

# Top 10 Tips for Moving to the Cloud, by Ballard Chalmers Ltd

## 1. Move to a Cloud-Based Email Service

Managing an email server in your own office is no longer worth the effort and costs. Transitioning to a cloud-based provider is easy to do, and you can then let the provider do all the hard work for a small monthly fee. Microsoft's Office 365 is an obvious choice.

## 2. Adopt Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP)

VoIP is telephony over an internet line and in effect is a cloud-based phone service, meaning that there is no need for equipment or even a phone line in the office. VoIP services come with built-in video services and conference calls. Microsoft Office 365 has it built in in the form of its Teams and Skype for Business features.

## 3. Take Advantage of Unified Communications

Unified comms involves bringing together multiple forms of communication together in a single, unified platform. This includes telephone, email, instant messaging, mobile phone calls, video calls, web conferencing, etc. Moving your emails and telephony to Office 365 gives you unified comms pretty much for free.

## 4. Automate Routine Tasks

Many cloud-based systems provide built-in productivity tools that allow power users to increase productivity by automating common repetitive tasks. The Power suite of products, part of Office365, provides several tools for automation and business intelligence.

## 5. Take Advantage of SaaS Applications

These days most software vendors are producing SaaS (Software as a Service) versions of their systems. Moving to SaaS-based systems simplifies the management of your business. All you need is a Web browser.



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## 6. Cloud-based File Servers

Cloud-based drive storage services such as Dropbox, Google Drive and Microsoft One-Drive have gradually been replacing the need for any on-premises storage, and unless your data is so private that it absolutely cannot be stored in the cloud then there really is no reason to keep that file server, especially given the extremally lost cost of these services.

## 7. Moving Servers to the Cloud

Some businesses will have servers running applications that are a custom built or are otherwise not available in SaaS form. Often these are running as a VM (Virtual Machine) and moving Server VMs to the cloud is a standard and easy process.

## 8. Developing Custom Cloud Applications

If you have developed custom applications for your own use, then these can also be migrated to the cloud. The easiest way is to just move the VMs that host the application to a cloud service as is.

However, these VMs are still servers that need to be supported, patched and backed up etc. A better way is to take advantage of the serverless cloud services that the big cloud providers offer, such as Microsoft Azure.

## 9. Reduce Technical Overhead and Costs

All of this results in reduced technical overhead, and reduced costs. No more servers in a cupboard, or in a data centre. No more days spent configuring new laptops, literally a touch of a few buttons, and you are up and running with all your systems and data available. And monthly costs with no major upgrade investments, so you can plan and manage your IT spend and keep it under control.

A black silhouette of a town skyline, including buildings, a train, and a tractor, set against a white background.

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## 10. Becoming a Digital Workplace

The idea of a digital workplace is a digital work environment where employees can readily find the information and processes they need to work successfully. The free flow of information in the digital workplace has positive effects on the innovative energy of modern companies and enables employee involvement and job satisfaction by providing the right information to the right people at the right time.

You can contact Ballard Chalmers on 01342410223 or [enquiries@ballardchalmers.com](mailto:enquiries@ballardchalmers.com)

A black silhouette of a town skyline and transport vehicles (buses, a tractor, and a train) on a curved horizon.

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