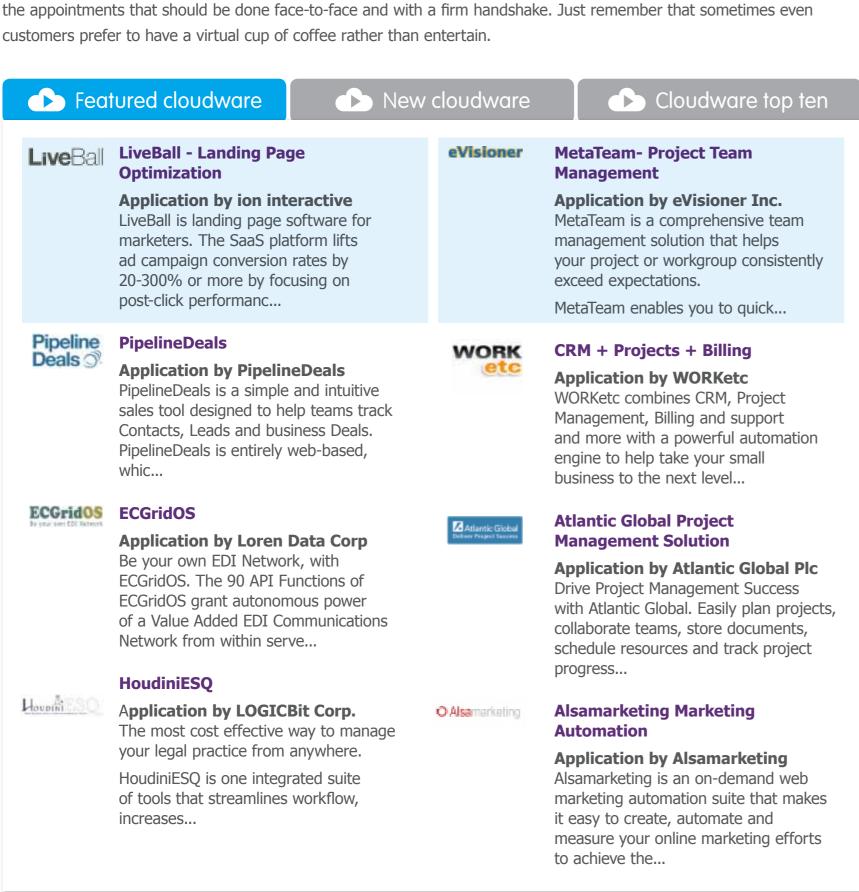


Conferencing overview

Meetings are simply unavoidable and part of everyday life. Thankfully, instead of spending endless hours on the road or travelling by train or plane there is now an easier and faster way to connect to customers, colleagues and suppliers. Using your PC, laptop or smartphone you can simply schedule a web conference.

Think of it as digital 'teleportation' where you can set-up or join a meeting instantly and invite participants out of thin air to answer specific questions or queries. Also the ability to share documents and work together on one screen is fantastic compared to a somewhat crowded and huddled affair in the real world. You can even record meetings for absentees. Once you add up the cost of travel and time, web conferencing is unbeatable value for money.

Some providers even use high-definition audio and video which is why we still recommend flossing! Now at Compare Cloudware, we're not suggesting you replace all physical meetings with virtual sessions but is does mean you can prioritise the appointments that should be done face-to-face and with a firm handshake. Just remember that sometimes even





