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Part 1

Cloud computing, especially [cloud hosting](#), offer businesses ways to work more efficiently and effectively. Before you make the decision to transfer all or part of your computing resources to the cloud, you need to consider a few things.

1. Decide if it's actually right for you: Depending on the size of your business, you may have an internal IT resource who is something of a cloud expert. Conduct an interview with her/him, and ask what the benefits of the cloud are and how it could benefit your organization.

2. Do a SWOT Analysis: A SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats) assessment will help you figure out if your traditional setup is working effectively enough for you. How much would it cost you to improve your current hardware/software systems? Does the cloud offer enough savings (both monetarily and efficiency wise) to warrant a switch?

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3. Check out the competitors: Many of your competitors have probably already made the switch to the cloud. There are probably a few white papers or case studies out there about their successes and failures using new technologies. Read up. It may save you from making the same mistakes, saving you money in the long run.

4. Talk to your team: Before fully transitioning, talk to your team about the upcoming changes. Put into place a good change management strategy: Talk about the change, tell them how the change will affect them, and follow up after the change to make sure that your team is keeping up with the new implementation.

5. Look at your budget: Generally, [transitioning to the cloud](#) will save you a ton of money on software updates and licensing and buying new hardware. But, you need to make a comparison of cloud pricing and offerings versus what your current expenses are.

6. Get educated: Don't make your decision in a vacuum. Do research, go to conferences, and participate in a few webinars. Many vendors even have white papers about the subject. Download and read them.

Have you transitioned to the cloud yet? If so, what was your decision-making process like?

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