



5 Cloud Migration Trends to Watch

“Change is good.”

Inspirational office posters around the world have heralded this idea for years. Change means growth, movement, and opportunity to expand. Changing your ERP systems, however, requires a little more than good faith and a positive attitude. For this reason, there's some warranted skepticism surrounding any kind of self-inflicted upheaval in your business. You can't afford to go out on a limb if you're not sure it can handle your weight.

You may consider migrating to the cloud to be one of these limbs, but we're here to tell you there's no need to fear. The cloud's growing popularity has ushered in a new era of ERP solutions — one experts believe will lead to a *cloud-majority landscape within the next few years*.

Many enterprises also anticipate investing big in the future of cloud technology for their businesses, *making their migrations a major priority*. These days, moving to the cloud is no longer a leap of faith, but a tried-and-true trend among forward-thinking businesses.

All over the world, large corporations and small businesses are leaving on-premises ERP solutions behind in favor of much more adaptable cloud solutions. Forbes found last year that *92% of the companies surveyed either currently use cloud software* in some branch of their business operations or have concrete plans to implement cloud software within the next year. Let's take a closer look at the ERP trends that have many companies eager to make the switch in order to optimize their operations around the fast-growing landscape of the cloud.



Saving Money

Obviously, cutting costs wherever you can is not a new area of interest. But with all the new arenas of expansion that cloud technology creates for users, the money-saving opportunities are greater than ever. Non-cloud solutions can lead to numerous hidden costs, such as IT check-ins, update fees, and hardware purchases. Cloud-based software can help users cut out these areas of financial waste.

With cloud ERP, you start saving money right from the get-go, because implementing cloud software comes with an impressively low cost of entry. Whereas on-premises solutions require businesses to pay for the hardware up-front, cloud software functions on a subscription basis, making the financial transition taste a lot better going down.

The cloud's customizable functionality is designed to help companies save money; they're set up to be "pay for what you use," which will eradicate unnecessary spending on features that don't translate to the work you do. This also gives cloud users a better idea of what features are essential to their company's operations, allowing them to focus more energy on mastering those areas.



A New Favorite Among SMBs

Another trend among cloud users has emerged; the user demographic is changing. More and more small businesses are flocking to an off-premises ERP software. In the past, it's been a common misconception that cloud technology is an intimidating undertaking that's only appropriate for large corporations who can afford a substantial upheaval in their productivity.

However, as the cloud has become more commonly used, it's also become more affordable, making it possible for small businesses to take advantage of an upper echelon of technology that may have been previously unavailable to them for financial reasons. This way, SMBs can remain on the cutting edge without paying steep prices.

The simplicity and ease of use that accompany cloud software make it a perfect fit for small to medium businesses. Cloud technology's integration capabilities minimize the hassle of yearly subscriptions to multiple systems that handle point-of-sale data, CRM functions, and inventory management. Now, it's all under one roof, and on one system, so managing these features becomes a snap and saves tons of time. The effort once expended on keeping up on several different solutions and consolidating data across them can now be allocated towards fuelling the company's growth.

The complicated nature of an on-premises solution can make or break productivity, especially for a small business. Many on-premises solutions require constant management — some businesses even hire additional personnel specifically to run the software and keep it in working order, because it can so often become fussy.

One SalesPad Cloud customer, Diversity IT, was in this position before they moved to a cloud solution. They were spending an unjustifiable amount on extra staff, which was toxic to a company of their size. They also faced the challenge of being slowed down by how long their item listing process took with the additional staff.

Once Diversity IT added cloud-based software to their arsenal, they were able to cut back on the excess personnel and redirect their energy towards getting their orders processed and their listings posted in record-breaking time. In this way, Diversity IT was able to hang on to a smaller operating style, but reached the same level of productivity as a much larger operation.



