



## Leverage the Cloud to Modernise Technology and Enable Business Goals

*In today's rapidly evolving business world, the lines between technology and business have blurred. Organisations need to modernise and transform their technology in order to successfully compete. CIOs play a critical role in transforming the world of work using automation and technology – but they can't do it alone. Collaboration among the C-suite is critical. In this blog series, Protiviti's Technology Consulting leaders share insights on the key areas CIOs need to consider on the transformation journey and the impact across the C-suite and business.*

Is your organisation modernising its technology by leveraging the cloud to gain new sources of revenue, optimise supply chains, reduce costs and increase market share? Successful organisations do not merely move traditional data to cloud platforms to have better data access – they shift to the cloud by thinking differently, using the cloud as a tool to achieve business goals by implementing a strong cloud infrastructure.

Cloud has evolved to become a key enabler for organisations to develop, grow and compete in today's marketplace. Executives should collaborate and communicate to enable a different, more valuable version of the enterprise and understand how cloud underpins this vision. Cloud can bring speed, agility, resilience and visibility. But taking on too much at once or not following a tried and tested model with clear foundations for successful consumption of cloud can result in analysis paralysis and questions from the business on whether cloud is a true enabler. Organisations may find it helpful to execute a multi-stage migration rather than undertaking a comprehensive re-architecture. An incremental

approach to cloud adoption affords a company time to refine the approach and effectively demonstrate progress and benefits.

Factors for successfully leveraging the cloud to enable business goals include:

- Transforming data processes
- Addressing the operating model and skillset considerations
- Compliance by design
- Minimising complexity
- Optimising costs

### **Shed What No Longer Propels You**

Transforming data processes is critical to capitalising on technology modernisation. Organisations should not rely on old tools, such as using Excel spreadsheets for change management, when there are many highly effective cloud-based tools that enable a more efficient, effective and consistent way forward. Existing processes must be abandoned to the extent they are holding the company back from achieving grander goals.

### **Take Your People Along on the Ride**

Enterprise transformation demands change management and navigating skillset considerations such as training so that employees can operate with confidence and evolve with your business. Companies should ensure they are bringing their people along on the transformation journey. As processes and technology change, employees should be trained so skillsets align with new approaches. To maximise ROI, organisations must think innovatively by adopting new practices like Agile for work effort management and DevOps for rapid provisioning of business solutions into the cloud.

### **Compliance is Not an Afterthought**

Compliance and security should be built by design and integrated into cloud solutions to enable better and safer consumption and to leverage the innovative nature of cloud services within your organisation. Automation affords different approaches to achieving compliance. Cloud deployment can be automatically driven, with entities spinning up numerous new systems while incorporating security and compliance along the way. Cloud-native paradigms such as DevSecOps can simultaneously incorporate compliance into deployments. In

comparison, traditional controls scan for vulnerabilities and apply patches at endpoints in time. This can put organisations at risk during patch deployment and leave them blind with no insight — unless they automate compliance controls.

### **Watch Costs**

It is easy to acquire technology that exceeds needs or requirements — and it is even easier to forget to turn technology off when it is underutilised. Insufficient control on technology expense results in excessive and unnecessary costs, so it is important to ensure that costs are well-managed and substantiated. Cloud, finance and procurement teams should work together to weigh cloud costs against benefits. [FinOps](#) can bring financial accountability to the variable costs of cloud infrastructure, helping organisations have a pulse on the financial health of their cloud environment.

### **Complexity Can Crush Clarity**

Uncontrolled complexity causes chaos. An in-depth understanding of the current cloud environment is essential as it facilitates subsequent modernisation later down the line — as compared to the complexity of trying to understand the data environment along the journey. Companies should not overcomplicate deployment simply to use new cloud technologies. Working with the Cloud Service Provider (CSP) and partners, organisations should aim to use the consumption of cloud to reduce complexity and define this as a target of transformation.

### **Have a 360° C-suite**

Effective cloud that aligns with business strategies comes from C-suite executives who communicate early and collaborate often. C-suite executives who understand how cloud infrastructure enables their business goals have a greater likelihood of achieving those goals. All members of the team must come with an understanding and alignment towards a common business case. It is then that all aspects of cloud are addressed, including cost, security, complexity, people and process. For example, having CFO buy-in early to support upfront investment is essential. Likewise, ensuring the chief data officer (CDO) and chief marketing officer (CMO) collaborate on how the cloud infrastructure supports the business case is critical to achieving revenue results. When communication and collaboration are lacking, conflicting scenarios develop — although revenue may increase, risk also may be higher. A growing concern among clients is the movement of more production workloads to

the cloud. Production workloads with sensitive data require having compliance in place, now more important than ever.

Engaging the C-suite about departmental challenges and opportunities uncovers gems of insight that can be used to improve efficiency or increase value in departments outside of IT. Effective CIOs continuously ask, “How can I be a better partner?” While communicating early and often is key for all members of the C-suite, there are some issues that are important for certain executives to be aware of, including:

**Chief Financial Officer (CFO)** – While consuming the cloud is easier across the organisation, a lack of control can allow costs to spiral. Implementing controls ahead of time can save money and provide greater oversight. The impact of infrastructure changing from CapEx to a consumption-driven OpEx model should be analysed and understood.

**Chief Risk Officer (CRO)/Chief Compliance Officer (CCO)** – Understanding the differences in how CROs and CCOs control risk is important due to the shift from interim approvals to DevOps automation. A combination of learning and incorporating appropriate checks into automation processes is important.

**Chief Audit Executive (CAE)** – With the automation that cloud infrastructure brings, controls become codified where they were previously in easy-to-comprehend word documents. To address codification, auditors must acquire the proper training to understand and read code and provide assurance on the proper design and operation of automation.

**Chief Data Officer (CDO)** – Knowing data location and cost is key. Having newer and more effective tools brings a need to understand associated risks. As data size grows, risk complexity increases, making it more important to manage the volume of data and the controls and compliance around that data.

**Chief Marketing Officer (CMO)** – Cloud can enable a holistic user experience across end points so that services integrate with call centers, mobile apps, home assistant devices and other access points. This affords richer data to elevate enterprise offerings that are delivered to consumers.

Last, but not least, business leaders and employees are the beneficiaries of a solid cloud infrastructure, as the end result is increased speed and delivery from enterprise to client.

## Where Do Companies Go from Here?

An organisation's phase in its transformation journey determines next steps. Entities at the beginning of their cloud adoption journey should plan, analyse their current environment, assess their workforce and determine and augment skillsets. Entities further along in the cloud journey should look for ongoing optimisation opportunities and continuous improvement. Lastly, enterprises approaching completion of cloud transformation should solidify benefits in accordance with those defined in the cloud transformation business plan.

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