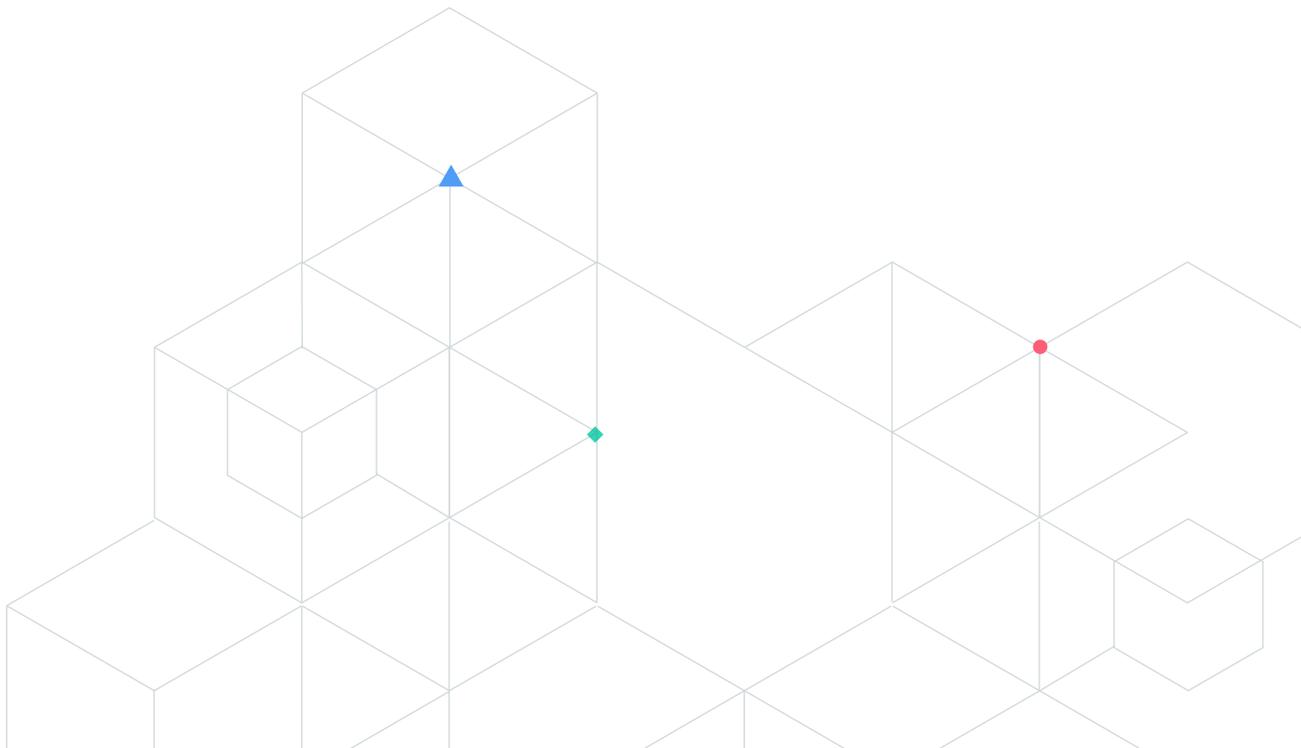




Busting the Top 10

Cloud Computing Myths



As the cloud heads into its second decade,

most if not all of the security and stability issues that dogged it in its earliest years have been put to rest. But even with the cloud quickly becoming business's safest, most reliable, and affordable computing option, some of the most persistent myths about the cloud remain. All of these will eventually fade away with increased usage. But until it does, we've provided you with the ammo and information you need to dispel the top myths blocking many cloud business discussions.

Myth #1

The cloud is not as secure as on-premises systems.

The reality

The Internet makes both cloud and on-premises delivery vulnerable to the same threats, but the cloud has some built-in advantages for safeguarding itself.

With their massive size and scale, top-tier cloud providers like Amazon and Microsoft have far more resources to dedicate to security than any single on-premises data center. As a result, hackers have now turned their attention to enterprise on-premises systems, where aging and mismatched infrastructure and less sophisticated security mechanisms make them more vulnerable to attack.

Myth #2

The cloud gives you less flexibility and control.

