



Making the Right Unified Communications Strategy Moves in a Cloud World

www.roinetworks.com

(949) 248-5000

27101 Puerta Real, Suite 100, Mission Viejo, CA 92691



Before making any major Unified Communications (UC) strategy decisions, it's important to have a full understanding of all the available options. Technology spending is one of the top expenses for most companies, and new user demands have led to a major shift in the allocation of technical dollars. The evolution of the cloud is the primary reason for this shift, leading many organizations to abandon traditional solutions in favor of more lightweight, flexible, and mobile answers.

There are many key facts to know about the cloud before making critical budget and technical calls, and ROI Networks is here to provide information, guidance, and solutions.

The Difference Between Cloud, On-Premise, and Hybrid

When vendors refer to cloud service solutions, they are typically talking about a hosted virtual solution in which applications and data are no longer stored on a company's own hardware, but on servers owned by a cloud vendor at the data center of choice. Cloud services can be public, private, or a mix of the two.

In a public cloud service arrangement, server space may be shared over multiple customers and have more open accessibility. Public cloud services typically rely on over-the-top (OTT) access via public Internet connections. This is usually an operating expense (OpEx), freeing the customer from time consuming capital expenditure (CapEx) funding and approval cycles. Implementation can be quite rapid.

Private cloud offers a dedicated access connection to provide a more secure and reliable solution. This is particularly valuable to customers who desire strong service level agreements (SLAs) and a total service monitoring and management option. This is usually an OpEx with rapid implementation.

Hybrid, in this case, refers to a service delivery option that provides servers dedicated to a single customer in a provider data center. Advantages include scalability, site reliability, and redundancy services that can be scaled to the customer's specific needs. Some vendors will offer this as an OpEx model with a shorter implementation cycle.



The standard on-premise delivery option requires hardware to be physically located on company property. Racks, switches, servers, and networking hardware are purchased or leased and require available space to house them on-site. This typically requires CapEx funding and approval cycles that often stretch into months. Implementation on premises often has a longer cycle than public/private cloud or hybrid service delivery options.

There are a number of advantages to each model, making the decision decidedly complex. ROI Networks' expertise within this industry is an asset to any company facing business decisions like this.

Cloud UC Strategy: What Is the Right Approach?

No two businesses are alike, so there is no single solution for all companies' needs. The key to making a sound decision on the public/private cloud versus hybrid versus on-premise question is to measure the following factors.

Budget

Cloud services have become less expensive by the day and are completely scalable. This means that a company can size the solution appropriately for all stages of its life cycle, from small to multi-location to enterprise. It is possible to scale up or down based on market penetration, global expansion, hiring, or any other factor that demands size adjustment. There is no major investment in hardware for cloud solutions, and there are few (if any) physical space requirements.

One important design and budgetary consideration is bandwidth. It's important to plan for adequate connectivity speeds and network security as well as the quality of the connections.

On-premise solutions typically require more planning and budgetary finesse. Any technology hardware can be quite expensive to acquire and implement. Space accommodations are another consideration when budgeting an on-premise solution since additional real estate may be needed. These costs can often be amortized with financing options, or may result in useful tax



deductions for depreciation of purchased equipment. Annual license renewals and hardware/software maintenance contracts are typically required by equipment manufacturers to provide support, updates, and patches to purchased/leased equipment. It is also important to factor in the utility costs needed to run on-premise hardware and to follow a five-year equipment replacement standard.

Regulatory Requirements

Many businesses have compliance rules that they must follow, which may dictate the solutions available. Organizations in industries like payment processing, healthcare, or government contracting may not be permitted to use a public cloud service arrangement. Private cloud services and providers specialize in these highly regulated industries, and an impressive 91% of small to medium businesses reported an easier compliance experience with the assistance of their cloud vendor, as opposed to self-certification of premises equipment.¹

Security

Cloud solutions have come a long way in the realm of security. It's important to note that public cloud should be considered a wide-open arena best used for general information and non-proprietary and non-confidential data storage, and without strong SLAs for quality or availability. Private cloud can be kept more secure while still achieving the cost benefits of cloud technology. On-premise solutions are sometimes the best in security, but with a footnote that all server hardware/software manufacturer updates must be followed strictly, firewalls actively used, and antivirus measures put into place.

