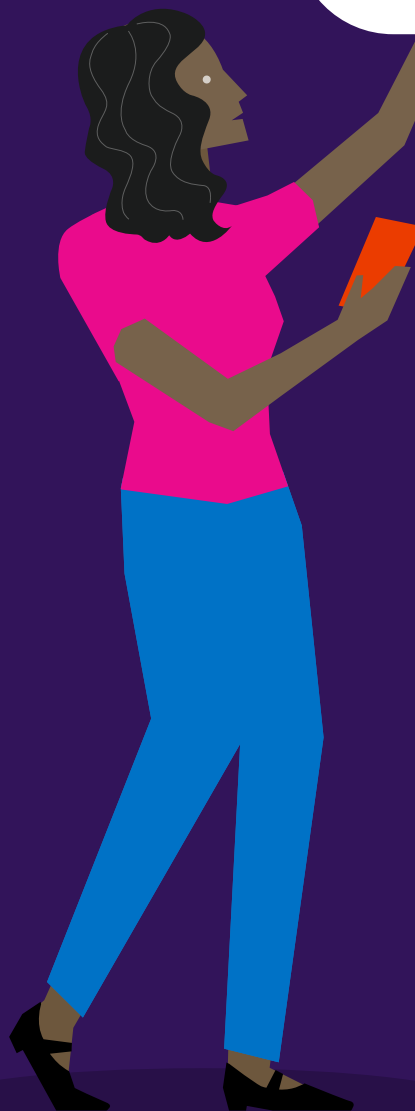


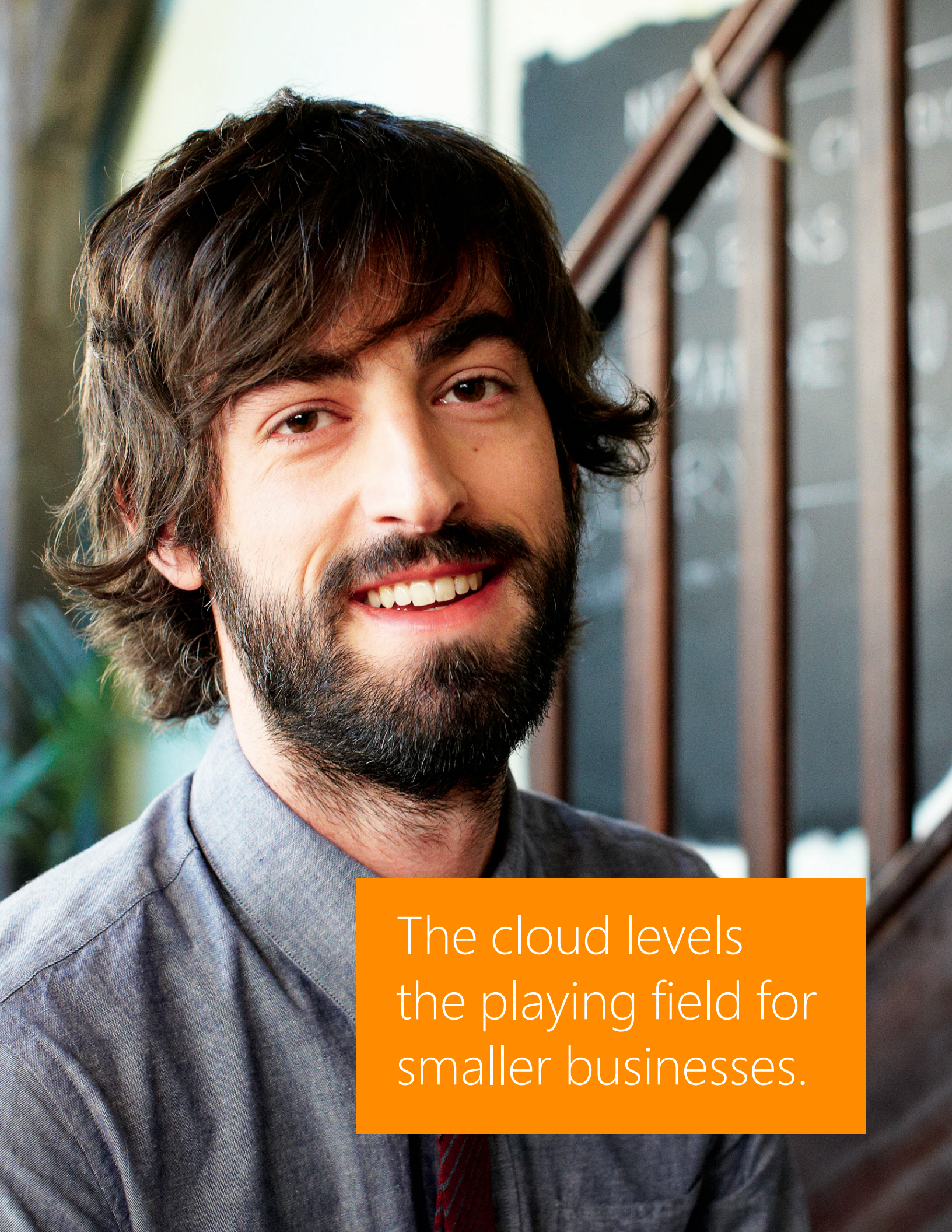
The Cloud for Productivity and Mobility

A Guide for Small and Medium Business

As mobile work becomes the norm, businesses can turn to cloud-based solutions to extend productivity and collaboration tools to employees on the go.



Microsoft



The cloud levels
the playing field for
smaller businesses.

Better Business Through Cloud Mobile Productivity

Mobile means business. During the past decade, mobile devices have become ubiquitous in our lives, performing a range of activities that were formerly limited to desktop and laptop computers. Now, mobility is an essential tool for startups and small businesses to empower workers and connect with customers.

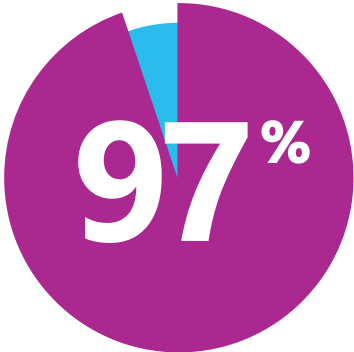
As mobile computing becomes the expected standard for work and life worldwide, the cloud offers a way to extend productivity, security, and access to information to mobile workers (plus partners and customers) working anywhere, anytime, on any device. The cloud levels the playing field, giving small businesses the same capabilities to develop apps and content for mobile, and for tapping into the huge global surge in mobile devices and consumers.

Mobile productivity? Bring it! Businesses are taking advantage of this trend is by letting employees work from anywhere or “bring your own device” (BYOD) as ways to accommodate different work styles and save costs. Enabling people to work the way they want is a great motivator, and can help smaller businesses attract and retain the talent they need. And by taking advantage of the security and management capabilities through the cloud, BYOD does not need to mean compromising on the quality of your business capabilities or security.

