes, alerting you to bad things about to happen, like clicking on a link that only looks like your bank sent it, but really is a fake site that tries to steal your credentials and wreak havoc.

Beef up your gadgets.

When you upgrade your computers and networked/Wi-Fi equipment, look for gear that has a firm reputation for security. This means when your techie-on-call drops by, it'll be easier to implement a safer environment in which to do business. As a bonus, spending a little more often gets you a lot more quality, so your device doesn't break when you're on a tight deadline.

Get educated.

Stay current on the latest cyber threats and tips on how to protect your identity and sensitive data. And make sure to follow your instincts and use your best judgment – if something just doesn't look right in an "e-mail," text, or pop-up window, take the time to get a second opinion. Those are easy to find on websites such as **WeLiveSecurity.com** or **eset.com**