

**Unleash your  
potential with  
Managed Cloud  
Services**

**The Cloud is an essential platform for which to build a modern, successful business. However, many organizations that have indeed migrated to the cloud are failing to make the most of their investment in cloud technology. The primary causes for this are skills and experience gaps in-house, limited operational readiness, and the struggle to gain control over costs.**

*This eBook will outline:*

- The role of the cloud in today's business landscape*
- The main challenges to making the most of the cloud and how to overcome them*
- How Softchoice's approach to Managed Cloud Services can drive your business forward*

# Why the Cloud is crucial

Why the Cloud is Crucial

Organizations must continually innovate to keep up with the rate of change and disruption. To do so, business leaders are expected to increase productivity while reducing costs. If organizations are to compete and withstand disruption, they need the agility and mobility that is offered by the cloud.

More and more organizations either operate solely in the cloud, in a hybrid environment (where IT is situated both in the cloud and on-premises) or are planning their cloud migration.

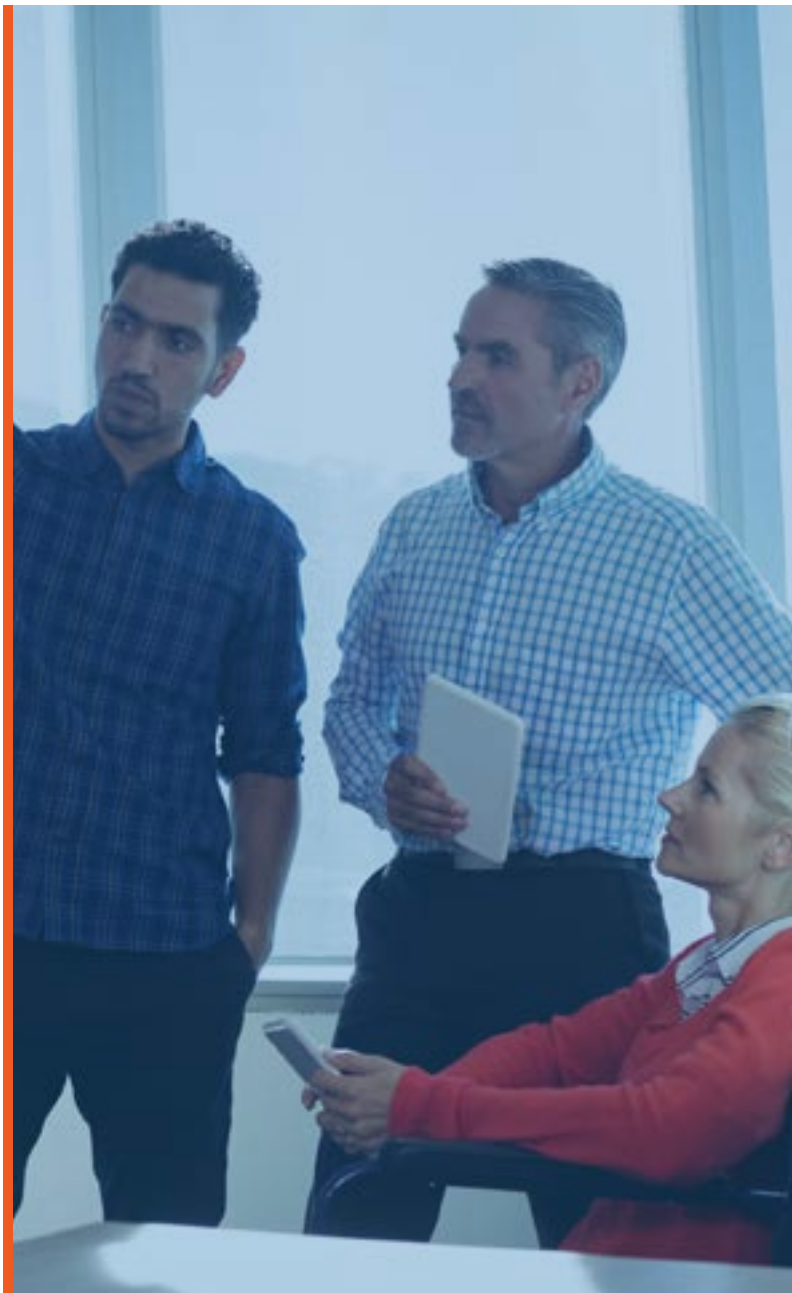
This is backed up by research from leading analysts like Gartner:

