EXECUTIVE BRIEF

Why move to the cloud now?

As businesses seek to rebuild or accelerate their operations post-COVID, agile infrastructures will play a key part of keeping ahead in a competitive environment. Now that the challenges of COVID have made cloud's efficiency and flexibility even more important, those left behind will find themselves at a competitive disadvantage that will continue to widen.

Cloud-based enterprise software provides businesses with agile platforms that enable quicker responses to market challenges, better data to base business decisions on, and the flexibility to seize new opportunities, all while meeting customers' changing needs.

Aware of these benefits, the real question that customers and investors will ask: Why isn't your business already operating within the cloud?

> 66 **Infor CloudSuite gives us the agility and transparency we need as our value chain becomes more global and more complex. We now have complete confidence that Infor CloudSuite is the right platform for our global business."**
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> LACHLAN FARRAN
> Chief Operating Officer, Rip Curl

Transform IT into a revenue multiplier

Come 2025 and beyond, CIOs will shoulder greater strategic responsibilities across the business as they are tasked with improving revenue generation while enabling new products and services. As things stand, IT already tends to focus on supporting business goals and processes beyond maintaining already-existing applications.

IT teams are now the system architects of the executive team's empire-building visions, whether those include expansion into new countries, providing new products or services that require new business processes, or squeezing more efficiency from current workflows. They use the cloud to deliver efficiency and scale, with **IDC research indicating** that "by 2023, 40% of the G2000 will reset cloud selection processes to focus on business outcomes rather than IT requirements."

According to Deloitte's latest **Tech Trends 2022** report, "Over the next 18 to 24 months, we expect to see a growing number of organizations across market sectors begin exploring ways that industry clouds can help them meet unique vertical needs."

With cloud-based software, CIOs can delegate day-to-day software management to a cloud-based software provider and focus their team's time on value-added initiatives for the organization. Instead of using technology to keep the lights on, they can extract insights that help them develop and deliver new products and services.

Innovate faster to grasp opportunities

On-premises and legacy systems encourage companies to focus their IT resources on maintaining existing infrastructure. They become stuck in a defensive operational mode, with little time or budget to expand or innovate.

COVID and increasing digitization rates are generally showing firms that they need to be more strategic with their IT, delivering initiatives that can facilitate organizational change. Cloud-based business solutions empower an organization to grow and take risks—allowing them to pursue new business opportunities without adding expensive infrastructure.

Convert software from a capital to an operational expense

Cloud-based software can help free up capital while giving a company the flexibility to meet evolving operational needs. By switching IT spend from capital investment, companies will have access to funds for expansion and new business initiatives, and the ability to respond to growing market opportunities more quickly.

The always up-to-date nature of cloud makes it possible to take advantage of new, innovative functionality more quickly and cost-effectively than was historically possible. If an initiative succeeds, it can be scaled rapidly and seamlessly to a wider audience. If it fails, the project can be quickly changed or shut down.

Cloud solutions provide an unprecedented level of flexibility, enabling companies to foster a culture that's more conducive to implementing new and innovative ideas—not just within IT, but throughout the entire organization.

Driving innovation and global growth

For many organizations, emerging markets and remote work comprise the next great business frontier. However, capitalizing on those opportunities was traditionally complex and expensive, as the acquisition of technical skills and equipment to establish such operations is not a trivial undertaking. Combine that with a more complex geopolitical landscape and fast-changing regulations, and it's easy to see how expansion efforts can benefit from the flexibility of the cloud.

Cloud-based solutions allow businesses to establish a new presence rapidly or expand existing operations in virtually any region without having to physically be there, which substantially minimizes both capital investments and risk. As COVID has led to a rise in remote working, cloud more easily supports secure hybrid or remote working for workforces as business needs and government rules continue to change.

Cloud solutions also offer better business outcomes by allowing remote offices to operate seamlessly alongside other business units and headquarters, making it easier to share information regardless of partner or supplier location. Assuming that an organization is working with a robust cloud solution, it will likely have support for multiple languages and currencies, which makes localization much easier to achieve.

Simplify ESG and compliance

On-premises and legacy systems make it complex, expensive, and inefficient to stay aligned with continuous changes in software, security, and regulations. Compliance is an area where cloud-based solutions offer extraordinary benefits to businesses eager to increase productivity and reduce risk. Cloud also simplifies business resources and reporting, helping improve environmental, social, and governance (ESG) initiatives.

In a cloud-based SaaS world, security and compliance updates can be pushed out automatically to the entire organization as soon as they're available. Not only does this simplify the process of keeping systems up to date, it also ensures that everyone in the company has access to the latest information and tools to do their jobs effectively.

Capitalizing on this opportunity to rein in the complexity, cost, and risk of compliance is relevant to nearly every business, yet it's particularly compelling to highly regulated industries such as pharmaceuticals and healthcare. The approach also offers huge value for firms operating in multiple countries, which can make regulatory and compliance challenges even more complex and costly.

Achieve always-on service, globally

In today's economy, downtime means lost revenue. Companies can't afford for critical applications to go offline. If a customer can't do business with a company, the competition will be more than happy to take over. In this "always-on" world, keeping the proverbial lights burning around the clock is fast becoming a business imperative.

The right cloud computing solution is available every day, 24 hours a day, no matter where employees are located or what devices they're using. Because cloud computing providers deploy equipment that is typically far more reliable than anything most companies would use for their own on-premises solutions, they can achieve system uptime levels that are difficult to match.

Decrease risk, increase collaboration and productivity

To do their jobs better, faster, and more flexibly, workers have increasingly turned to **shadow applications** or systems outside of officially sanctioned core IT applications. Personal mobile devices are used to tap into the company network. Teams use personal file-sharing accounts and project management tools to work on projects together.

In short, workers are implementing their own cloud-based solutions to achieve the ease of use and functionality they need but aren't getting from their own IT departments. These applications aren't necessarily "bad," but if used in a context outside of proper security infrastructure and protocols, they can expose businesses to unnecessary risk—theft of intellectual property, lost data, even damage to a company's reputation. With the right cloud-based applications, organizations can help employees to do their jobs more efficiently and more collaboratively. The result: decreased company risk, as employees no longer have to enlist outside sources to optimize job performance.

Taking action

With cloud spending up to over $1.3 trillion by 2025 **according to IDC**, the multi-faceted benefits offered by modernization are compelling. "In today's digital-first world, business outcomes and innovation are increasingly tied to the ability to develop and use innovative technologies and services anywhere, as quickly as possible. Cloud is the foundation for meeting this need," said Rick Villars, GVP, Worldwide Research at IDC.

When an organization gains enterprise-wide flexibility and the capacity to collaborate across all departments, it can swiftly respond to changing markets and expand the business to take advantage of the most impactful new opportunities—ideally, way before the competition.

For more information and a demo, visit **infor.com**.

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