

Quick Reference Guide For Cloud Solutions Providers

SMB/SME Target Markets

The SMB/SME is interested in better uses for their capital and staff than buying and managing IT hardware and software. They desire a predictable monthly cost for their IT services.

Look for companies that rely on IT for business growth but need to reduce cost and improve efficiencies. Identify SMB/SME companies that want IT to provide more business agility and enable growth with a predictable and pay-as-you-go monthly expense. Business continuity and data protection are also critical for minimizing risk and ensuring the integrity of their data.

A number of vertical SMB segments can benefit greatly from cloud services including manufacturing, government, healthcare, retail & distribution and business services (e.g., legal & finance). Information-intensive service industry segments are best.

Customer Profile

Size: Up to 500 employees (15 to 100 is the sweet spot)

Locations: Single site or multi-site (multi-site is better)

Mobility: Mobile workforce with multiple endpoint devices

Decision Maker: Owner, CEO, COO, CFO or CIO

Stakeholders: CFO, Sales/Marketing Executive, Line of Business Manager, Operations Manager or IT Manager

Technology Adoption: Not afraid of new technology but not interested in developing in-house applications and systems.

Buying Criteria: TCO reduction, technology upgrades, new application deployment, higher employee productivity

Sales cycle: 1 to 3 months from qualification to close

Business Challenges

Cost of IT: How to reduce the cost of IT and control ongoing expenses for hardware, software, facilities and support staff.

Complexity of IT: How to support business goals with new application development, integration and data migration while supporting users and managing multiple vendors.

Employee Productivity: How to improve communications, collaboration, information access and transaction processing.

Customer Retention: How to improve the quality of customer service and enable greater business expansion opportunities.

Operational Efficiency: How to deliver IT services with high performance and continuous availability on a 24x7 basis.

Information Security: How to protect business-critical systems, applications and data from a catastrophic event or a security breach.

Cloud Solutions

Shift capital-intensive IT for desktops and data centers to a managed services model based on cloud services by outsourcing IT to a single reliable solutions provider. This eliminates the need for expensive IT staff and allows the reallocation of investment into growth initiatives and simplifies the management and delivery of IT to employees.

With managed cloud services you can provide unified messaging and collaboration services that allow employees to interact with customers and each other from any location or device to improve customer relationships and business efficiency with a scalable, on-demand service.

A qualified and experienced cloud solutions provider will design, deploy and deliver a cloud-ready infrastructure.

Host all critical services in a secure, redundant and high availability data center with a comprehensive data backup and disaster recovery plan.

Your Elevator Pitch

We provide our customers with tailored IT solutions that combine the best use of cloud computing with our deep knowledge, expertise and support services to maximize the business value of IT. We manage the delivery of IT services for our customers so they can focus on their business while we focus on reducing the cost of IT and increasing its business impact.

We do this by understanding your business needs and designing IT solutions that integrate cloud services into your current business environment and then we support your users and manage the delivery of your cloud solutions. As a result, we can reduce your operating expenses and position your business for safe and secure growth by protecting your critical data assets and ensuring business continuity as we deploy IT solutions that increase the productivity of your workforce.

We would like to explain our cloud solutions strategy to you in more detail. It represents cloud technologies and hosted services that we believe are best-in-class and we have combined them with our own service and support plan to provide our customers with secure, high availability and state-of-the-art IT services.

Discovery Questions

- 1) Do you struggle to deploy new technology while supporting users or legacy systems within your budget?
- 2) Do you allocate more IT resources for maintenance & support than on business or growth initiatives?
- 3) Do you have to manage multiple technology vendors?
- 4) Do you have sufficient staff to manage IT expansion as your business grows– does your business fluctuate?
- 5) Do you have to manage remote users and locations?
- 6) Do these users need to collaborate, share documents, process transactions or access information remotely?
- 7) Do you have any hosted services:
 - exchange server (email, contacts, calendars)
 - applications (collaboration, doc sharing, office apps)
- 8) When do you plan to modernize your IT infrastructure:
 - servers (storage, mail, applications, network)
- 9) Do you have all data (central and remote) backed up?
- 10) What would happen to your business if you had a catastrophic data loss or security was compromised?

Sales Qualifiers

Pain level: Look for these sales motivators

- A compelling event like a system outage, data loss or move
- High internal IT cost and/or lack of operational efficiency
- New ownership or executive management change
- Technology refresh or new applications required

Solution Fit: Assess your IT solution fit

- Can you reduce the cost of premise-based IT services?
- Can you simplify the management of IT service delivery?
- Can you provide better protection of critical data assets?

Business Value: Quantify your business value

- Calculate a reduction in Total Cost of Ownership (TCO)
- Estimate the productivity gains your solution provides
- Identify a risk reduction from data backup and recovery

Decision Process: How are decisions made

- Identify decision-makers, influencers and stakeholders
- Determine the source of funding or budget constraints
- Understand the process for approving your proposal

Timeframe to Close: Estimate the sales cycle

- Separate serious-buyers from information-gatherers
- Identify internal deadlines for making a final decision
- Vendor selection, budget allocation, contract negotiations

Hurdles and Objections

- 1) Our in-house staff is handling all of our support needs at the present time.
- 2) Will your company really be able to support all of our cloud services and their support requirements?
- 3) Your solution seems expensive – Why should I pay a fee for services every month whether I need them or not?
- 4) How can I be sure that my data will be secure in the cloud?
- 5) If the cloud goes down, all of our systems will be down – this seems like a risky approach to me.
- 6) We are considering purchasing our cloud services directly from the hosting company – what is the downside of this approach?
- 7) What if you go out of business in a year or two – what happens to our data and applications?

Your Responses

That may be true, but with cloud services you can use those resources for new business-building initiatives while you leverage the cloud to reduce cost and increase scalability.

Without question –Our company manages your cloud vendors and we add our experienced staff providing you with a tailored support plan and a single point of contact.

If you compare our fees on an annual basis with the cost to deliver the same services by hiring IT staff and building IT facilities, I think you will find that we offer a much lower total cost of ownership. Shall I calculate this for you?

Our cloud vendor partners operate highly secure and redundant data centers that comply with strict industry standards such as SAS70 Type II. Your data will very likely be more secure in these facilities than in your data center.

Our cloud vendor partners have a long track record for delivering reliable hosting services. Google for example maintains a 99.9% uptime rating - achieved by operating redundant data centers to ensure continuous operation .

We provide services that tailor these applications to your business processes, integrate them with the proper security and data backup services and provide a single point of responsibility for all of your IT solutions.

Your data, systems and applications will be safe. Think of us as the IT department that you didn't have to hire and our service providers as the data center that you didn't have to build - only we provide more experience and our partners provide world-class facilities without the capital investment .