Benefits of the Cloud

Flexibility

Whether a company chooses cloud-based UC for just a few business reasons or a whole gamut of features, cloud UC solutions can be configured to perfectly fit any requirements. From simple to complex, skilled cloud UC service providers are able to customize a cost-effective feature package. Features can be added at any time as business needs evolve or become more intricate.

¹Aptterra, "20 Fun Facts about Cloud Integration for 2015," 2015, <<http://tinyurl.com/hgkh4ya>>.



Scalability

Smaller companies generally have a more limited budget and simpler needs than a large or multi-location enterprise. Cloud UC solutions can grow or shrink proportionately to the company workload, allowing a business to streamline, consolidate, or expand in a short timeframe.

Security

Worried about security? A whopping 94% of companies report improved security as a result of transitioning to cloud solutions.² As many as 63% of companies surveyed report using at least one cloud-based UC tool or application.³ This high adoption rate is due to the array of UC assets available to businesses. UC applications can allow a business's phone and customer relationship management (CRM) systems to seamlessly integrate, saving money and increasing productivity.

Reliability

A survey of hundreds of businesses in the U.S. and abroad uncovered losses in the billions each year as a result of downtime. Small businesses alone average up to \$55k per year in lost revenue from downtime, which can be a fatal blow to a growing business.⁴ Cloud solutions are incredibly reliable and are able to have redundancy built in. They're also fantastic for disaster recovery programs, helping to resume operations quickly in times of business crisis.

How ROIingage Optimizes the Cloud

ROI Networks has a firm grasp on the struggles and obstacles faced by businesses today. Rather than expending valuable hours and eyestrain assessing technical documents or interviewing dozens of cloud vendors, using ROI Networks as a resource allows management to focus on the more important aspects of running successful operations and growing revenue.

ROI Networks' newest product offering, [ROIingage](#), focuses on the full array of business collaboration tools housed in the cloud. By carefully assessing a company's current state and future objectives, a custom-designed solution is crafted to transform the way the organization functions. Gone are the daily annoyances and woes caused by old technology, evolving

²Appterra, "20 Fun Facts about Cloud Integration for 2015," 2015, <<http://tinyurl.com/hgkh4ya>>.

³Thinkingphones, "Seven Weekly Stats: Unified Communications in 2015," 2015, <<http://tinyurl.com/jgkx2vt>>.

⁴Betanews, "Comparing cloud vs on-premise? Six hidden costs people always forget about," 2014, <<http://tinyurl.com/nmwtjp6>>.



technology, and increasing security requirements. Lost customers, security issues, and financial stresses disappear as ROI Networks creates a perfectly fitting solution and helps make the transition painless and efficient.

Through one comprehensive service, a company can experience a wide variety of benefits, including:

- >> **Gain Flexibility:** Increase your ability to support steady growth or seasonal spikes.
- >> **Boost Efficiency:** Get more done in less time. Refocus resources on your business goals.
- >> **Increase Speed:** Produce quick turnarounds for the C-level, and stay nimble enough to meet changing product requirements and demands.
- >> **Reduce Risk:** MPLS offers a secure closed private network that is fully monitored and managed. The ROIingage Network Operations Center's response to potential issues is rapid.
- >> **Lessen Growing Pains:** Navigate the financial risks associated with business growth.
- >> **Simplify On-boarding:** Deployment is easier with customer classroom-based systems, training videos, and more.
- >> **Streamline:** Simplify management of multiple vendors.
- >> **Control Costs:** Everything is bundled into the seat price.
- >> **Guarantee:** If something is not a right fit, walk away from your contract.

The cloud holds immense potential, but may not be the perfect fit for every company. ROI Networks is focused on creating the best solution to fit each unique set of business needs, whether by way of the cloud or traditional on-premise hardware. Through ROIingage, make strides above the competition and improve in all areas of company operations.

Contact ROI Networks to start the cloud conversation today.

