



Best practices in cloud migration from the Infor Cloud Council



Cloud gives you choices never available before

The convenience and value of having business technology in the cloud is now apparent to millions of firms that have made the move. But the process of migrating to the cloud remains a detailed, sensitive project that requires the full attention of an organization's business and technology leaders to ensure a timely and effective outcome.

In a recent survey, Infor® Cloud Council members representing diverse industries such as manufacturing, healthcare, public sector, distribution and government, offered suggestions about best practices for planning and executing a cloud migration based on their experience. Following are some of their recommendations.

Vendor selection

With cloud technology, effective vendor selection is even more crucial than it is with on-premise technologies, since you'll be working actively with at least one of your vendors indefinitely. You need to be sure that the vendors you choose are suited to your situation.

Technical background and expertise at scale—There's a world of difference between a single site, 30-seat implementation and a multi-site, multinational project serving thousands of users. You don't want to be any vendor's test case. Make sure your vendor has done a successful project for a company of your size or larger.

Industry and domain knowledge—An apparel manufacturer needs very different things than an

electronics manufacturer does. A vendor with experience in an industry comparable to yours can add valuable insight.

Discipline-specific experience—The goals of a CRM implementation are vastly different than those of an ERP implementation. Be sure that you're choosing vendors with experience implementing the product type you seek.

Maturity—Because cloud technology creates a long-term relationship, you need to choose partners with a proven capacity to sustain that relationship for a period of years. If you've had an on-premise ERP in place for a decade or more, presume that you'll be tightly connected to your cloud vendor for at least that long, and that you can rely on your vendor to be in business that long.

Resources

Stay in charge—It makes sense to outsource costs and functions with cloud technology; but don't be lulled into complacency by thinking you've outsourced responsibility—that belongs to you. Your vendors may not always know the best method or answer; only you can be the judge of that.

Establish a single point of contact—You need to identify and assign one person to run cloud operations and work with the vendor team. Ambiguity about key responsibilities can delay the project and lead to unexpected errors and omissions.

Communication

Establish clear procedures—Make sure your user community knows who to contact, how to interact, and when to escalate issues to resolve issues.

Document and share processes—Create written documentation of business processes, best practices, and lessons learned, then communicate that as widely and regularly as possible.

Set expectations early—Communicate early and frequently with all stakeholders to establish realistic expectations so that the change management process can flow more smoothly.

Contracting

Clarify terms—Make sure you understand the terms of the vendor contract, including issues involving indemnity, security, data confidentiality, scope of service, remote use, deliverables, daily administration and operating procedures, termination, and exit terms.

Establish service level agreement (SLA)—The SLA is critical to understanding potential disaster recovery issues and how to deal with performance outages.

Check references—Find out how other customers view your prospective vendors' performance. Don't just focus on the big wins; find out how they dealt with difficult situations, or how they recovered when things went wrong.

Testing and training

Review security protocols—Because Infor hosts cloud apps on Amazon® Web Services, you have fewer physical security concerns, but your internal processes could still be vulnerable. Make sure all personnel are briefed on security precautions to keep your data safe.

Engage expert services—Cloud implementations have unique requirements and challenges. Engage a vendor with sufficiently robust service offerings to ensure a successful project.

Test performance before go-live—Give priority to full performance testing to ensure that the entire environment is properly sized for your work cycles and peak loads.

Review your integration plan—Make sure you understand how your new application will integrate with all the other solutions you use, including ERP, CRM, EAM, WMS, and other systems. The impact of your integration plan can have effects throughout your organization, so it's essential to know what to expect.

Build a comprehensive training plan—Your migration offers the perfect opportunity to build a training plan that supports your current employees, and serves new hires as well. Take advantage of Infor subscription training services to help bring new employees up to speed in their work responsibilities.

About the Infor Cloud Council

The Infor Cloud Council is a forum where customers can share and discuss ideas, concerns, and suggestions. Council members also provide input into program planning and product development for Infor's cloud offerings. The benefit to all is in strengthening relationships and communications.



641 Avenue of the Americas
New York, NY 10011
800-260-2640
infor.com

About Infor

Infor builds business software for specific industries in the cloud. With 15,000 employees and over 90,000 customers in more than 170 countries, Infor software is designed for progress. To learn more, please visit www.infor.com.

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641 Avenue of the Americas, New York, NY 10011
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