Mobility and Security Are Not Mutually Exclusive

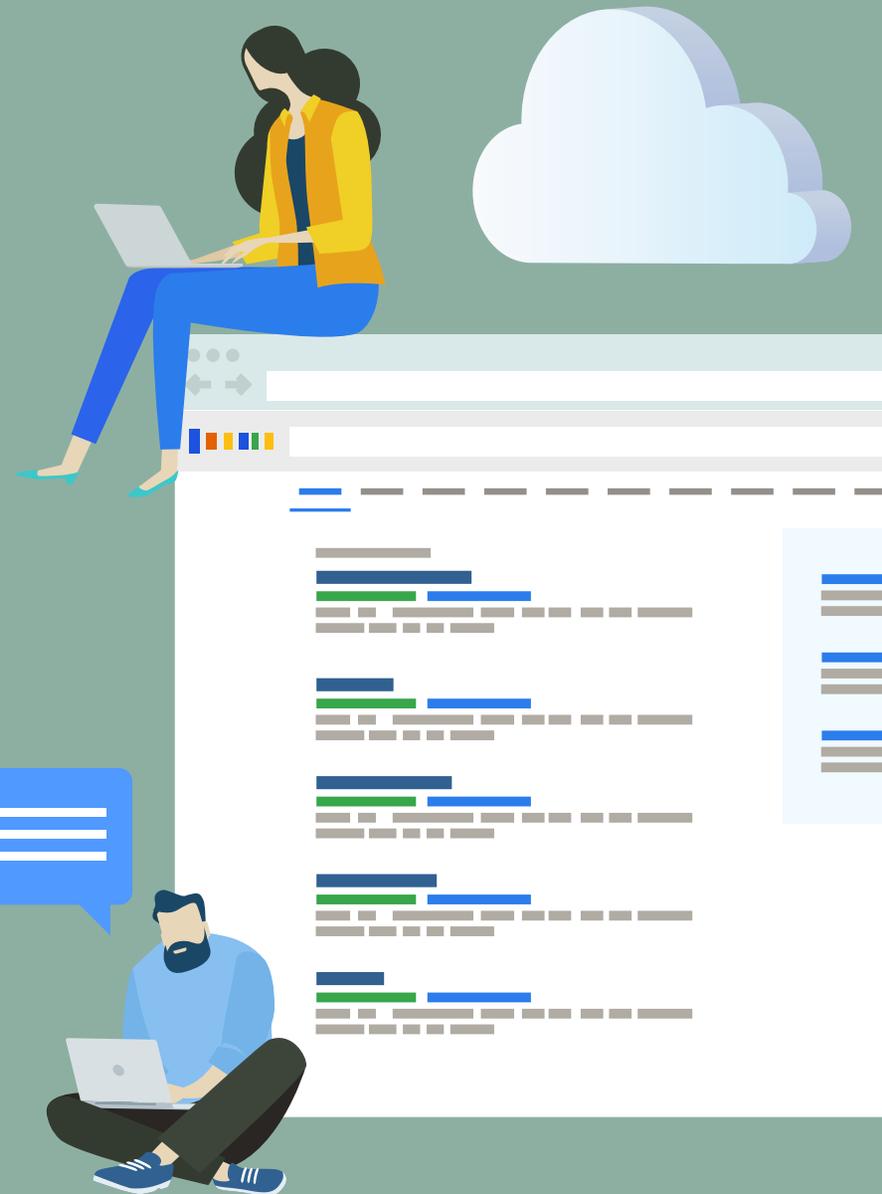
The business sphere is constantly changing and adapting, as is the very nature of how people perform their day-to-day work. With all the opportunities that our tech-savvy world provides, business professionals are redefining the traditional work day. The amount of people who work from home has increased drastically throughout the last couple years, **and currently hovers around 8 million individuals in the U.S.** alone. This trend shows signs of continued growth, which means if your company doesn't have the wherewithal to allow employees to work remotely, you're falling behind.

Cloud software makes working remotely a snap. With an on-premises solution, off-site work requires a VPN (virtual private network) and other additional hassles. Cloud technology offers powerful mobility, so employees can work off-site without missing a beat, and documents can be shared, approved, and distributed in the most efficient manner possible. The flexibility will keep your colleagues happy, and the security will keep your data in the right hands.

While being able to host your data off-site is super convenient, **90% of IT practitioners see this as a threat, out of concern that off-site data centers aren't fully secure.** Data security is a huge priority, and putting your trust in a system you can't actually see seems like a big leap of faith. This is especially true if you're working with company-sensitive information, or handling financials that need to be kept secure from a location outside your main hub. There needs to be no doubt about the security of your system.

