that at least require significant conversion efforts to migrate to the cloud. For example, you might have use an accounting system that relies on local file storage.

Fortunately, many cloud providers offer assistance with this migration. And in many cases, the same application that you run locally can be run in the cloud, so no conversion is necessary.

» **Internet connection speed:** Cloud computing shifts much of the burden of your network to your Internet connection. Your users used to access their data on local file servers over gigabit-speed connections; now they must access data over slower bandwidth Internet connections.

REMEMBER

Although you can upgrade your connection to higher speeds, doing so will cost money — money that may well offset the money you otherwise save from migrating to the cloud.

» **Internet connection reliability:** The cloud resources you access may feature all the redundancy in the world, but if your users access the cloud through a single Internet connection, that connection becomes a key point of vulnerability. Should it fail, any applications that depend on the cloud will be unavailable. If those applications are mission-critical, business will come to a halt until the connection is restored.

Here are two ways to mitigate this risk:

- *Make sure that you're using an enterprise-class Internet connection.* Enterprise-class connections are more expensive but provide much better fault tolerance and repair service than consumer-class connections do.

- *Provide redundant connections if you can.* That way, if one connection fails, traffic can be rerouted through alternative connections.

» **Security threats:** You can bet your life that hackers throughout the world are continually probing for ways to break through the security perimeter of all the major cloud providers. When they do, your data may be exposed.

The best way to mitigate this threat is to ensure that strong password policies are enforced and make sure that your data is backed up.

Examining Three Basic Kinds of Cloud Services

Three distinct kinds of services can be provided via the cloud: applications, platforms, and services (infrastructure). The following paragraphs describe these three types of cloud services in greater detail.