Ensuring Your Cloud Provider Meets Your Business Needs

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Every company has its own needs, yet solution providers often try to force a square peg into a round hole by offering a "one size fits all" cloud solution. Companies that opt for this cloud model must adjust their processes and procedures to the capabilities of the system, while enduring the pain of knowing that the solution does little to address their business needs.

If you own a small business, staying within a budget is an ongoing challenge. Finding a solution provider that can facilitate a migration to the cloud at the right price is logical. A pay-as-you-go model will offer extensive flexibility for the future. Since the price is based on what your organization actually uses, this model helps you and your service provider easily adjust to changes in your business and the surrounding market. Proceed with a budget in mind, but remember that cost should not be a deterrent from finding the right solution.

To ensure your company's needs are met, the following tips should be considered when evaluating a cloud solution provider.

The solution provider should tailor the cloud solution to your company's specific needs. Every business utilizes applications relevant to its own industry, so selecting a cloud solution that does not support these applications negatively impacts productivity and the company's bottom line. The service provider you choose should have the capability to design and implement a solution exclusively for your business, including its unique applications. Invest time in researching and interviewing prospective solution providers, or soliciting opinions of similar-sized companies. The time spent in this phase will be worth it when your company finds a cloud vendor that is able to design, develop and implement a cloud solution that keeps your business operations running smoothly and efficiently.

The relationship with the solution provider should be a partnership. Because of the investment your company is making in migrating to the cloud, a certain amount of trust should be expected between the business and the service provider. This relationship needs to develop into a partnership that lasts through the duration of your contract. During the transition to the cloud, it is not enough for a solution provider to leave your company with the technology and instruction manuals, expecting your staff to complete the process. The cloud provider should be on-site to execute the migration and answer any questions your staff has about the new technology. When the migration is completed, the service provider must be readily available to address concerns and resolve any issues. With an effective partnership in place, your organization can operate with the confidence of knowing it has the necessary resources to achieve its business goals.

Your solution provider should have an eye for the future. As your company strives to stay ahead of the curve in its industry, the solution provider must do the same. Constant innovation and a forward-thinking mentality help solution providers offer cutting-edge solutions and facilitate brainstorming sessions with clients. Leading vendors also look to their customers to understand ways to improve and enhance the product it offers. As the cloud provider continues to improve its solution, your business will reap the benefits of hosting data and applications on an up-to-date technology platform.

Ultimately, the goal for any business is to identify a solution provider that meets and exceeds the needs and goals you already have in place. Selecting a provider that employs the "let's see what makes sense for you" approach when developing a cloud solution will enable you and your staff to maintain peace of mind that your technology is working for you and shift your focus back to being productive and profitable.

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