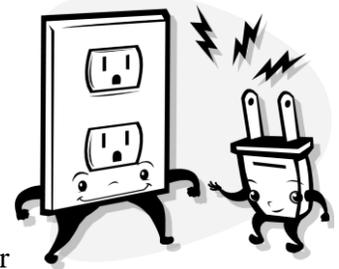




# What Is Cloud Computing And Why Should You Care?

The web and cloud computing is to storing and processing data what the electrical grid and electric company is to plugging in your coffee maker: a more convenient, more reliable and less expensive way to access the “computing power” and resources needed for the tools you use.

**Traditional computer networks are undergoing the same technological revolution the one that altered our use of electric generators in the early 1900s.**



During the industrial revolution, factories were required to produce their own electric power to operate the machines they used to produce their wares. In 1851, the man leading the pack was Henry Burden, an industrial giant who built the largest and most powerful electricity-generating water wheel in the world. At top speed this 600 foot, 250 ton machine could produce 500 horsepower, generating enough electricity to power the tools in his factory. This invention made Burden a very powerful and wealthy man.

## Fast Forward 50 Years...

However, by the early years of the twentieth century, this once-world class, cutting edge technology was abandoned, left to rust in a field of overgrown grass. Why? Because Thomas Edison and his Pearl Street electricity generating station had realized the concept of providing electricity as a utility. . It caught on like wild fire because it eliminated the large cost and complexity of running a factory, and within a very short period of time it became a competitive necessity for factories to tap into the cheaper electrical grid instead of produce their own electricity.

## The Same Technological Revolution Is Happening Today With Cloud Computing

If you think about it, there’s a good chance that MOST of the software applications you use every day are SaaS applications, or “software as a service.” In other words, you don’t have to install it on your server or PC – you simply access it as a pay-as-you-go model for only the licenses, space and features you use. This gives you, the user, the ability to access highly sophisticated software and functionality at a fraction of the cost – or even for free – and without long-term commitments.

For example, Google is a massive, free cloud application – the power required to search billions of web sites and content in seconds and deliver the relevant results to your screen far exceeds the capacity of your PC. Facebook is another free cloud application that allows you to post pictures, play games, and connect with your friends in real time without having to install those applications on your computer. Of course, there are also the applications such as Salesforce, Constant Contact, Zoomerang, etc., that you pay to use..

With the introduction of cloud-based office applications like Office 365, Google Apps and thousands of other SaaS applications, it’s becoming unnecessary for some businesses to purchase and maintain an onsite server. Now we can host one or more of your applications, data, e-mail and other functions “in the cloud.” That simply means it’s stored offsite in a highly secure, high-availability “utility” company that has far more power and resources than you could ever logically have onsite as a small business. And with devices getting cheaper and Internet connectivity exploding, cloud computing is suddenly a very smart, viable option for small business owners.





## What Are The Benefits?

- Eliminates the need for expensive server upgrades and allows you to use cheaper devices (PCs, etc.) to get the same work done.
- Frees you to access applications from any device and any location. All you need is an Internet connection.
- Built-in disaster recovery and business continuity.
- Only pay for what you need and use (utility pricing).

## Is Cloud Computing Right For You?

While there are a ton of benefits to cloud computing, it's NOT right for every company. Some applications don't play well in the cloud. You need commercial-grade Internet connectivity, and some functions, like working with big graphics files, are better kept local or the slowness will make you crazy. However, in almost every case, parts of your computer network (functions) can easily be put in the cloud to save you money and give you better service. So before you donate your server and sign up for Google Apps or Office 365, it's important you talk to someone who can honestly assess your unique situation and tell you the pros and cons of making the switch to cloud computing.

That's why we're offering all clients a FREE Cloud Readiness Assessment. At no cost or obligation, we'll come to your office and conduct a complete review of your computer network, data, software, hardware and how you work. From there, we can provide you with insights and helpful answers as to how you might benefit from cloud computing. To claim your free Cloud Readiness Assessment, **give us a call at 716.630.1701.**