



Why the corporate world is flying to the cloud

WHITEPAPER



In the last decade, the proliferation of enterprise cloud services has been one of the biggest stories in the world of corporate technology. Offering unprecedented capabilities for scaling, cost management, and streamlined administration, cloud services have quickly moved from a quirky solution for unique use-cases to a foundational tool in corporate tech.

As more development becomes focused on a cloud-native native environment, the imperatives for moving to the cloud only multiply. No longer offering only ease of management, today's cloud-based tools and applications often include best-in-class feature sets. In this context, the cloud becomes not only a cost-management asset but a leading option for optimal performance across almost every prominent enterprise technology stack.

This transformative potential makes it easy to see why the most innovation-focused companies in the world have been flocking to the cloud. Well planned and managed cloud solutions not only offer powerful features and unprecedented agility but constitute a true runway for the next decade-plus of enterprise-focused innovations. The rapidly emerging cluster of AI/Machine Learning use cases, for instance, introduce novel data and computing needs best served by the cloud.

Unfortunately, accessing the present and future benefits of the cloud is rarely simple. Whatever its potential, "cloud" is not a magic word. It requires a sustained long-term investment to achieve these potential benefits in full. And this investment introduces challenges that are preventing far too many enterprises from staying abreast of this vital technology.

This white paper overviews some of the central challenges and opportunities surrounding cloud management, migration, and optimization.

Why too many companies stay grounded?

While the benefits of a cloud-first approach to business technology are readily apparent, the sheer volume of work associated with migrating to the cloud leaves far too many otherwise innovative organizations with sub-optimal technology infrastructure.

What's more, ongoing management of a cloud-based technology portfolio requires specific skillsets and attention to a unique managerial burden that can be inefficient to support with in-house personnel. Cloud service providers abound, and even the foundational task of choosing vendors can be overwhelming for organizations lacking an existing cloud knowledge base.

Hybrid cloud deployments, meanwhile, offer unprecedented flexibility, effectively allowing organizations to choose between the customizability and security of the private cloud and efficiency of the public cloud on a service-by-service basis. This very flexibility, however, represents yet another sprawling technology management challenge: determining which services should be managed privately or publicly for maximum efficiency.

Many businesses are understandably trepidatious of wading into a complex arena where reliability, security, and complexity challenges risk swamping the very benefits the cloud purports to deliver in the first place.

"Demand for SaaS enterprise applications is accelerating and exceeding the demand for on-premise applications by five times [from 2014-2018]" –Christine Dover, IDC Research Director for Enterprise Applications and Digital Commerceⁱ

Talk about complexity! The average enterprise uses 1,427 distinct cloud services, a number that's increasing fast every yearⁱⁱ

The Zen3 Cloud Services Runway

Our portfolio of cloud services addresses different functional needs that point to the same ultimate goal: accessing the powerful benefits of the cloud while avoiding the classic pain points associated with transitioning to and managing an enterprise-scale cloud deployment.

From overseeing migrations, to establishing Dev Ops pipelines, to ongoing support tasks, our team focuses on taking on the most burdensome aspects of cloud management, freeing client technology professionals for more innovation-centric workflows.

Our team, assisted by machine learning and other automation approaches, can handle core cloud management tasks with an efficiency that teams who lack special expertise in enterprise-scale cloud management are hard-pressed to match. We employ various service models tailored to the precise needs of each client, including IaaS, PaaS, and SaaS. With the ability to source cloud specialists from a massive in-house roster and database, we've helped cloud support teams go from zero to global in a matter of weeks.

Our work is integrated with best practices for risk management every step of the way. We proactively identify key risks during each client's cloud journey, developing a framework to avoid classic pitfalls and ensure a lightning fast, low-cost resolution for any unforeseen issues.

These workflows are tightly defined by client-specified outcomes, which we define concretely in terms of CAPEX/OPEX reductions, workflow time reduced, and other measurables. Smart management tools, honed across our many cloud engagements across the globe, keep our team focused on the work that drives the most value for clients' businesses.