## \$186.4b

The public cloud services market grew to \$186.4 billion in 2018

## Yes Cloud

'No-cloud policies', once common in the enterprise, will be as rare by 2020 as a 'no-internet policy' is today





The cloud is now a critical part of any organization's strategy to compete in the modern world. The cloud facilitates collaboration and communication in an increasingly flexible and mobile workplace, increasing productivity. Users can access the tools they need to get their work done anywhere, any time, and on any device. Organizations are more agile and ready to innovate as a result. Cloud environments also function on a pay-per-need basis. This allows organizations to reduce costs by only paying for the computing power that they currently use - and no more.

Similarly, organizations can scale up and down as required, increasing and decreasing their IT power (compute, storage, etc.) where appropriate.

But these benefits are only available to organizations that are managing the cloud optimally.

IT in the cloud needs to be managed, just as on-premises IT has been managed in the past. However, the cloud poses a whole host of new challenges for organizations whose practices have roots in on-premises IT environments.

<sup>1</sup>Gartner. 2018. Forecast Analysis: Public Cloud Services, Worldwide, 4Q17 Update. Available online at: <https://www.gartner.com/en/newsroom/press-releases/2018-04-12-gartner-forecasts-worldwide-public-cloud-revenue-to-grow-21-percent-in-2018>

<sup>2</sup>Gartner. 2016. Gartner says by 2020 a corporate "no-cloud" policy will be as rare as a "no-internet" policy is today. Available online at: <https://www.gartner.com/newsroom/id/3354117>

# Three challenges to a successful cloud migration

There are three challenges that organizations face when it comes to managing the cloud.

*These are:*

- *Skills and experience gap* **01**
- *Operational readiness* **02**
- *Cost allocation and optimization* **03**



# Skills and experience gap

Organizations have been operating on traditional on-premises IT for decades. Many organizations' work cultures have evolved around this set-up – the accompanying working practices, skills, and expertise are ingrained in their DNA.

For example, organizations may find that the resources available within the IT department are not suited to managing the cloud. The repercussions of this can affect the whole business – for instance, slow issue resolutions resulting in downtime and reduced productivity.

The right skills are also required for developing the right cloud strategy. One of the first steps should be to develop a cloud strategy and roadmap that nurtures a cloud-

first culture and prioritizes user adoption across the organization.

However, bringing in the right people with the right skills can be harder than expected, and expensive. As the cloud becomes more ubiquitous, the market for employees with these skills is competitive, and resources are expensive to acquire and retain. What's more, a slow and expensive recruitment process can delay the execution of an organization's cloud strategy. Organizations can lose their competitive edge if they are unable to adopt the cloud fast enough.

Just how real is this problem? According to our research, 96% of IT leaders acknowledge that their organization has a skill gap.

## How to overcome the challenge

Build up your existing team's cloud competency without sacrificing IT performance by bringing in expertise from outside your organization.

Access to ongoing, proactive mentorship from knowledgeable cloud experts can empower your employees to achieve more in the cloud, from managing IT on a day-to-day basis to developing a cloud strategy and

roadmap for the future of your organization.

By extending your IT team in this way, you can lighten the load on your employees and provide the opportunity to learn directly from proactive cloud mentorship. This will help you speed up cloud adoption, build up the skills and experience in your team, and accelerate the move to the cloud.



# Lack of operational readiness

Neglecting the cloud leaves organizations out of touch with how businesses operate today. For instance, customers can be tempted away by competitors that can go to market quicker and provide a better customer experience. Yet, failing to manage the cloud sufficiently can be just as unfavorable.