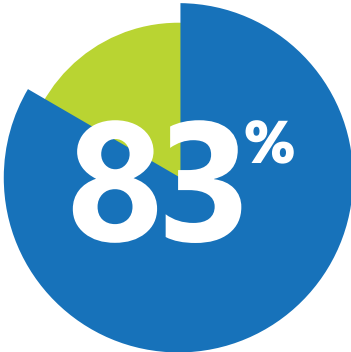
According to a March 2014 study of 300 SMB IT pros by Dimensional Research:



Have employees that use tablets for work.



Say anytime, anywhere access to data and applications makes employees more effective.



Say mobilizing business data and applications would have a high or medium business impact.

What Cloud Productivity Means for Your Business

Cloud computing is a technological innovation, but how does it connect to the real needs and pains of businesses?

BYOD 2.0: Simplicity in diversity. BYOD relieves businesses from tracking and maintaining aging company-owned workstation and laptop computers, but it comes with a downside. When every employee is using a different device, the business is challenged to ensure security, manageability, and consistency for work-related data and software. By providing productivity tools and secure, shared storage through the cloud, you can ensure everyone is on the same page when it comes to work, even if they're using different devices. Your team will become more productive and satisfied with their jobs, and your business will gain higher-quality work as a result.

Synchronize your business. Business doesn't start at 9:00 A.M. and end at 5:00 P.M. anymore. Even if it did, odds are you have suppliers, partners, or customers in other time zones.

When you use cloud productivity and collaboration tools, you can stay on the same page with distant partners and off-site employees, all working with the latest versions.

Use the tools you know. Do your people prefer Windows devices, iOS, or Android? Cloud-based and mobile versions of popular business software suites are available now across all mobile platforms. Enable your staff to use the skills and practices they already know to create content and analyze data.