Luckily, the cloud offers many security measures to protect your data. With cloud-based software, it's easier to control your employees' access levels. This means that you'll be able to make sure that your users only have access to the information they need, creating heightened security from the inside. This more restrictive tactic will also allow you to limit who is editing what, and when. If there are any internal security concerns, they can be traced back to the culprit with ease.

To further combat security concerns, cloud technology is equipped with data encryption that only allows those with the encryption key to gain access. This is a stronger and safer method than simply password protecting something — passwords can change, be guessed, or fall into the wrong hands. Encryption keeps your data safe even if the data is lost or stolen because it is impossible to decipher without the accommodating key. As we move towards a more advanced digital world, it's impossible to say that any data security method will be 100% foolproof, but cloud software gives you the best chance at keeping your information secure.



Environmentally Conscious

If you've been keeping up with the news during the last couple of years, you know that the necessity for *environmentally-friendly business practices is ever-increasing*. While many companies have made strides in implementing environmentally friendly practices, it's not necessarily an immediate instinct to consider that your ERP system can also be a source of extreme energy waste and lost potential.

Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory's Google-commissioned study found that if the 86 million users who are still utilizing an on-premises system moved to cloud-based software, it would amount to cutting their respective energy usage by 87%. *That equates to enough energy to power Los Angeles for a year*. Energy emissions from operating multiple systems contribute greatly to carbon emissions, so any way that your company can reduce your energy output, the better off you'll be. Implementing a cloud ERP solution also allows you to host all your systems in one location, electronically, reducing the number of physical printed materials that were originally in circulation. No more waiting at the printer or passing papers around the office in hopes that they make it into the right hands. This system improves accessibility and minimizes your company's waste output, helping your company save on energy costs.



Scalability and Customized Functionality

We're living in an age where small, niche businesses are becoming more and more commonplace. Because there are so many new, innovative industries on the rise, one-size-fits-all software solutions just aren't going to cut it anymore. People are starting to seek out systems that will allow them to customize and integrate their ERP solution to fit their specific needs, not the other way around. There's no need to compromise or find workarounds — the cloud is designed to be adjusted and customized.

In order to provide this scalability, the cloud is primed for including integrations. The best ERP solutions are the fully comprehensive ones; you want to be able to do more than just track your inventory. *Integrations give you the benefit of the functionality of many specialized, diverse programs* and the ease of operating from one platform. You can combine functions, such as ecommerce channel management and payment processing solutions, with your ERP, and sync every branch of your company's operations.

Cloud technology's scalability doesn't end with integration opportunities. It allows for unlimited data, so as your company grows, your cloud solution can move right along with you. Whatever add-ons or specific capabilities you need, cloud technology is also designed to be customizable and can be adapted to meet any needs your company may come across now or in the future. No more limits on inventory items, no more purchasing separate systems to accomplish your business goals. By implementing cloud technology, the sky's the limit.

Another SalesPad Cloud customer, Angstrom Supply, was able to implement cloud-based software that grew as they did. As the demand for their cleaning products began to pick up, they felt overwhelmed by the number of listings they needed to put out daily in order to maintain their business' current performance. At one point, they were only processing one order a day.

Luckily, SalesPad Cloud proved to be the perfect partner for their growing business. They were able to integrate brand-new workflows, which upped their productivity through every step of the purchasing and shipping process. These changes didn't require a huge upheaval, and allowed them to completely personalize the features of their software to create a streamlined experience.





Distribution Operations. Transformed.

In the grand scheme of things, being trendy doesn't always equate to financial success. Some fads move by faster than others and aren't worth the time and money invested. Luckily, moving your ERP system to the cloud is one of those choices that is proven stronger as time goes by. There is much for your business to gain from streamlining your software, and there's no better time to start considering a move towards a safer, more reliable, easily maintained system that will catapult your operations into the modern business world.

If you're thinking of making the switch, check out our overview of *SalesPad Cloud services*, or request to *demo our sandbox*. We're here to make our solutions work for you.

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