

## What every business must do before moving to the cloud



### Getting your on-premise architecture and systems in order and ready to integrate with the cloud



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Regardless of size, cloud can help any business that relies on IT to become more efficient, responsive and customer-centric, while reducing risk. Moreover, public cloud doesn't require the sort of upfront expenditure that on-premise hardware would – meaning it's easier from a cost perspective to build a business case to put things into the public cloud.

This puts the benefits seemingly within very close reach. But beware the risks of rushing to the cloud to solve individual tactical issues without thinking about the bigger picture: doing so will invariably create problems for you later on, or mean you don't achieve the benefits you expected. It's vital you lay the groundwork correctly.

#### Don't rush into anything

When all it takes is a credit card number and an internet connection, it becomes very tempting to start spinning up applications and pulling data into the cloud without first considering a broader cloud strategy. We've seen organizations move specific applications or data to the cloud because they believe it will solve tactical challenges they're facing, but without properly considering how the cloud will resolve these. In such cases, because things aren't properly thought-through, the expected benefits are rarely (fully) realized or unexpected issues, such as cloud lock-in, arise. How will your cloud systems link back to on-premise ones, and with future cloud capabilities as you build these out?

As more areas get moved into the cloud in this piecemeal way, you'll end up with a sprawling, siloed, inefficient cloud estate that's difficult and costly to manage. Worse, you could face a future bill to rework things that wipes out any early savings you've made.

On a larger scale, we've seen enterprises shift troublesome legacy architectures wholesale into the cloud and expect problems to go away. This approach rarely works, because the problems you're experiencing have their roots in the underlying architecture and will continue to propagate despite the positive change in network and infrastructure. If your on-premise setup has grown organically and isn't as consolidated or efficient as it could or should be, you need to streamline it before you move anything to the cloud. Otherwise, the problems you face now will continue to plague you.

#### How to start your cloud journey the right way

So while it can seem tempting to get things into the cloud as quickly as possible, a bit of preparation and planning will hugely increase the probability that you'll achieve the benefits you're hoping for.

Central to this should be a proper cloud strategy and architecture that will support your overall business strategy and goals. An equally important part of your preparatory work is to build yourself a solid foundation for cloud by getting your existing on-premise IT architecture, hardware and software in order. And by leveraging enterprise-grade cloud solutions that link seamlessly with on-premise, your cloud strategy becomes a part of your broader IT strategy.

#### What needs to change close to home?

Your enterprise architecture should be your first port of call on your cloud journey. Assess how well it's serving your needs in areas such as scalability, security, availability, manageability and cost-efficiency. Are the licenses you have the right ones in terms of delivering maximum value to your business, or could you rationalize your estate and spend the funds on other Oracle capabilities that better serve your goals?



## What every business must do before moving to the cloud (continued)

Most importantly, how cloud-ready is your architecture?

A key element of this is to review which versions of Oracle you're running. Even though no business will move everything to the public cloud, it's highly recommended you make sure everything is up to date and ready to transition to the cloud, or to integrate effectively with it. Because most cloud offerings use on the latest (or latest-but-one) version of Oracle, you won't be able to transition or link your legacy systems to cloud systems without first upgrading them.

From your assessments, identify a target enterprise architecture that addresses the shortcomings you've identified. Rather than create something from scratch, take advantage of existing architectures that are designed to be cloud-ready and have been tested and proven in organizations like yours. This reduces risk, can speed up delivery and means you'll only procure the Oracle capabilities that you actually need to meet your business's goals.

Then you can put together a roadmap that sets out how you'll get your business fully cloud-ready. As you do this, think about areas that are low-risk but potentially demonstrate significant value, or that can relieve a pressing pain point. Make these the first steps in your cloud journey.

### Looking beyond the technology

So far, the focus has been largely on technology. But to fully enjoy the benefits of cloud, just like with any other disruptive technology, you need to make some fundamental changes to the way your business is structured and operated if you're to enjoy the full benefits.

You need an individual or team to own and champion your cloud strategy and drive its implementation across all layers of the business and infrastructure, including storage, network, databases, systems and people. If you don't, you risk a situation where everyone believes it's someone else's responsibility to deliver the cloud vision, which will delay or derail your drive to make it a reality.

Your company will also need to alter the way it looks at project funding. There's much less upfront capital expenditure in getting a new product to market when the underlying IT is on-demand cloud infrastructure. Instead of looking at returns against the total cost of the project, you can now set a target transaction cost, and

scale your cloud infrastructure to hit this target.

We'll look in detail at some other organizational challenges later in this guide. The main thing to understand from the start of your journey is that cloud represents a transformation that will touch all parts of your business, not just your technology.

### Next steps

Once you have your on-premise architectures and systems in order and ready to integrate with the cloud – and your business understands who will be responsible for delivering the vision – you can start to design and roll out your cloud environment. It's this we'll look at next.





## Your pathway to success

Cintra is a multi-award winning Global Oracle Platinum partner and Enterprise Architecture specialist operating in the Americas, Europe and Asia. Cintra focuses on enterprises undergoing digital transformation strategies in Retail, Financial Services, Gaming and other verticals; becoming a trusted partner for organizations investing in Oracle Business Technology – delivering value by helping architect the digital enterprise.

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### FURTHER READING:

Best Practice Guide: Cloud computing: How you can unleash the benefits in your business

Opinion: Five reasons your business needs cloud

Opinion: Design, implement and manage a successful cloud environment

Opinion: Overcome the challenges of cloud

Case study: GVC Gaming boosts efficiency and reduces costs with an Oracle Exadata and cloud strategy

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