Organizations that are built around operational procedures developed for on-premises IT will find that they cannot benefit from the advantages of the cloud. Rather than becoming a modern and competitive enterprise, organizations risk low levels of cloud adoption. This will lead to unused cloud benefits, poor productivity and a breakdown in processes, communication, and information sharing. The things that began as the main reasons to migrate to the cloud remain out of reach.

There is also a risk of downtime and degraded performance if systems fail. If workers can't access the tools or documents they need, the cost to your business can spiral out of control as larger issues, such as customer experience, begin to suffer as a result.

An even more serious concern is security. Without strong governance processes and controls to monitor and manage role-based access to the cloud, unauthorized access can be a problem. Research from Gartner states that 95% of cloud security failures are caused by improper configurations. Organizations of all sizes are being targeted by cybercriminals, and the threat is existential to many businesses. If the cloud is not supported and managed correctly, it becomes a huge risk.

## How to overcome the challenge

To avoid downtime and security risks, you need to implement the right processes and controls to optimize your cloud environment. The basis of this should involve proactive monitoring of both performance and security.

With ongoing insight and remediation, you can stay on top of your cloud performance at all times. This provides the insight and tools to solve issues before they become major problems, and it also illuminates areas for continuous improvement and optimization. Likewise, automating workload deployments can increase efficiency, reduce human error, and lead to less disruption.

You can minimize security risks by taking a robust approach to identity, access, and policy management. For instance, with role-based access control, you can ensure that only the right people are accessing your cloud environment.

However, to drive your cloud performance to the next level and to build truly robust security, ongoing mentorship from cloud experts is key. Finding the right partner to build up cloud competency in these areas is essential.

<sup>3</sup>Softchoice. 2018. The State of Cloud Readiness Fall 2018: IT leaders are lost in the cloud. Available online at: <https://www.softchoice.com/about-softchoice/news-and-insights/research/state-of-cloud-readiness-study>

<sup>4</sup>Gartner. 2018. 2Q 2018 Emerging Risks Report and Monitor. Available online at: <https://www.gartner.com/en/newsroom/press-releases/2018-08-15-gartner-says-cloud-computing-remains-top-emerging-business-risk>



# Cost allocation and optimization

The cloud provides an opportunity for organizations to cut costs: to do more with less. By optimizing application usage, organizations can strip down their IT set-up to the bare essentials, if they so desire, and add more applications and compute as they need it. This allows organizations to operate in a lean and agile manner, which can impact greatly on its productivity and competitiveness.

Yet, the cloud is a complex beast, and so is cloud billing. The processes and policies that need to be implemented for optimizing costs can be time-consuming and difficult to manage. For instance, it can be hard to:

- Forecast and set budgets as the company grows
- Administer chargeback or consumption reports to departments consuming cloud

Overspending is a common consequence of the confusion around cloud usage, spending and billing. And if the procedures aren't set up to monitor cloud usage on a departmental basis, you can end up without accountability for cloud spend. In fact, organizations that manage the cloud sufficiently through Softchoice's Managed Cloud Services have an opportunity to save 35% of what they are currently spending in the cloud.

## How to overcome the challenge

Getting cost optimization and allocation right should be a key priority when defining your cloud strategy. You need a structured plan to manage, monitor and optimize cloud spend.

There are several ways to get on top of cloud cost. As you pay for what you use in the cloud, you need to develop the means to monitor usage and spend in real-time. You also need to introduce a structured process

for automated spend alerting and spend remediation across the entire organization at project, department, or service-levels.

There are many tools on the market to optimize costs. Without the right people, processes, or management, however, your cloud environment will not operate to the optimal standard.