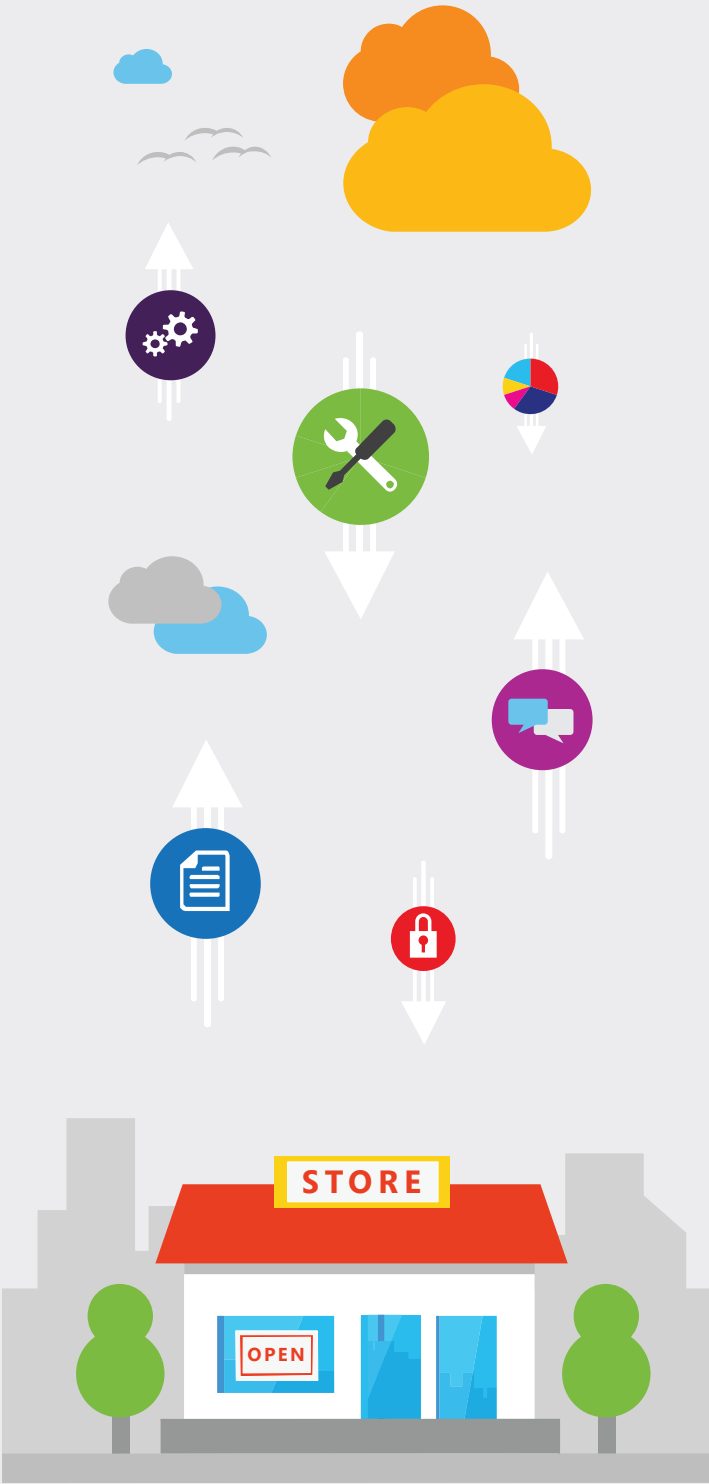
Build business anywhere. Mobile tools let your sales force close deals, including getting a contract signed, all while at the customer's office or while picking their kids up from school. Anywhere they go, your business tools can go with them.

The Mobile Productivity Toolbox

What do today's workers need to be productive on the go? Here's a rundown.

-  **Content creation applications:** Familiar, standard tools for creating documents, spreadsheets, presentations, and other building blocks of business communication.
-  **Data analysis tools:** Secure mobile access to business systems for customer relationship management, financial analysis, and other role-based functions.
-  **Business class communication and collaboration:** Secure access to business email, calendar, real-time communication (voice, text/media chat, online meetings), shared workspaces, and internal sites.
-  **Storage and synchronization:** Enterprise-grade cloud storage that keeps information accessible and synchronized across devices.
-  **Remote desktop access:** Ability to sign on to business desktops and systems with secure credentials from anywhere via web or client-side application.

