Tabush Group

Our involvement with the ALA Capital Chapter is a rewarding and enjoyable experience. The events are very well organized, occur in great locations, and are a great mix of chapter business, education, and fun. The latter is just as important as the former. As a native of Ireland, I had not visited our nation's capital prior to partnering with the Capital Chapter, so this has been a great bonus for me personally. I definitely need to bring the family on one of my next trips!

Our company also partners with the ALA in NYC, Boston, and nationally. One of the distinguishing things about our relationship with this chapter is the many opportunities for Tabush Group to assist members in an educational capacity – a big shout out to Frank Schipani for all his help! The questions we field most often from the Capital Chapter membership pertains to how to best leverage IT, the cloud, the importance of security, and the fear of not having the right level of security.

Tabush Group has been partnering with law firms as their IT team for more than 15 years. We believe that the cloud inherently solves many issues that firms using traditional IT infrastructure encounter, including efficiency and security concerns. Today, most law firms move one part of their IT to the cloud, such as a practice management application, a billing application, or a financial application, to gain the inherent benefits cloud provides. If it is worthwhile for these apps to be in the cloud, why not more? Here, I discuss moving all of your IT to the cloud.

-- Darragh Fitzpatrick, Tabush Group

Why Your PC Belongs in the Cloud

The cloud is where many small to midsize companies place their IT and magical things happen, right? Well, not exactly. Migrating to the cloud can be a daunting process, and if not done correctly, your cloud result may be not what you desire.

So how do you prepare to move to the cloud?

- **Ask the right questions**. Identify the right IT partner to will help to navigate to the cloud. Not all service partners are the right fit for your firm and needs.
- **Determine how to best utilize the cloud.** Once you select your partner, work with them to identify how to best leverage the cloud for your business. Will the cloud solution meet your needs or will it introduce a new set of issues?
- **Do it right the first time.** Respect the complexity of the decision you are making and the process so that your migration to the cloud is implemented correctly, rather than rushed to completion.

Leveraging the Cloud for Applications

A current trend for businesses who want to begin leveraging the cloud is to select one or multiple applications and use the cloud in those isolated instances in the hopes of improving things like access, functionality, or scale. Email, for instance, is a very simple and obvious choice that most companies already use in the cloud. It is a communication application we constantly use, and we want to have access to email from any location and any device. We are highly dependent on email, perhaps too

dependent, yet many companies do not want to bear the responsibility or cost of owning and managing their own email server. This makes email a perfect fit for the cloud.

Many businesses want to move line of business applications to the cloud for the same reasons and benefits. A line of business application is built for a specific industry that generally manages a very important workflow in a business. Examples include a practice management platform in the legal industry, a project management platform in the construction industry, or a tax platform in the accounting industry.

Moving a single or multiple applications to the cloud eradicates some of a company's IT hardware footprint, particularly servers. Organizations often still need to have other servers and storage devices and they definitely still require PCs at all desks and must purchase licenses and manage hardware upgrades. The question is, can businesses leverage cloud to simplify our infrastructure even further?

DaaS/WaaS
Perhaps you've heard of desktop as a service (DaaS) or workspace as a service (WaaS). These cloud platforms enable companies to leverage cloud further and have a dramatic impact on how IT is managed and used. These services completely eliminate the need for both servers and PCs. Yes, I did say that! No more purchasing PCs or server hardware, yet users can still work as normal on their Windows desktop, using all the same applications and accessing all of their files! With DaaS/WaaS *all* of the servers, PCs, applications, and data are moved to the cloud to the cloud.

Why is this a good thing? Why does your PC belong in the cloud?

1. **Basic cloud sense.** The key reason cloud is a great option, regardless of how it's leveraged, is that it allows your systems and data to live in a different physical space from where your people and business is located (i.e. your office). If something happens to your office network, your local area and system are still intact and easily accessible from elsewhere for employees. Moving your PC to the cloud adds business continuity to your IT infrastructure: always available no matter the status of locale.

2. **Simplicity = fewer problems.** Simplicity is generally an advantage in both business and life. Removing all servers and PC hardware simplifies the IT environment, translating to easier management and fewer problems.

3. **Focus on what matters.** In every business, regardless of size, an ongoing investment of time and money is spent to manage, plan, and execute computer and server upgrades. While it is a frequently recurring expense, it is never a truly productive one. I have never seen a business owner, after spending money on replacing PCs, satisfied with the knowledge that this investment improved the performance of his or her company. Why, you may ask? Well, the reason is that new computers do not have a direct positive impact on business. Upgrading hardware is a necessity but does not provide many, if any, tangible financial benefits. Eliminating server and PC hardware when moving to the cloud allows everyone to focus on

actually improving the business. Instead, investing in more efficient applications, such as ones that execute key workflows, will move the needle for a company's bottom line.

4. **Enjoy your office experience everywhere.** Nearly all staff, no matter their position, work remotely at some point. The biggest complaint most people have when working remotely is that the experience is not the same as when working from their office. First, they are not working on their own PC; remote desktops look and feel different. Working remotely also means a different level of speed and performance. It is generally obvious to the user that they are on a remote access platform.

   When your PC is in the cloud, you are, in a sense, working remotely all of the time but without the performance challenges. Users always enjoy the same experience no matter where they are working from, with the same consistent connection speed. It is the same as working on a physical PC with the added flexibility of being able to access it from anywhere and from any device.

5. **Solves the "my key application does not have a cloud option" issue.** Many line of business applications are vital to doing business but do not have cloud options. The legal industry has many examples of this, such as Prevail, Tabs3, SmartAdvocate, and PCLaw. Instead, in a DaaS environment where your entire PC is in the cloud, all your server and apps are there, too. This means that non-cloud based apps get placed in the cloud and are accessible through your cloud desktop.

6. **More effective and simple security.** Security is paramount, even more so after the numerous high-profile incidents in 2017. Ironically, a pervasive myth in the SMB world is that moving to the cloud is somehow a security risk. The truth is quite the opposite. With the right partner, a DaaS/WaaS environment is built with enterprise-level solutions following best practices and therefore, provides a level of security most firms would not be able to provide on their own due to cost and expertise barriers. Security becomes simpler, as its focus is on one ecosystem and one location: the DaaS/WaaS cloud.

The only question left to ask now is, why isn't your PC in the cloud? Reach out and let me know!