Cloud infrastructure is the ultimate forward-facing technology investment. Consequently, we think today's cloud solutions need to be ready to take advantage of rapidly emerging AI-driven applications like Machine Learning. In fact, we take advantage of the power of Machine Learning in support of our hyper-efficient cloud-management practices. Our cloud team has the ability to ensure that any enterprise cloud has the data and computing infrastructure necessary to support AI-driven technologies, which we're seeing become hugely relevant in one industry after the other.

AI-based technologies are the perfect example of how a well thought out cloud deployment can not only achieve unmatched advantages for scaling, cost management, and reliability, but provide a true innovation runway extending decades into the future.

Zen3 Cloud Service Portfolio

Our true full-service cloud portfolio is founded on our commitment to providing the right cloud support structure for any business. Some firms want to build out their own cloud team over the long term, and just need some help picking the right vendors, installing the requisite infrastructure, and overseeing a successful migration. Others are looking for a cloud management partner to take on key administrative tasks over the long term. Some just need help setting up some vital Dev Ops tools.

We have extensive experience with all these varieties of engagements, and more, organizing our cloud services into four core areas:

Cloud Advisory



Some organizations that prefer to manage their own cloud deployments still require targeted assistance with strategic planning, technology selection, and risk mitigation to ensure a timely, smooth transition or seamless new cloud initiative.

From dealing with the intense talent sourcing needs that come with building out a cloud knowledgebase to assisting with complex long-term planning efforts, our advisory teams lend clients our expertise.

Cloud Migration



Whether dealing with business essential applications, large volumes of data, or both, we can help move these assets safely and securely to a proven cloud solution.

Supporting hybrid, public, and private cloud options, our migration services ensure that our client's clouds have rock-solid foundations.

Cloud DevOps Support



Dev Ops methodology enables speed-of-business development without sacrificing professional-grade quality control and testing procedures.

Unique tools help this process work faster and better than ever before in the cloud, enabling development that's tightly aligned with real business concerns rather than tech-centric development processes. Dev Ops support includes establishment of CI/CD pipelines, provisioning of testing automation, and installation of app monitoring tools.

Cloud Operations Support



By taking on the repetitive chores associated with managing an enterprise-scale cloud deployment, we free up client tech teams to focus on innovation.

Our operational support engagements leverage our experience and tooling developed in support of cloud ops for some of the biggest names in technology.

Zen3's cloud operations clients effectively gain access to economies of scale in cloud management that would be inaccessible to almost any individual firm.

The Value of True Cloud Services Partner

Supporting sprawling private, public, and hybrid cloud infrastructure for some of the biggest names in tech, Zen3 has seen the incredible potential of the cloud up close. We've also learned how to unlock that potential while aggressively managing risk, controlling costs, and facilitating a timely, stress-free cloud transition. And learned how to unlock the same power in more restrained, value-conscious contexts.

A High-Efficiency, High Impact, Well-Planned Cloud Solution Can:

- Limit Risk: move essential services without allowing gaps pertaining to security, privacy, and compliance with internal or state regulations
- Protect Data: achieve highly scalable data storage and processing without compromising security for vital corporate data holdings.
- Ensure Performance: by ensuring services are matched with infrastructure that can support bandwidth, latency, uptime, and other core operational requirements.
- Facilitate Agile Development: by enabling dev-ops powered practices tailored to a cloud-native environment where necessary. Faster Proofs of Concept, more responsive technology.

Learning More

If you're interested in discussing what the cloud can do for your enterprise, or how Zen3 can help manage your existing cloud deployment more efficiently and effectively, our Cloud Team is available to talk. Please contact them...

We have experience engaging with projects ranging from routine migrations and short-term advising relationships to sprawling global management efforts supported by dozens Zen3 team members across the globe.

ⁱ<https://www.forbes.com/sites/louiscolombus/2014/12/20/idc-predicts-saas-enterprise-applications-will-be-a-50-8b-market-by-2018/#7a5e586c22a8>

ⁱⁱ<https://www.skyhighnetworks.com/cloud-security-blog/12-must-know-statistics-on-cloud-usage-in-the-enterprise/>



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