When evaluating cloud-based productivity tools for mobile users, look for solutions that are *comprehensive, familiar, and enterprise grade*. Piecemeal or consumer-oriented tools may offer compelling features, but their greater risk and complexity can lead to hidden costs.



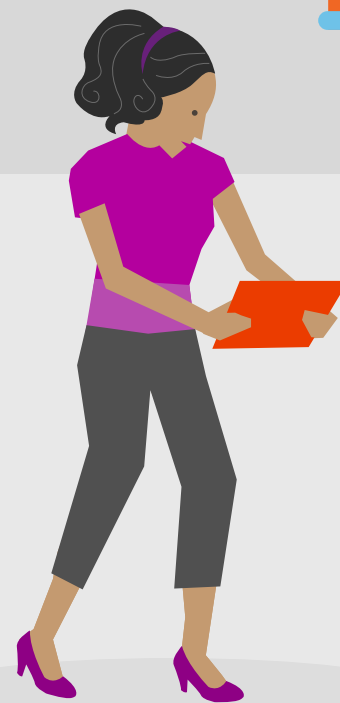
Mobilize the Productivity of Your Business

The cloud is on the move. Your customers, partners, and employees are mobile. Your business and productivity solutions should be too. Connect mobile apps, users, and devices through the cloud.



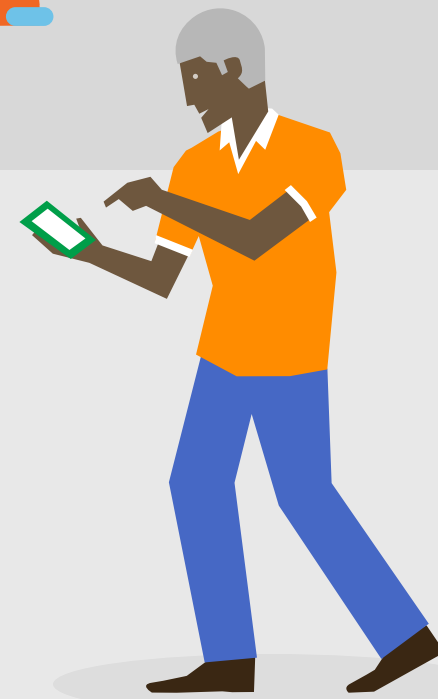
Cloud Confidence

Keep your business data safe in the cloud while making sure everyone has the access they need.



Cloud Productivity

Extend access to business-class productivity tools on any device your people prefer.