The reality

Cloud-based systems and software are more agile and configurable.

Cloud systems and software are inherently more flexible, giving businesses the ability to add and remove capabilities, quickly leverage new features and innovations, and even adjust capacity on demand as needs grow or contract. Conversely, any alteration—or even update—to an on-premises system typically requires costly and/or time-consuming development.

Myth #3

Cloud software is difficult and expensive to integrate with on-premises systems.

The reality

New tools make it increasingly easier for business users to integrate data between cloud and on-premise systems.

As the mixed cloud and on-premise (also known as hybrid cloud) environment has become the new norm for business, the providers of cloud and on-premises (and separate third-party integration) solutions have stepped in with a number of tools and technologies to make hybrid integration easier and less expensive. In fact, many of these tools place the ability to import/export and transform data into the hands of the business users themselves.

Myth #4

Users don't get the same level of support as they would from internal IT.

The reality

Whether for cloud or on-premises software, user support is still the responsibility of the IT help desk. As companies migrate more solutions to the cloud and outsource security, maintenance, and upgrades to the software vendors, IT increasingly will be left with more time and capability to support users with the everyday use of the programs.

Myth #5

Cloud systems are not as stable or reliable.

The reality

Scale and redundancy make the cloud inherently more reliable than on-premises installations.

Today's cloud has built-in advantages that make it far more stable and reliable than any internal data center could ever hope to be. Chief among those is that the cloud is made up of a vast network of redundant servers that can spread the load at times of high stress or individual data center failure. Add to that the fact that most cloud software providers' reliability plans include multiple points of redundancy and together they give you a level of uptime few on-premises solutions can match.

Myth #6

You don't get the same level of visibility or amount of auditability with the cloud as you do with on-premises systems.

The reality

Cloud providers, like Amazon, give their customers powerful auditing tools that allow for the easy logging and review of all user activity.

One by-product of the rapid growth in cloud adoption has been an increased focus by cloud providers on transparency and auditability. As a result, providers like Amazon give their customers powerful auditing tools that allow for the easy logging and review of all user activity. In turn, cloud software vendors can provide the same visibility to their customers, along with regular audit reports that confirm that their security and privacy processes and protocols are being followed.

Myth #7

The cloud is great for commerce but not for business applications.

The reality

From office productivity and ERP to HR, cloud-based business applications are quickly moving up the stack and taking over core business services.

With so much attention dedicated to online commerce, it's easy to forget how vital the cloud is to every other aspect of our working lives. The cloud offers businesses an agility—to scale with growth, add and upgrade features on demand, and act immediately—that they simply cannot get with an on-premises solution. With the average company now using more than 1,100* cloud services, the business cloud is here to stay and is only going to gain in adoption and prominence.

Myth #8

Cloud software is more costly to run and maintain.

The reality

Comparisons typically don't take into account IT infrastructure and maintenance, which can easily surpass cloud costs over time.

On-premises cost calculations typically only take into account the cost of the software and not the network and servers that run it. When you consider all the costs that it takes to manage the underlying IT infrastructure—including completely replacing it every 3-5 years—the costs for an on-premises system can easily surpass that of cloud in a few short years. And that doesn't even take into account the opportunity costs of having less agility or, due to the large up-front costs, a lack of cash for revenue-producing investments.

Myth #9

On-premise systems are quicker and better at disaster recovery.

The reality

Multiple geographically distributed backup centers make the cloud better at disaster recovery.

Unlike on-premises systems, cloud services typically maintain a complete backup of their systems and databases at two or more sites that are geographically distributed from their primary server. This inoculates them against natural disasters or other location-specific failures. These backup systems, like the primaries, utilize the latest hardware and technology and can be quickly spun up and made operational in the event of disaster or other event that causes the primary system to fail.

Myth #10

The cloud gives users less control over their information.

The reality

New innovations, like customer-managed keys, give cloud users equal control over their information.

As the cloud has evolved, it has adapted to the needs of businesses that require greater information security, access and control. With innovations like the customer-managed key, cloud software customers can now have complete control over the encryption of their data. Other controls allow them to choose the geographical location of their data centers or request a complete copy or wipeout of their data.