

5 CRITICAL FACTS ABOUT CLOUD COMPUTING

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Cloud computing is an ever-evolving technology. Every single day there are adjustments and improvements. By now, in 2018, the question of moving your business' data to a cloud-based (or hybrid) solution is not an 'if' but a 'when'. Any business that migrates their data to the cloud is significantly less likely to lose that data.

However, before they make any decisions when it comes to their business, a smart entrepreneur does as much research as possible beforehand. We've written blogs about the cloud in the past, but these five critical facts about cloud computing deserve to be emphasized.

FACT ONE

All businesses are vulnerable to cyber attacks. No matter what size

(and the numbers say small businesses are the biggest targets for cyber threats), every single business should be arming itself against hackers, viruses, and malware. This security should absolutely be left to the professionals, as any error could be leaving a back door open for attackers. Cloud computing is a critical factor here - it's essential for recovery. If your data is not backed up locally and in the cloud, you could have a major problem getting your data back and your business up and running.

FACT TWO

Speaking of local backups, a data server located in your office is common in many businesses. While we don't suggest getting rid of your newer server entirely, studies have shown that 80% of businesses

purchased a server with more capacity than they need. This is an expensive piece of hardware that needs replaced every 5 years, on average. It's not necessary to pay for an entire server when you only use 20% of it. This is where cloud computing comes in. The cloud is a pay as you grow solution. Because your data is stored in a massive warehouse full of servers, you only pay for the exact amount of storage your data requires.

FACT THREE

The cloud is everywhere-literally. A cloud based technology called Internet of Things is becoming an essential part of our daily lives. Devices like Alexa, smart home security systems, and Siri are only the beginning. As the IoT

The cloud is everywhere - literally.

develops into more complex systems, they'll be using more and more of the cloud. (Thankfully, the cloud is almost limitless). It's suggested that there will be 20 billion IoT devices by 2020.

FACT FOUR

Even if you don't need your data in the cloud to operate your business, manufacturers for instance, it's unlikely that your office staff feel the same way as your warehouse team. Over 90% of sales and marketing teams need cloud based applications to get their jobs done. Applications like Salesforce, Infusionsoft, and even your website and social media are all cloud-based technologies. If your marketing team isn't keeping your website updated, how will your customers know you exist?

FACT FIVE

An astounding amount of data is being stored in the cloud. It's estimated at 1.1ZB (that's zetta-byte, which equals a trillion GB. Your cell phone likely has 16GB or 32GB storage capacity). This cloud data is twice what it was last year, and it's only going to grow. Thankfully, we have the technology and the space to make that happen.

Devices like Alexa, smart home security systems, and Siri are only the beginning of the IoT limitless capabilities.

6 Ways To Keep Your Top Employees From Jumping Ship

1. Give them a raise. It's a no-brainer.
2. Offer other financial incentives. Give top performers bonuses based on meeting certain goals, or give departmental bonuses to show you value your team.
3. Add more benefits. Health insurance is a massive factor when employees consider how long to stay at an organization. Dental and vision insurance, as well as a retirement plan, are excellent motivators as well.
4. Be more accommodating. In today's job market, you need to throw employees a bone. Let them leave early for doctors' appointments, work from home when necessary, or even arrange their own schedules if possible.
5. Add more perks. Even something as simple as bringing in a massage therapist to the office once a week can do wonders for morale.
6. Reduce stress. Don't overload your employees and push them to the breaking point. Be reasonable with your demands, and hire an additional team member when necessary.



4 LESSONS FROM THE COACH'S PLAYBOOK

For the business leaders we coach in my organization, it is often easier for them to see where others need to improve and course-correct than it is for them to see which changes they need to make themselves. But it's important that we, as coaches, leaders and entrepreneurs, put as much pressure on ourselves to move forward in our own lives and businesses as we do on others. Here are four ways I've learned to cut through the egos and expectations and help business leaders and their teams achieve their personal bests.

1. LISTEN. THAT'S ALL.

It sounds so simple, but it can be very difficult for people who are used to running the show to begin by listening. In any group of strong personalities, you're going to get a lot of brutal honesty disguised as constructive criticism. But that's okay. As a leader, the best thing you can do is listen and not respond until the other person is finished. Avoid "getting in there" and problem-solving right away. Instead, hear what the other person has to say and consider it carefully before you respond.

2. REALIZE — AND ADMIT! — THAT YOU'RE NOT PERFECT.

You've been running a business for years. You know where you're going and how to get there. But no matter who you are, you've still got a lot to learn. We all do. The minute you think you know it all is the moment it's time to get back to basics. Invite other voices and opinions to weigh in. Troubleshoot areas where you might need help. Get vulnerable.

3. TEAR IT DOWN AND BUILD IT BACK UP.

Step back, look at what you've done in the past and ask, "Is this really the best way?" Find all the things that are not working or could go wrong, and shine a light on them. Then, fix what's broken. Once you get a new plan to a place that feels right, solidify it and put in the work to make it happen.

4. BE A LIFELONG LEARNER.

A superior track coach will always be looking for the best shoes for their team to wear and the most efficient ways to train. Any football coach worth their salt will spend hours watching game videos and developing new plays to help their team win. As a business leader, it's your duty to do the same for your team members. Adopt a student mindset. Read voraciously. And keep your mind open to whatever may come.

PREFERRED IT SECURITY SPOTLIGHT

Staying secure against ransomware doesn't have to be hard. Here are a few tips to get you started right away!

Backup regularly and keep a recent backup copy off-line and off-site. There are dozens of ways other than ransomware that files can suddenly vanish, such as fire, flood, theft, a dropped laptop or even an accidental delete. Encrypt your backup and you won't have to worry about the backup device falling into the wrong hands.

Don't enable macros in document attachments received via email. Microsoft deliberately turned off auto-execution of macros by default many years ago as a security measure. A lot of infections rely on persuading you to turn macros back on, so don't do it!

Be cautious about unsolicited attachments. The crooks are relying on the dilemma that you shouldn't open a document until you are sure it's one you want, but you can't tell if it's one you want until you open it. If in doubt leave it out.

Don't give yourself more login power than you need. Don't stay logged in as an administrator any longer than is strictly necessary and avoid browsing, opening documents or other regular work activities while you have administrator rights.

Patch early, patch often. Malware that doesn't come in via a document often relies on security bugs in popular applications, including Microsoft Office, your browser, Flash and more. The sooner you patch, the fewer holes there are to be exploited.

Want To Know For Sure If Your Data Is Safe?

Thanks to our Done-For-You Disaster Recovery you can rest assured that your data is being backed up in a format that is not only secure, but also easily recovered when you need it.

Your files are automatically backed up every hour locally and over the Internet.

Your data is safe from fire, floods, storms, viruses, hackers, hardware malfunctions, and human error! With image-based and file level backups, your data is immediately accessible even during a disaster.

Should a disaster occur, you can be back up and running the very same day...we **GUARANTEE** it.

Preferred IT Group will provide the hardware required, **absolutely free.**

Learn more at www.preferreditgroup.com/dfydr



OUR COMMUNITY

It's the month of **SOCKTOBER.**

Preferred IT is helping the local homeless shelters in Fort Wayne and Columbia City this year with a sock drive.

We'd love your help!

Please drop off a pair or two of new socks to our office - or give us a call and we'd be happy to bring you a box to leave in your office for the month of October.

We'll be collecting through October 31st.



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