Rich Snippets

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These days, clouds are no longer annoying collections of little ice crystals that can ruin someone's parade. Clouds can now help your business run more efficiently while helping you keep costs down. Whether you love technology --or despise it-- you've heard of cloud computing. Yes, in IT we have coined the term and marketed really well! Here is our simple metaphor for the tech neophyte: For the power or average user, all computer network elements (provider-rendered services) are invisible…as if obscured by a cloud. Sounds easy and rosy doesn't it? But wait a minute…! Before you start putting everything you have into the atmosphere, make sure you talk to a professional and weigh in all of your options.

Industry experts do agree that small and mid-size business that embrace technology (in particular cloud-based solutions), will fare far better than those who do not. Cloud computing lets you store and access data and applications on the cloud (aka; the internet) instead of having everything on a local computing device. All of your applications, data, and files are stored virtually in the metaphorical cloud, which you can access from anywhere and every where. Everything you do from accounting to operations to marketing can be done remotely (just make sure you are on a secure network). And if you are one of the 900,000 people who leave their laptop in an airport annually, all is not lost, because you'll be able to retrieve everything you need from your own cloud.

Additional Items to Consider:

Here are some aspects to consider before thinking about moving to the cloud:

Hardware: Upfront costs are minimal. With the cloud, you pay a monthly fee to put your data/files on someone else's server. There are multiple free cloud options, up to a predetermined storage limit. Once you are over the limit, you can pay a monthly fee based upon how much storage you use. Some companies will let you try them before you have to commit.

Software Savings: With everything from files and applications stored on the cloud, there's no need to purchase pricy software licenses to any new machines in your office.

Ease: Storing files on the atmosphere saves you time backing everything up, plus you'll no longer have to email documents to your personal e-mail address so you can work from home, or put files on a flash-drive that you might (or usually) leave on your desk at work. Everything you need to do your job from anywhere (as long as there is internet access), can be accessed through the cloud.

However, the gloomy question remains…business owners always want to know about security. For now, if you have something that is top secret—say M&A/buyout info, patents, new marketing strategy, new product/service not release to market yet, etc…keep it off the cloud. Not all clouds are the same and neither are businesses, so do your due diligence, talk to your Agility consultant to help guide you through all options and find out what works best for you and your organization.

Safe Computing Part II

- Configure your Internet Browser to block pop-ups
- Read all advertising and other web site pop-ups carefully before clicking OK.
- When closing pop-ups or advertising windows use the X in the upper right hand corner. Do NOT click any of the buttons (close, OK, Ignore) in the add. If there is no X press ALT-F4 to close the window or use the Task Manger to "kill" the window.
- Save all attachments and downloads, DO NOT SELECT RUN. Once the file is saved you can run your anti-virus program to scan the file and make sure it is not infected before opening.