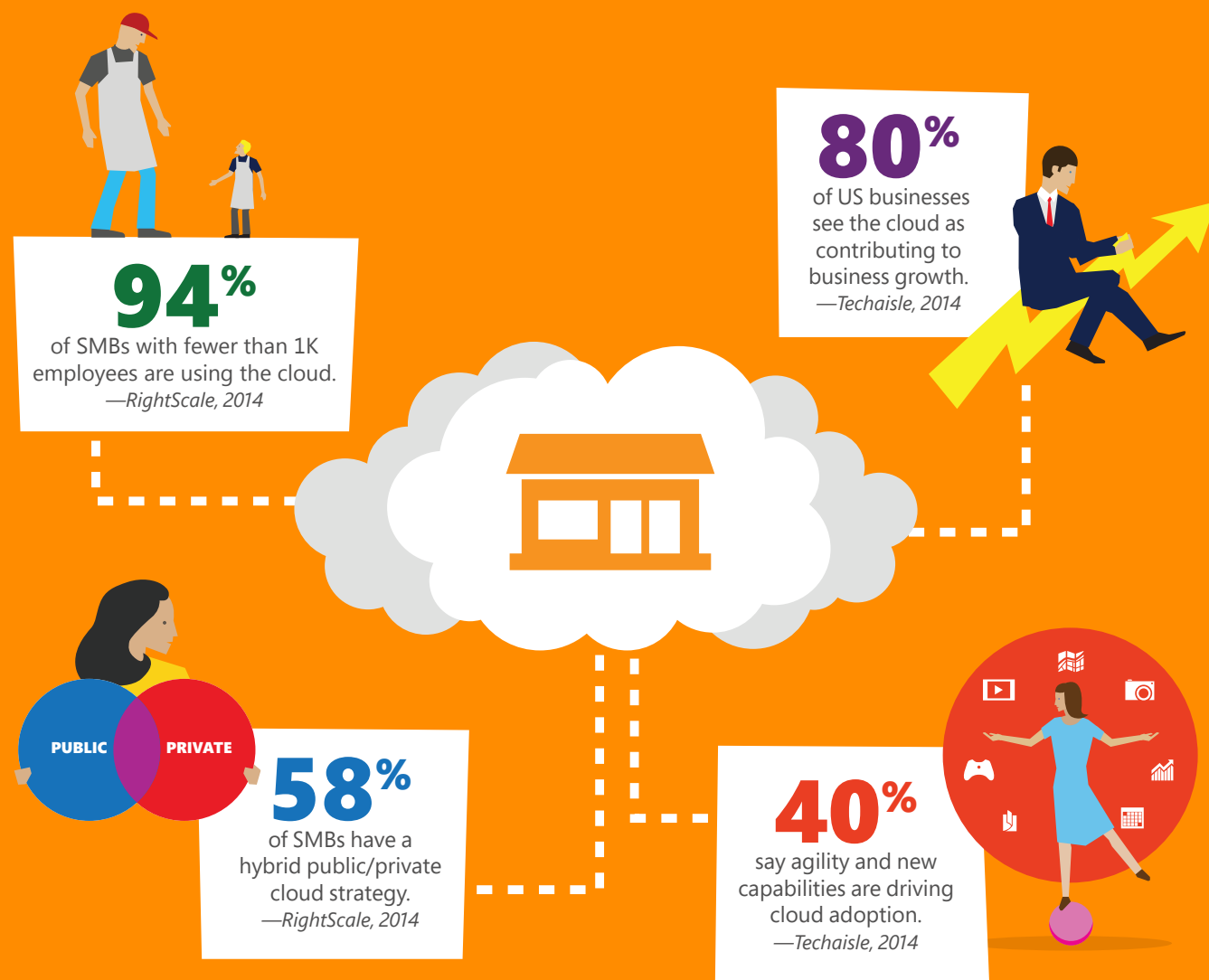
Cloud Ubiquity

Use the cloud to tap into new mobile data sources and target apps to any device.



Cloud Coordination

Keep everyone on the same page by synchronizing data and devices through the cloud.



SMBs Unleash Productivity Through the Cloud

Why are smaller businesses turning to the cloud? According to industry research from global SMB technology specialists Techaisle, it's opportunity, not just efficiency, that's behind the move. Sure, businesses of all sizes see value in the cloud pricing model that lets you pay as you go for the volume of service you use. But more than 80 percent of SMBs in the United States see productivity as the main benefit.

For smaller businesses of 1–50 employees, productivity through the cloud means giving team members the high-end business tools they need to compete and win. For businesses of 50–250 employees, the main driver is IT productivity: freeing tech-oriented staff from the chores of maintaining software on devices, and empowering them to do more for the business.

Mobilize Your Business: Connect to Customers Through the Cloud

What new and emerging capabilities can businesses unlock on their journey to the cloud?

As more people turn to mobile devices as their first (or only) way to access data and information, your business needs to think about ways to make your online presence mobile-friendly. The cloud is the ideal platform for mobile development, whether for business, entertainment, or marketing.

Mobile first, cloud first. Creating a website or social media presence is not the only way to reach customers. More and more businesses today are tapping into the mobile market with apps that offer content, convenience, location-based features, and more. The cloud enables you to develop and deploy those apps faster, and scale them up to meet higher levels of demand instantly, without the need for new equipment.

Sync and swim. One of the most popular uses of cloud computing in the consumer world is cloud storage that synchronizes across different devices, so you're always looking at the latest version of a document or the newest photo no matter where you access it. That's useful to business as well, but only when you can be assured of the security, privacy, and access control you need. The best solutions integrate the convenience of cloud storage, synchronization, and team services with familiar productivity and collaboration tools, synchronizing across devices while ensuring high-level security.

Mobile apps and content reach customers where they spend most of their time.

Heavy lifting, light footprint. Thinking about more ambitious mobile tools? The cloud is ideal for custom business and data applications because massively scaled cloud infrastructure can handle the load that crunching numbers or displaying rich images requires without taxing the relatively light capabilities of the mobile device. This makes it easier for your IT staff or partner to expose business data and analysis tools as a service in secure mobile apps.

Vision for an Agile Business

What processes and outcomes can businesses achieve through the cloud?

By extending productivity tools and data to mobile users through the cloud, business managers can make it easier for their people to contribute value and improve the work experience, benefiting the entire organization.