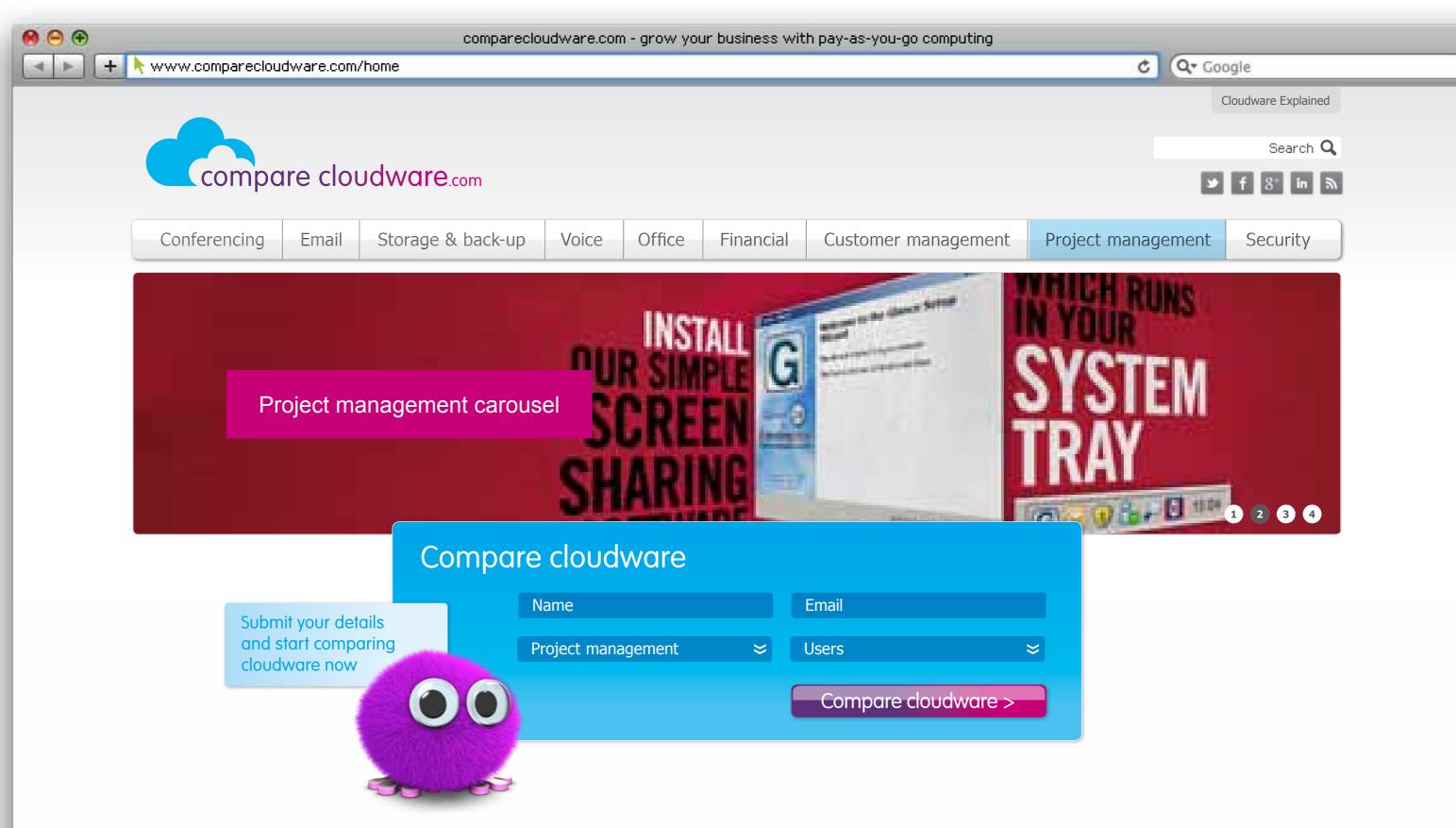


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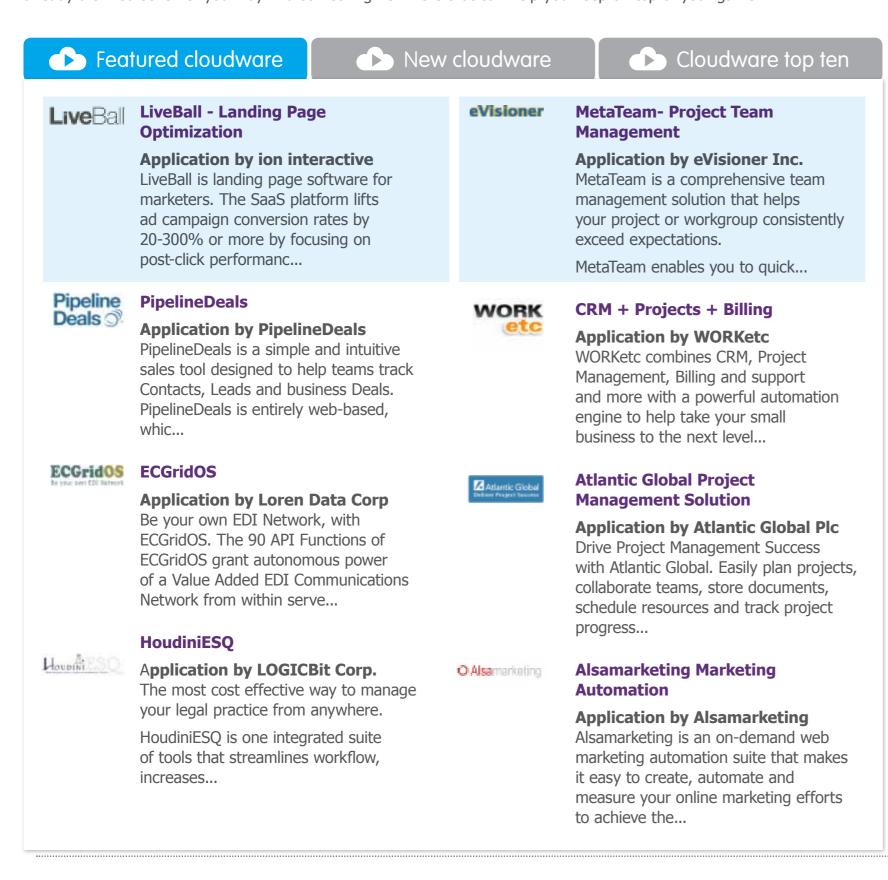
Project management

