

## Cloud Computing - Why You Should Be Using It Now

Construction Companies are Taking Advantage of the Cloud



because they can manage their operations without huge investments in equipment and software.”

Unlike big-ticket hardware and software, cloud-based services don't face inevitable obsolescence and replacement because cloud service providers are constantly improving their products, ensuring that upgrading is smooth and painless for their clients. The cost savings of cloud information management are considerable.

A 2011 tracking poll conducted by CDW, a technology solutions provider, found that 84% of surveyed companies that had moved their applications to the cloud reported an average 21% savings over the previous in-house costs. Survey respondents reported that the benefits they derived tracked closely with their organizational goals of consolidating IT infrastructure, reducing IT power consumption, lowering IT capital costs, and improving access. “With benefits like these, there's no reason for a construction company to delay moving to the cloud,” Kafka points out.

It's been said that 2012 was the year of the cloud. In the past year cloud computing technology has been gathering momentum as companies begin to understand the many efficiencies and cost savings that can be realized by eliminating the need to buy, build and maintain in-house IT infrastructure.

The old model of the in-house management information “factory” just doesn't compute in the 21st century,” says Don Kafka, President of ToolWatch. “Companies must be nimble to compete effectively in this new world, and the cloud makes that possible. The cloud isn't tethered to an on-the-ground footprint. It's anywhere and everywhere, accessible to a company's farthest-flung construction site in real time.”

Virtually every corporate operation, on the jobsite and in the home office, can be more efficiently managed by a cloud application. Critical business functions like tool management, warehouse operations, inspections and calibrations, regulatory

compliance; billing, accounting, payroll; and strategic planning, forecasting and reporting, are all readily adaptable to cloud computing at a significant cost saving and efficiency improvement.

“With cloud-based services, there's no need to try to force compatibility among various systems and software packages,” says Kafka. “With the cloud, it's all there and fully integrated.”

Cloud computing is not only integrated but highly scalable. Construction companies can manage equipment and inventory and expand (or cut back) quickly and inexpensively as their fortunes change.

“When business is good, it's fast, easy, and economical to add computing power with cloud-based solutions,” explains Kafka. “In an economic downturn, there's no expensive in-house hardware and software to drain tight resources. And here's a big plus: the cloud puts smaller operations on a more equal footing with their big-shouldered competitors,



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