Making the Case for the Cloud:

How to Convince Leadership It's Time to
Migrate to a Modern Infrastructure
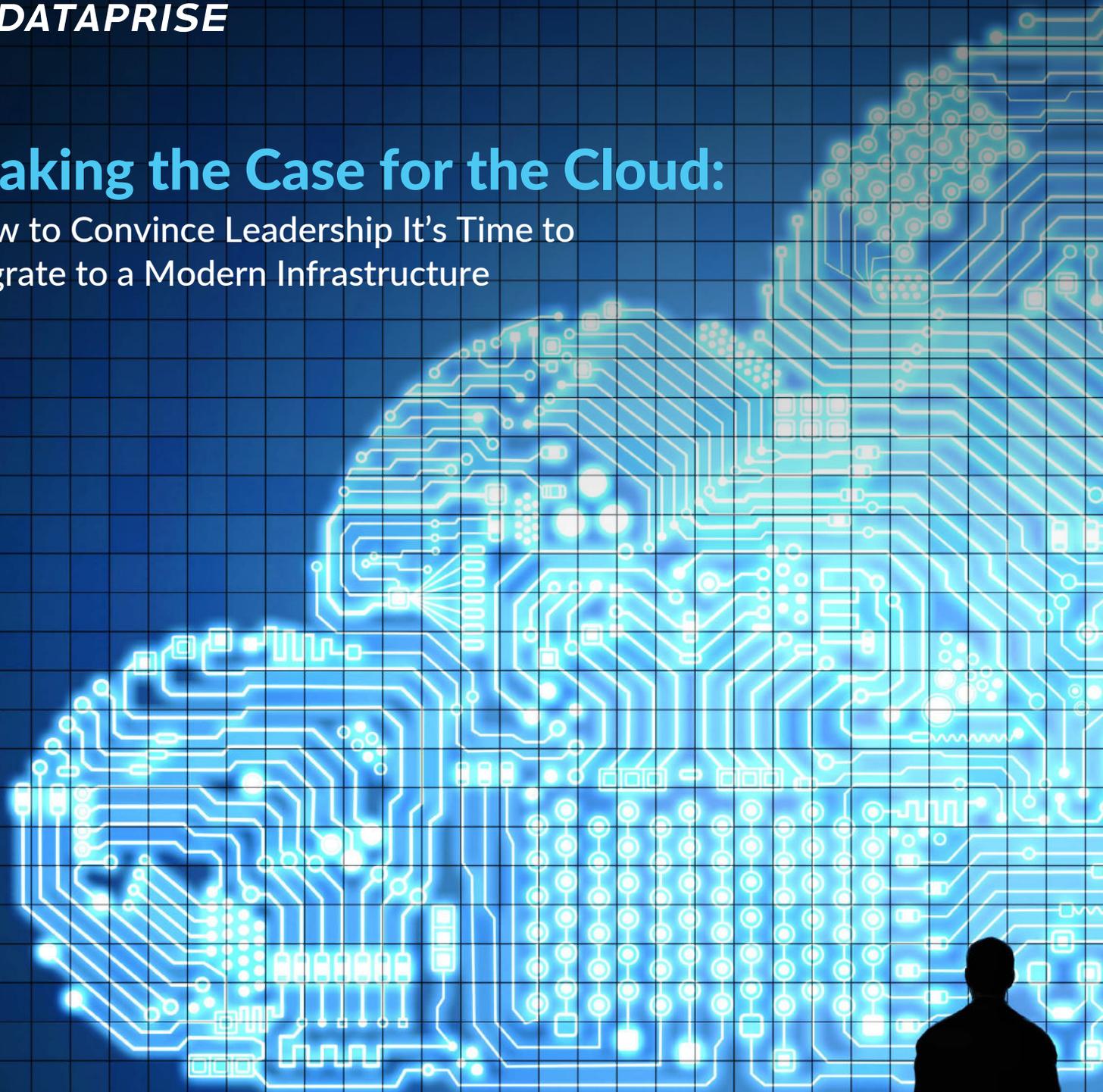
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Introduction

As organizations evaluate their IT infrastructures, leaders are likely given numerous reasons to migrate to the cloud. If they still haven't made up their minds, though, it's clear that the rationale is falling on deaf ears. In this whitepaper, we'll explore what it takes to convince leadership that migrating to the cloud is the best possible option for their organization:

- **Security:** When surveyed by Deloitte, 58% of IT professional respondents believed that data protection prompted the cloud migration, as a modernized infrastructure can improve overall security posture

- **Resiliency:** Proper disaster recovery is the best way to keep a company up and running immediately following a crisis and the cloud provides flexibility

- **Optimization:** Eliminate wasted infrastructure resources by selecting, provisioning, and right-sizing your environment in the cloud

- **Costs:** Change IT economics from CAPEX to OPEX, improve budgeting and allow your IT resources to be allocated with precision

- **Industry-Proven Strategy:** Outsourced teams can help organizations pinpoint an effective strategy that can be implemented quickly

60% of businesses have already moved at least a portion of their workloads to the cloud, which is a powerful statistic for any leader. This isn't about following the herd, though - it's about recognizing when it's time for a change. Upgrading technology takes effort, but it's also one of the best ways to stay competitive.

