

IKEJA & DISTRICT SOCIETY

CLOUD COMPUTING AND IT'S RELEVANCE TO CHARTERED ACCOUNTANTS

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As technology continues to evolve, the ways in which we do business also change. One of the recent game changers in IT space has been the rise of cloud computing. What is cloud computing and why is it so relevant to Chartered Accountants?

WHAT IS CLOUD COMPUTING?

CLOUD COMPUTING is a way of storing and processing data on servers owned by third parties. It is on-demand IT deliveries via the Internet. The term was first coined by a scientist David Wheeler in 1992. His idea was that instead of using hard drives, it would be better if one uses the Internet itself.

The idea became so popular that it was adopted by many companies such as Amazon, IBM, Google, Microsoft and Apple who also started offering cloud computing services to their customers.

Today, almost every company uses cloud computing for their business needs including Chartered Accountants who need efficient tools for managing their clients' finances and accounts.

It enables organizations to store their data, manage their IT resources and access them from anywhere. This means that one's clients, can access their services from anywhere across the globe.

Cloud Computing also allows one to save money by offloading some of their workload to a third-party service provider (in this case, the cloud). For example, one can use a web-based accounting software platform that requires less maintenance.

Worthy of note is the fact that individuals in the accounting industry could collaborate with other colleagues remotely via video or audio-conferencing tools, thereby reducing physical presence.

With the advent of new technologies such as Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Machine Learning (ML), Cloud Technology has become more accessible to non-technical users. For example, one might use Cloud storage to store one's tax documents while they're being reviewed by the tax authority or a client.

However, it is important for Accountants to understand how Cloud Computing can be used by their clients in order to better decisions about their respective businesses.

TYPES OF CLOUD COMPUTING

Choosing a Cloud type or service is a decision that must be critically made. This is because no two Clouds are the same (even if they look similar), and no two Cloud services can be used to solve the same problem.

- **Public Clouds:** Public clouds are available for anyone who wants to use them, and they're typically hosted in data centers owned by a third party company like Amazon Web Services (AWS). They are known for their low prices and ease of use unlike the private cloud because there's no need for you to pay for hardware or software. However, you may have concerns about security, privacy and control over your data if you use a public cloud service instead of a private one. They also have a lot of flexibility because they can be scaled up or down as needed.
- **Private Clouds** Private clouds solutions are owned by an organization, but they're accessible to anyone within it. This means you don't have to worry about security or privacy issues when using your own private cloud infrastructure. They are similar to public clouds but they're owned by an organization. The owner may have access to all the machines in the cloud or just a subset of them. These clouds are very efficient at managing large amounts of data but they tend to be more expensive than public clouds.
- **Hybrid Clouds:** Hybrid clouds combine elements from both private and public clouds into one solution that's accessible from multiple devices (i.e., tablets). This type is growing in popularity because it allows users to access their personal information from anywhere without having any special software on their device (i.e., iPad).
- **Multi-clouds:** Multi-clouds are cloud computing that allow you to use different types of clouds at the same time. The concept of multi-clouds is very similar to hybrid cloud, except that multi-clouds can be used by multiple organizations and companies, while hybrid clouds can only be used by one organization. Multi-clouds allow organizations to reduce their costs and increase their flexibility in how they manage their data and applications. This is because multi-clouds allow you to move between different types of clouds as needed—for example, if you need to scale up or down your storage capacity, you can do so without having to change the underlying infrastructure (for example, switching from Amazon Web Services' S3 storage service to Google Cloud Storage).

Types of Cloud Computing Services Model

There are also three main types of Cloud Computing services model which include: Infrastructure-as-a-Service (IaaS), Platforms-as-a-Service (PaaS) and Software-as-a-Service (SaaS).

- **SaaS – Software as a Service**

This is a service that allows customers to access applications over the Internet without needing any special hardware or software. Customers would have full control over their own data and can access the data from anywhere in the world at any time

- **PaaS – Platform as a Service**

This is a service that allows customers to create their own applications by using an online development environment instead of having to purchase separate software licenses for every application they want to use.

- **IaaS – Infrastructure as a Service**

This is a service that allows customers to rent out unused resources like storage space, bandwidth and processing power on demand without having to invest in new hardware themselves.

Cloud Computing has become increasingly popular in recent years due to its many benefits especially for Accountants. They include:

Easy access to data throughout the day: With cloud computing, one can access different applications at different times, regardless of the time of day.

Greater flexibility in terms of location: Cloud-based services are accessible from wherever one is located at any given moment.

Increased security: This is due to the fact that data is stored on servers rather than the traditional method of storing data on hard drives. If one's computer is stolen or hacked into, the hacker can't have access to the files because they're not stored on a physical device—they exist only in cyberspace.

Minimal hardware requirements as Cloud Computing uses less power when compared to local storage systems.

Increased accessibility: Through use of the internet; no need for additional hardware.

Reduced costs: It requires less storage space, compared to the traditional methods of data storage such as hard drives or physical servers.

Opportunity to innovate: With a Cloud-based accounting software platform like CarrotSuite, SageBusiness Cloud, Fresh books etc., one can create different versions of one's application for every client based on their specific needs.

As a chartered accountant, you may be wondering how can cloud computing help your career. Here are some common questions to ask yourself when considering the relevancy of cloud computing to your career or before moving your company to the cloud:

- Which cloud should I use?
- What are the costs associated with using cloud-based services and which cloud costs more?
- How many resources do I need?
- Which cloud has the best resources?
- How safe and secure is my data?
- Does my organization have the skills needed to use these services effectively?
- Will this move help me meet my firm/clients' goals for the future?

In conclusion, there is much to learn about Cloud Computing and its many benefits in helping to increase the competitiveness of firms. Many entities should consider Cloud Computing if they rely heavily on documents (or if they are to be kept up-to-date) and need features like data sharing and workflow automation. Cloud Computing has come to stay as a positive technology disruption tool that will support their users and place in a competitive advantage over their competitors who are using the traditional methods and tools.

Anniversary Program:

Aug. 5 Friday - Jumat Service @ Alausa Central Mosque, Alausa Ikeja - 1:00pm

Aug. 6 Saturday - Novelty Match/Vital @National Broadcasting Academy, Adekunle Fajuyi Way, Ikeja GRA. - 9:00am

Aug. 7 Sunday - Thanksgiving Service @ ArchBshop Vining Memorial Church, Ikeja
Dress Code: White on Ruby Colour Fila & Gele for Everybody - 10:00am

Aug. 8 Anniversary walk around Ikeja - 9:00am

Aug 9 Tuesday - Public Lecture by Mr Taiwo Oyedele FCA (Virtual) - 10:00am

Aug 10 Wednesday - Visit to the Orphanage, Giving back to the Society. - 10:00am

Aug 12 Friday - Grand Finale Morning Session @IDSICAN Secretariat - 9:00am

Anniversary Party - @EKO FM Marquee, LTV Compound, Opp. Coca-Cola Agidingbi, Ikeja - 2:00pm (Dress Code: Any Comfortable Dress)

