



Professional Services Cloud Readiness Assessment

The industry change from traditional methods of IT service delivery to Cloud based solutions has been one of the largest transformations the IT Services industry has seen in decades. With the marketing machine in overdrive, the benefits of moving to cloud are increasingly well publicised and UK business is keen to embrace this brave new World. Many are held back however, unsure as to they can go about getting cloud to benefit them and how to plot a smooth path to an effective cloud environment.

In reality, cloud based services are not a panacea for all things. Unlike start-up businesses built in the cloud from scratch, more mature and established organisations have more complex problems to deal with. What about our legacy systems? How does cloud impact our security and compliance requirements? How do we prepare our IT staff and minimise the disruption of living through a transition to the cloud? These represent very real problems and can be very costly if not dealt with properly. The benefits that adorn cloud services brochures very rarely apply carte blanche to every business without exception and careful consideration must be given before any migration to the cloud.

It is true that cloud based delivery models can improve IT delivery in terms of cost, service quality, availability and security. It is also true that poorly considered cloud based delivery models can restrict business growth, damage user experience and undermine security and compliance to such an extent that serious business level consequences can ensue. Moving to the cloud and saving 5% on your IT spend is great, but not if your users are all complaining and the ICO is knocking on your door for accidentally publishing sensitive data on the internet.

The cloud infrastructure market is valued at \$17Billion globally in 2015 and will double by 2018

Gartner, 2015

Whilst looking at individual point solutions may satisfy an immediate need, the intricate relationships between the applications that form a business process are most likely to be the reason a cloud adoption strategy will fail. Integration of data across multiple disparate systems, restrictions on functionality from standardised cloud services and user adoption of more internet dependent solutions are all major factors that must be reviewed in the context of the organisation looking to adopt cloud services to ensure success with a minimum of disruption. The result is an Enterprise Application Architecture design.

How to ride the Cloud Tsunami

Working with thousands of UK clients, we have a specific and focussed view of the adoption of cloud solutions within our client base. The key lessons most clients are learning about cloud adoption really focusses on the approach rather than the solution.

Without a holistic consideration of your business requirements from IT, no cloud solutions will work. Looking at individual point solutions may satisfy an immediate need, but the interrelationships between applications within a business process will be the key reason why a cloud adoption strategy will fail. Integration of data across multiple disparate systems, restrictions on functionality from a standardised cloud service and user adoption of more internet-

dependent solutions are all major factors in cloud service disruption which need to be woven into an enterprise application architecture. Without this architectural awareness, focusing on individual solutions can be fraught with risk and complexity.

Armed with the application architecture, user locations and profiles need to be thought through. Although often taken for granted, network infrastructure is key to the delivery of cloud-enabled services. With users generally spread across multiple sites, or working remotely, access to the internet becomes a key business enabler, and the corresponding resilience and cost of internet access can make or break a business case.

What's Included in a Cloud Readiness Assessment?

Alternative's heritage in working with thousands of clients across both IT and Networking technology areas gives us a unique perspective on the end to end implications of a cloud strategy. Following a structured workshop approach, Alternative's experienced consultants can explore all of the aspects of the use of IT within a business to determine the best approach to adopting cloud, if indeed it is considered beneficial.

By interviewing key business stakeholders, and working closely with IT and Networking technical staff, we will make recommendations on:

- Cloud services available in the market place that could add benefit to a clients business processes
- The impact of these cloud services on your IT and Telecoms infrastructure, in terms of risks and benefits, such that a decision can be made on whether to proceed with this migration
- A headline plan and cost to support the migration effort if taken forward.

Our Approach

Our methodology is a proven one:

- Engage in a fixed price, fixed output workshop to determine best practice requirements and document risk profile based on IT and Telecoms architecture
- Deliver a Cloud Readiness Assessment report that provides an overview of pros and cons of migration to the cloud, along with other considerations for the IT and Telecoms estate
- Assess the capability of the IT and Telecoms organisation to support a distributed cloud based application architecture, and provide commentary on the impact on training and enablement.

At a high level, the workshop will focus on the following areas:

Business strategy - Details of any existing cloud services in use, regulatory implications, current pain points etc.

Application portfolio - Covering such areas as CRM, Enterprise Desktop, Enterprise Mobility Management and Line of Business applications in use

Infrastructure assessment - Data centre details, compute, networking and storage platforms, virtual infrastructure and desktop hardware;

People - Focusing on user locations and workspace, IT stakeholders, existing IT skillsets and identity management;

Processes – Looking at key business processes, DR/BCP plans, service level agreements and user administration procedures.

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