



Liquid Web

Cloud Computing Delivers Growth Opportunities

to SMB IT Leaders Still Uncertain
About the Path Forward

The Status of Digital Transformation

While 79 percent of corporate strategists consider digital transformation a company priority, the shift to a digital-first business strategy among small and mid-size businesses (SMBs) has been slow, at best.¹

That is, until the **COVID-19 pandemic struck.**



Cloud Computing May Be the Answer

Over the past year, always-on remote access, on-demand collaboration, heightened security, and the integration of previously disparate networks have transformed from nice-to-have capabilities to immediate necessities for business survival and ongoing growth.

Cloud computing is delivering on these demands. *The Flexera 2021 State of the Cloud Report* presents survey results of global cloud decision makers and their increase in cloud adoption. Sixty-one percent of businesses surveyed plan to make cloud computing initiatives their top priority in 2021, and 59 percent will focus on cloud migration.²

According to the report, SMBs are rushing to the cloud. They expect to **place two-thirds of their workload and data in the public cloud within the next 12 months**. While the COVID-19 pandemic caused an increase in cloud adoption, the value realized by businesses has been eye-opening. The increase in business continuity, for example, is causing them to consider **cloud computing as a foundational IT element** in their long-term business strategy rather than simply a quick fix for a short-term challenge.

Over half of survey respondents also revealed they are considering moving a portion of their **sensitive company and customer data** to the cloud, demonstrating their growing confidence in the security measures implemented by cloud providers.

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Shifting Technology Responsibilities

The COVID-19 pandemic is showing a bright light on the many benefits cloud computing provides. Some IT professionals, however, are still cautious about migrating their organization's IT infrastructure to the cloud.

IT leaders like yourself have experienced a dramatic shift in business and IT requirements over the past year, and you may still be uncertain about the right path forward. Many leaders are wary about what the cloud might mean for them and their organization.

Typical Areas of Concern



Loss of Control

Understandably, handing over some of your company's most critical assets can cause anxiety. While this may feel like a loss of control, it is simply a **shifting of tactical responsibilities**.

Yes, you are moving your data to a third-party data center, but you are still very much in charge of what happens with that data. That includes how it is accessed, stored, secured, and maintained. You are the one making the decisions, just not doing the work.



Insufficient Security

Security is arguably the number one concern of businesses considering cloud migration. Will unauthorized users be able to access your data? Are patches and updates implemented as soon as they are made available?

Sophisticated, multilevel security measures are what help define a reputable cloud provider. Their robust network infrastructure, patch and software updates, ongoing testing, and highly trained staff of security experts continuously provide a greater level of security than the typical business could ever implement on its own.



Inconsistent Performance/Uptime

If the last year has taught us anything, it is that data must be accessible 24/7, on-demand, and from any location for a business to survive and thrive. Even five or ten minutes of downtime can result in lost sales.

That's why **redundancy, enhanced network connectivity, and always-on availability** are integral to a purpose-built cloud environment. A reliable cloud provider makes this a priority by including a 100% network uptime guarantee or SLA (Service Level Agreement) in their contract.

The Cloud Brings Growth Opportunities for You and Your Company

The cloud enables you to transition from reactively handling tactical IT challenges to proactively developing, enhancing, and securing an IT infrastructure that propels company processes and business goals forward.



Business Continuity

Cloud-based data replication and infrastructure/network redundancy **eliminate the threat of business downtime** from on-premise power cuts, hardware failures, network outages, and natural disasters. Replication and redundancy enable your team to continue to close sales, collaborate on projects, and interact with vendors with no impact on their productivity.



Security

Data security is not just a top priority for large, well-known companies. Small businesses are just as vulnerable to cyberattacks. Cloud providers are responsible for their clients' security, and they take it very seriously. **Multilevel security measures, around-the-clock monitoring, and security specialists** trained in preventing the latest cyber threats mean that security is a priority, not an afterthought. Robust encryption and the ability to adjust security settings and restrictions to your specific needs provide a high level of confidence that your data is in good hands.



Consolidation

The integration of disparate technologies, improved security, streamlining of infrastructure assets, and the ability to meet compliance requirements with ease can all be realized with data center consolidation in the cloud. The uptick in remote work by companies of all sizes requires a renewed focus on **efficient operations, elevated collaboration, and optimized resource management**. Cloud consolidation enables your business to operate most efficiently for ongoing growth.

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Cost Efficiency

Cost-effective cloud resources **increase your business' profitability**. Cloud computing eliminates the upfront expense of purchasing excess server hardware in anticipation of future needs and provides considerable cost savings using economies of scale. You are only required to pay for the services used at any given time. Nothing more.



Go-to-Market/Rapid Deployment

This scalability also drives an increase in agility and productivity. The ability to **configure, test, deploy, and refresh your IT environments** and applications on the fly enables you to develop and deploy the most in-demand and innovative solutions rapidly. You will be able to dramatically shrink your go-to-market timeline and stay well ahead of your competitors.



Scalability

The ability to purchase and pay for only the cloud resources you need means that you can **start small, easily add IT resources as you grow, and scale back as your business requirements or market forces change**. For example, a business that sees a 50% sales increase over the holidays can quickly and easily add IT resources as they ramp up their staff for the holiday rush and just as quickly remove those resources when the post-holiday demand has returned to normal.



Support/Management

Because the cloud provider maintains all hardware, software, and infrastructure resources, they deliver the **highest level of IT management and support** without you needing the expertise or personnel to do it yourself. This single provider also enables you to call one number to deploy new applications, onboard employees, increase or decrease resources as needed, or ask questions. Consolidation to a single provider reduces the time and resources required for ongoing management.

The Cloud Can Be an Extremely Effective, Profitable Resource

We at Liquid Web are **cloud experts**, working with you to develop the perfect cloud solution for your needs, jumping in when you need help, and letting you take the reins when that's important to you.

Here are some questions to get you thinking about what business needs the cloud could positively impact, whether you choose public, private, or hybrid cloud:

- What are your company's **growth goals and objectives** over the next **three to five years**? That includes revenue, product portfolio, and employee growth.
- What **industry changes and customer demands** will impact how you do business in the future?
- What are your company's **short-term strategic goals** for the next year? How could the cloud help improve the tactical elements?
- Which **workloads and applications** can you move to the cloud, and which can you not?
- What level of **redundancy/always-on availability** do you need on a daily basis as well as during a cloud migration?
- Are you required to meet **regulations or privacy requirements** that would impact what and how data is moved to the cloud?

Take The Next Step

It's often challenging to answer these questions on your own. **That's where Liquid Web comes in.** We are experts at working closely with IT professionals, listening intently, and helping you develop a custom cloud solution that meets today's needs and tomorrow's goals – with you involved every step of the way.

Cloud Solutions:

- VMware Private Clouds
- Public Cloud Servers
- High Availability Hosting
- Hybrid Clouds
- Custom Solutions

All Solutions Include:

- Fully Managed with 24/7/365 On-Site Expert Support
- Standard DDoS Protection & Firewall
- Server Secure Hardening
- Proactive Monitoring & Maintenance



Need Help Finding a Cloud Solution that Fits Your Specific Requirements?

Talk with a Liquid Web Cloud Hosting Advisor Now.

1-800-580-4985 | 1-517-322-0434

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¹ Speed Up Your Digital Business Transformation by Jackie Wiles, Gartner
<https://www.gartner.com/smarterwithgartner/speed-up-your-digital-business-transformation/>

² 2021 State of the Cloud Report, Flexera
<https://resources.flexera.com/web/pdf/report-cm-state-of-the-cloud-2021.pdf>