



Moving Forward with the Cloud: It's No Longer *If*, But *When*

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In today's world, there's absolutely no denying the captivating hold that cloud-based technology has on nearly every facet of our society. It's expanded far beyond personal use – originally used as an instant way to store and share photos, documents and digital mementos – and has become a true mainstay in business operations. In fact, a survey titled, "Diving into Cloud Services," conducted by Spiceworks, the professional network for IT, found that approximately 93% of organizations had already begun using a cloud-based service in some capacity by early 2016. This statistic has only continued to rise exponentially over the past year, with unparalleled growth in terms of product advancement and depth of market penetration.

For the construction and real estate industries, this upward trend has proven to be no different. Moving data storage and server management to a virtual, cloud-based solution can allow for easy, remote access to critical data across various internal departments and partners – from the back office to the field or job site – all while offering heightened security to ensure data integrity remains intact. This fluid accessibility to crucial datasets can significantly improve upon project management, operational efficiency and internal communications by making data readily available to pertinent parties almost instantaneously, while still establishing security measures and redundancies that far exceed any that can be feasibly employed for an on-site server. In many instances, the remote servers attached to most cloud-based solutions are housed in intensely protected datacenters, often regulated by strict federal or military-grade security mandates, offering a nearly impenetrable quality of data security that has become increasingly sought-after in a world that seems rife with threats of data breaches and loss.

But perhaps what is most intriguing about the industry-wide trend in embracing the cloud is that the most popular reason for adoption is not necessarily trained in on cost savings or to enhance data security measures. While the cost savings in migrating to cloud-based server management are no less substantial – offering a total cost of ownership that amounts to approximately 79% less than the annual expenses associated with maintaining, upgrading and securing most traditional in-house servers – it's the business agility that has appealed to most business owners. Cloud-based solutions provide a level of scalability that can almost immediately respond to growth within the business itself or across the industry, as a whole. This kind of flexibility and technological elasticity is almost unheard-of when considering in-house data storage options, and has proven to be the most attractive quality for those deciding on whether to adopt a virtual server management solution. In fact, a survey conducted by the Harvard Business Review Analytic Services in February 2017 among 347 business leaders showed that

49% of organizations interviewed viewed business agility and flexibility as the primary driving force and reason they would consider the adoption of more cloud systems or a hybrid cloud architecture. It's all about staying competitive; by being able to rapidly evolve with the industry, businesses can respond more readily to emerging opportunities and combat new risks that have cropped up in the market. In moving over to a more modern, cloud-based IT infrastructure – one that presents the optimal ability and true sense of malleability to expand upon features or constrict data access as needed – can be a core, invaluable contributing factor to an organization's future success in this industry.

That's why, at Cornerstone, we developed our Sapphire Cloud Services offerings. In partnership with telecommunications giant, CenturyLink, we've created a powerful, truly cost-effective virtual server management solution, specifically geared to respond to the needs and ever-changing expectations of the construction and real estate industries. With the two plans we have available – Sapphire Prime and Sapphire Principal – we're aiming to be right in line with the broad spectrum of demands we hear daily from our customers. You'll achieve that coveted quality of business agility to mold the solution and storage to fit your needs, and backed by the strength of vigorous data security and server reliability, you'll increase profits, decrease data loss and secure your organization's future.

At Cornerstone, we've been around for more than 30 years, so we know precisely what it's like to have to change with the times. We've been able to sit back, take stock of the swift progress in recent years and have recognized that the decision for businesses to move to the cloud is no longer a question of *if*, but *when* – and we're here as a trusted adviser to make sure that your transition is smooth, simple and affords you more game-changing opportunities to grow and thrive.

To learn more about Cornerstone's Sapphire Prime and Sapphire Principal Cloud Services, please visit www.cornerstonesapphire.com, or email Client Advocate, Dominic Pernai at dominicpernai@corner-sol.com. For more background on Cornerstone Solutions' long-standing dedication to providing construction and real estate partners with an innovative, solution-oriented approach, please visit www.corner-sol.com.