Why cloud hosting can transform your business today

By Colin Thornton   1 Nov 2017

In the midst of an excruciatingly tough economic year, SMMEs are undoubtedly in survival mode. No matter their size or sector, South African businesses have to scrutinise their balance sheets and find any cost savings - and efficiencies - that they possibly can.

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Fortunately, technology is increasingly able to provide many quick and easy wins, enabling businesses to cut overhead costs while enhancing operational efficiencies. Arguably, the cloud and cloud hosting has been a major enabler here.

But what is cloud hosting, and how can it help your business right now?

In essence, cloud hosting refers to a way of harnessing virtual servers to host your data. These virtual servers get their computing power from physical servers.

Because they are relying on virtual servers, businesses can access their data from anywhere, at any time, provided there is decent connectivity. This leads to significant cost savings because you only pay for what your business actually uses!

Public versus private cloud

When discussing cloud hosting, it is important to distinguish between the public and private cloud. There are pros and cons associated with both, and businesses need to decide on their key objectives when deciding which route to take.

Today, the majority of businesses that use cloud hosting use the public cloud. This cloud gets its resources from publicly shared servers. These public clouds invariably harness strong security features to ensure that data is kept safe and private.

On the other hand, the private cloud is used when security and privacy are of utmost importance. These clouds are powered by on-site servers, or in partnership with a dedicated cloud provider.

'IT-as-a-Service'

The move to cloud hosting is indicative of a wholesale move within the enterprise to hosted IT solutions. Increasingly, businesses are harnessing the benefits of such offerings that include IaaS (Infrastructure-as-a-Service) and PaaS (Platform-as-a-Service).

Today, cloud hosting can be delivered to a client in one of two ways, either using IaaS or PaaS.

PaaS refers to when the client is provided with software, such as CloudWare, whereby they can access applications and install hardware straight from the cloud. This is easier to use and more suitable for people and businesses that are less technically inclined.

IaaS, on the other hand, is more suitable for experienced IT professionals or teams. Here, the client is provided with the hardware required to access their cloud hosting. This solution is typically used when a client has a complex IT infrastructure.

Reliability is key

Today, every business has to be up and running and responding to customers around the clock. This is where cloud hosting is truly invaluable.

The cloud is 100% reliable due to getting space from a network of many physical servers. If one goes down, you don't!

Added to this, a physical/on-site server has a limited amount of data capacity available, while the cloud doesn't. So if you need to use more cloud space, you can do so at the press of a button (and using a smart, pay-as-you-go model). Notably, due to the cloud being a network of physical servers, you benefit from the advanced security of these servers.

In short, every business today can immediately benefit from cloud hosting. Arguably, those that fail to leverage IT as a Service risk falling behind their more tech-savvy peers in the near future!

ABOUT COLIN THORNTON

Colin founded Dial a Nerd in 1998 as a consumer IT support company and in 2002 the business-focused division was founded. Supporting SMEs is now its primary focus. In 2015 his company, merged with Turrito Networks who provided niche internet services outside of the local network. These two companies have created an end-to-end IT and Communication solution for SMEs. Colin has subsequently become the managing director of Turrito. Contact him at info@dialanerd.co.za
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