Use work flexibility to compete for talent.

Smaller businesses face bigger challenges in recruiting top talent; therefore you need every advantage to attract and retain the best people to help you grow. By embracing the cloud for mobile productivity, you can offer a more flexible work experience that lets people balance work and life.

Enable choice without compromise. Motivate your people by encouraging them to use the device they prefer, but keep the experience consistent and your data secure through the cloud. This lets you say yes to BYOD but no to the risk and complexity of supporting so much different equipment.

Align with global trends in mobility. You and your team are in good company. More than 260 million people who work in small businesses telecommute or use cloud-based services. The rising global generation is mobile. Tap into this developing market and workforce as your business grows.

Reduce data risk. If someone on your team loses a smartphone or tablet that has business data on it, are you sure you can get it back? When you plan for mobile productivity, you can take steps to centralize business information in cloud-based storage while making it available more securely through an app. You can also make it far easier to restore that data once a replacement device connects to it.

SOLUTION IN ACTION

Tastea Brews Up Success with Cloud Productivity Solutions



Tastea offers innovative tea-based beverages in its three tea bars in Orange County, California. The company wanted to maintain a high level of quality and service while preparing for expansion. They turned to Office 365 to extend productivity to employees anywhere, anytime.

“We wanted to help our store managers and team members be more self-reliant,” recalled Ted Vu, cofounder of Tastea. “We also needed the infrastructure to be able to do things like track and manage our inventory more effectively.”

Everyone at Tastea is taking advantage of the new tools. For example, all the store managers use Microsoft Lync Online to hold monthly virtual meetings, saving them the hassles and hours

of driving time that their former in-person meetings required. In addition, Vu is developing an inventory tracking and management workflow solution in SharePoint Online that automates many of the steps associated with placing weekly orders to the company’s 20 vendors.

“Before, when we didn’t have so many ways both to reach out and to respond, things could be chaotic and team members often felt like they were left in the dark,” said Vu. “Today, they’re more engaged and truly feel part of our success because we’re using Office 365. We’re getting twice as much work done.”

[Click here to learn more](#) about how Tastea improved productivity with cloud-based solutions from Microsoft.

Considerations: To best realize these benefits for your business, ask the following questions

How much are your aging computers costing you?

Among small businesses, the average cost to repair a four-year-old PC is \$531 per year, according to Techaisle’s 2014 Small Business PC Cost Study. Consider migrating to cloud-based productivity solutions as you refresh older PCs with new multifunction tablets and mobile devices.

How easy is it to manage mobile device apps and security?

Users need to access apps on their devices, but those apps and devices need to be managed and kept up-to-date. Does your solution provide a way for users to self-install approved apps and remotely lock and/or wipe corporate data from devices that get lost or compromised?

Are your employees giving away valuable business information without realizing it?

Some free cloud-based productivity tools and consumer applications make money by tracking how it gets used or by advertising to anyone who installs one. “Free” services often come with other information security risks, too. Evaluate all the hidden costs as you look at the value of a straightforward license agreement.

Can your people securely and simply access corporate data on personal devices?

It’s likely that business users have two or more devices to do their work. Does your mobile business solution make it easy for them to sync data from work folders to authorized devices? Do you have a way to manage content security on files, even outside the firewall? Can they log on securely without multiple passwords and credentials?

Key Takeaways

- For startups and small organizations interested in offering business-class productivity tools for mobile and remote users, the cloud offers better security, convenience, capabilities, and economics.
- As businesses develop ways to extend access to data and content to consumers, partners, and employees, think mobile first, cloud first.
- When considering cloud-based productivity solutions for mobile workers, look for business-class performance: comprehensive capabilities, familiar and consistent user experience, business-class security, and a trustworthy cloud provider.

For Further Reading

- For information on the trends driving agile business and the cloud, see http://www.microsoftbusinesshub.com/Solutions/Technical/Cloud_Services.
- For more information on the Microsoft Office 365 cross-platform mobile productivity solution, including benefits, success stories, and pricing, go to www.office.microsoft.com/en-us/business/what-is-office-365-for-business-FX102997580.aspx.
- For more information on Microsoft cloud offerings, go to www.microsoftcloud.com.
- For more information on managing and securing mobile productivity solutions for your business, go to the people-centric IT site www.microsoft.com/en-us/server-cloud/cloud-os/empower-enterprise-mobility.aspx.

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