Most of us try our upmost to manage our lives with a dose of common sense, perhaps the occasional 'to do' list and maybe even mark a calendar with a special event. For the most part that's OK but sometimes we need a little extra help and that's what this category is all about.

Successful project management is about keeping track of all the important (and seemingly unimportant things) in our more complex endeavours. Making sure certain tasks don't fall between the cracks will help prevent wasted time, increased costs and rising blood pressure. So whether you're building an extension, re-fitting a kitchen, developing an app, keeping tabs on an important assignment or even doing a work project outside your normal comfort zone, we suggest ditching the self-made 'to do' list (yes, even on a spreadsheet) and get something that can really help ease the burden.

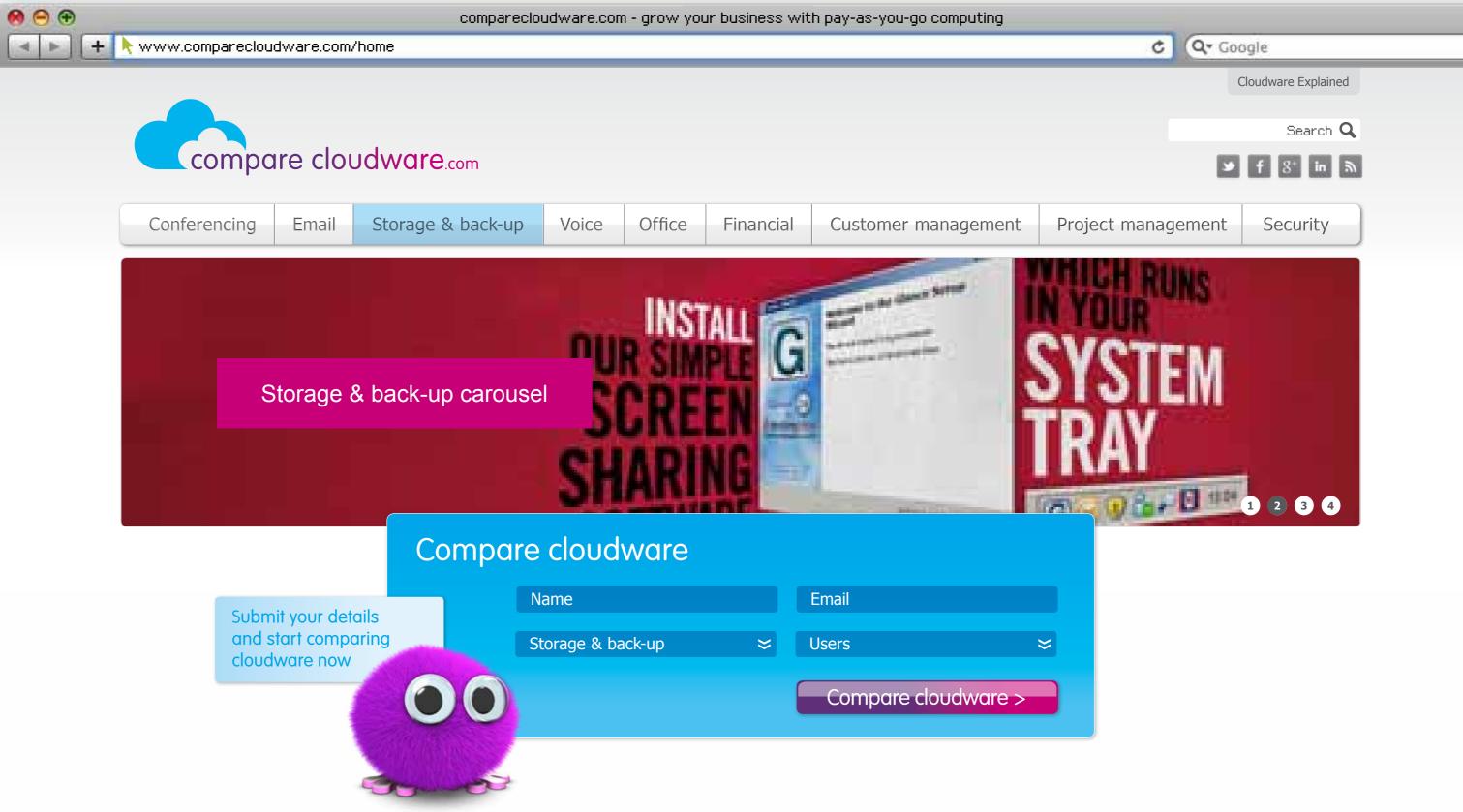
Now of course you may be able to afford hiring a professional project manager or, better still, actually be one. So if you're already a skilled schemer you may find something new here that can help you keep on top of your game.