<sup>5</sup>RightScale. 2018. State of the Cloud. Available online at: <https://www.rightscale.com/lp/state-of-the-cloud>



# Managed Cloud: The Softchoice way

How organizations manage their cloud environment is crucial to its success. Therefore, more and more organizations are deciding to trust experts to help run and manage their cloud environment. Softchoice's Managed Cloud Services provides organizations with the tools, support, expertise, and experience to make adopting the cloud a success. The Softchoice approach to Managed Cloud is unique, comprehensive, and built around expertise and mentorship. It has been built off the back of hundreds of cloud engagements and has been continually developed with the help of a large community of experts. All of this is given back to your team through ongoing mentorship.

**There are three pillars which underpin Softchoice's unique approach, each tackling one of the main challenges presented earlier in this eBook:**

*These are:*

- *Support and mentorship*
- *Operational management*
- *Cost management*

## Support and mentorship

Mentorship is a core part of Softchoice's Managed Cloud Services offering. Softchoice offers two types of mentorship: proactive mentorship and unlimited technical mentorship.

With the proactive mentorship program, the Softchoice team actively engage with yours to ensure that you are best placed to make the most of the cloud.

With the unlimited technical mentorship, support from Softchoice's experts is available at any time. Support includes operational guidance, best practices, upgrade direction, and new feature enablement.

Softchoice also run exclusive cloud events and publish exclusive whitepapers and webinars to continually enhance your IT team's cloud knowledge.

## Operational management

When it comes to operational management, Softchoice can implement cloud management standards and operational best practices. This includes identity and access management, snapshot and restoration services, and operating system patching. But, crucially,

Softchoice offers ongoing 24x7 support including remediation of performance and availability issues to keep everything in working order, so you can focus on what matters to your business.

## Cost management

Softchoice's cost allocation and optimization offering is a four-pronged approach. It covers cloud spend insights, policy management, cost allocation, and ongoing recommendations. The recommendations are wide-ranging and aim to help you uncover waste and then identify a remediation plan.

Softchoice also offers cloud budgeting with insights that cover both historical and future cloud spend; and automated cost allocation enables chargebacks and visibility to cost by project and department. This, together with ongoing mentorship, helps you optimize the cost of the cloud and make large savings.



# Customer success story: building confidence in the cloud

The Groupe Média TFO (TFO) offers a public resource of rich educational and cultural experiences for children in the French language. Its public-facing websites represent more than 200 web properties including the TV shows and other online multimedia content.

“ The Softchoice team has been instrumental in helping us build confidence. ”

*Giles Lebon, IT Manager, TFO*

TFO partnered with Softchoice to take advantage of our Managed Cloud services, and the results have been extremely positive. TFO was able to transition the web infrastructure to the public cloud rapidly and continues to realize benefits from efficiency and flexibility. TFO recently expanded web services from 12 school boards to hundreds

within Ontario and around the world – this kind of scale would have been unachievable based on a traditional architecture. With Softchoice’s Managed Cloud services, TFO was able to scale the web infrastructure quickly to achieve access for nearly 100,000 visitors.

Softchoice continues to partner with TFO. Through Our Managed Cloud services, TFO gains access to 24X7 access to incident management, ongoing mentorship and cloud analytics.

### *The long list of positive outcomes includes:*

**Cost of service delivery** – reduced costs by 20-30%

**SLAs & redundancy of architecture** – mitigated the risk of mission critical web infrastructure downtime

**More with less** – the new public cloud model helped a nimble team achieve greater focus on applications and business goals

**Removed aging hardware and upgrades** – self patching and extended quality assurance cycles associated with aging hardware were eliminated

**Greater flexibility and scalability** - ability to scale quickly and deliver enhanced services



**Unleash the  
potential of the  
cloud: the next  
steps**



**Softchoice offers Managed Cloud services to help organizations succeed with the cloud to unleash the potential of their people and technology. Our Managed Cloud services help organizations save costs, gain expertise and focus on their core business.**

**By meeting with one of our Managed Cloud Services Advisors, they can guide you on how our services can best suit your organization's needs. To learn more about our Managed Cloud Services, get in contact with the Softchoice team.**

# Unleash your potential with Managed Cloud Services

#### Contact Us

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