Proof Point #1:
Cloud Infrastructure Can Protect Against Modern-Day Threats

Cloud infrastructures - much like on premises infrastructures - is what you make of it. Just as you can leave the building unlocked for criminals to stop by, you can choose not to implement any security features in the cloud. The goal for organizations should be to choose a platform that introduces layers of security and provides protection against modern attacks. Each new challenge - or security layer - is another reason for a hacker to move on.

When you consider how attackers may infiltrate your systems, the possibilities are truly endless. Some hackers use social phishing tactics. For example, sending emails disguised as an email from a supervisor. Others will exploit an IoT device and use that opening to access the entire network. Hackers can force account access, steal credentials, or talk their way into inside information — and those are just the external possibilities. You also have to consider the potential of internal sabotage as well.

Microsoft Azure and Microsoft 365 make it possible for organizations to keep themselves out of harm's way based on the security tools available. When correctly deployed and configured, these tools can help ensure the organization's security profile is as robust as it can be. Knowing which applications to use and where they should be integrated into your systems takes a certain degree of expertise, but when done correctly, the results are unparalleled.

Proof Point #2:
Expand Disaster Recovery (DR) Functionality and Improve Business Resiliency

Power outages, employee sabotage, flooding: there are a number of events that can cause your business to either slow down or crash to a halt entirely. The point of disaster recovery is to plan ahead for different scenarios, so you can get back to business as quickly as possible. The cloud is considered ideal for this. In a recent survey by Veeam on Cloud Data Protection, they found that:

- 67% of organizations use cloud services as part of their DR strategy.

- 42% of IT leaders name hybrid-cloud workload protection as the most important component of enterprise backup.

- 40% of servers have had at least one outage per year.

- 20% of IT implementers reported that improving reliability (RPO/RTO) is a key driver of changing their backup solution in 2022.

Disaster recovery principles illustrate that moving to the cloud is a starting point that can be built upon to include additional disaster recovery capabilities. Organizations need to protect themselves from any number of unexpected occurrences.

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We cannot stress enough that when you're making the case for migration, you need to stress how protection and backups function and the need for additional protections. Unfortunately, there are a lot of misconceptions about this. For instance, there is an assumption that data is automatically backed up if they're in Microsoft 365. The truth is their data is only available for 30 days before disappearing. It's important for everyone to do their homework on these matters, so there are no unpleasant surprises. To support data protection and DRaaS, with the cloud you can select a data center in one region for production and a second in a geographical dispersed location for redundancy.

Proof Point #3:
Optimized Environments Mean Better Performance, Stellar Flexibility, and Reduced Costs

When it comes to virtual resources, it's not always easy for people outside the IT department to see where the waste is happening. However just because they don't notice, doesn't mean it's not happening. It's all too common for servers to do a fraction of the job they were designed for. The cloud makes it possible to scale your business without necessarily having to scale your costs. In fact, you may be able to reduce your equipment and costs and increase your efficiency at the same time.

In addition, once the migration has taken place, there are a number of ways to control cloud costs:

- Switch off any unnecessary processes or functions, so you're not charged for them.

- Consolidate resources where needed. The autoscaling capabilities and on-demand options make it possible to scale computing power at any time.

- Heat maps can be used to reveal the peaks and valleys of demand. This helps IT leaders establish start and stop points (e.g., turning off development servers on weekends).

- Servers, memory, database, graphics, storage: if any of these assets are too big, they become a cost liability to the organization. The cloud allows organizations to find the right size, so they're not wasting any resources.

Proof Point #4:
The OpEx Benefit

In the past, companies who wanted to secure their data and security would invest in space, equipment, software, and personnel to do so. There are inherent benefits to doing this, as you have full control over the installation and maintenance. However, the logistics simply don't make sense anymore. With the cloud, you don't have to make the same upfront expenditures, nor do you have to pay the same costs to maintain them.

With the cloud, organizations pay for what they use. IT leaders can establish a routine of regular tasks to ensure it remains optimized, which often takes less time than attempting to upgrade on-site equipment.

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As a general rule, a modern cloud environment setup takes fewer resources than a traditional setup. When a cloud platform needs upgrading, the company has already built those costs into subscription fees. (As opposed to a company that has to dip into its direct resources.) Considering how technology can change on a dime, the goal is to stay ahead of the curve whenever possible. With the cloud, you can choose a provider with cutting-edge protection, so you can rely on their expertise when needed.

Proof Point #5:
Setting Yourself Up for Success with an Industry-Proven Strategy

As we covered, the layers of protection in the cloud can go on for as far as the eye can see. Knowing how to manipulate each one when it comes to your organization is rarely as straightforward as IT leaders want it to be. This is why having a Managed Service Provider (MSP) with cloud expertise can be such an invaluable addition to an organization. Because their teams specialize in the cloud, it frees up the in-house talent to concentrate on matters that pertain to the business.

An MSP can help you decide on an overall strategy, secure the best applications for the business, and choose the right provider to work with. They can execute the migration with confidence and then make adjustments and upgrades as necessary. The cloud may be becoming more and more ubiquitous by the day, but the truth is that it's also extremely complex. It's easy to get lost in its functionalities, which can end up costing more than money.

Conclusion

Dataprise is the premier managed IT services partner to growing and midmarket organizations across the United States. Dataprise delivers best-in-class cloud management and consulting, IT management, cybersecurity, data protection, and end-user solutions that drive business, enhance user experiences, and eliminate business risks.

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