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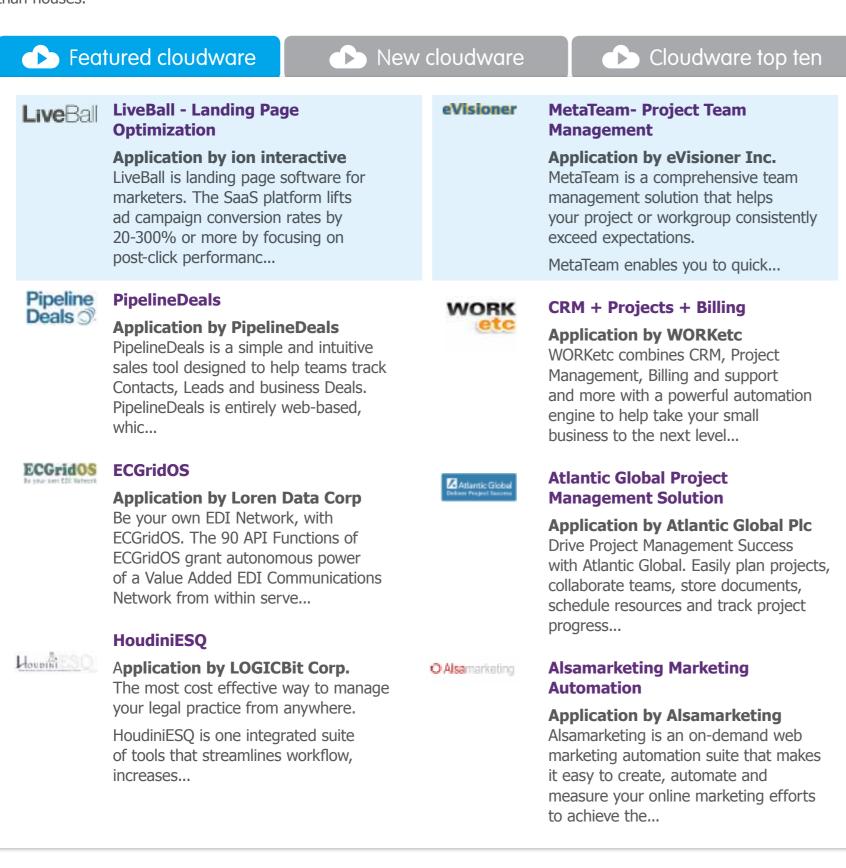


Storage & back-up

We humans love collecting things until we're bursting to the brim with a lifetime of possessions and souvenirs. After a while we usually head to IKEA to box-up old keepsakes and maybe put those boxes in the cupboard, loft or garage for safe-keeping. Ultimately, we either get rid of the accumulating odds and ends or maybe decide to go to a yellow painted self-storage facility!

Now what about your digital life? Instead of having important files, photos and videos spread across multiple computers and moving them around when you buy new devices, wouldn't be simpler and safer to have all those digital belongings in one manageable place? We think it is. So don't wait for the 'blue screen of death', a stolen smartphone or laptop or even a fire (especially if you happen to live on a remote Caribbean island!) to ruin your digital existence.

Whether it is a lifetime of memories, a treasured music library or essential work documents, storage in the cloud is safer than houses.







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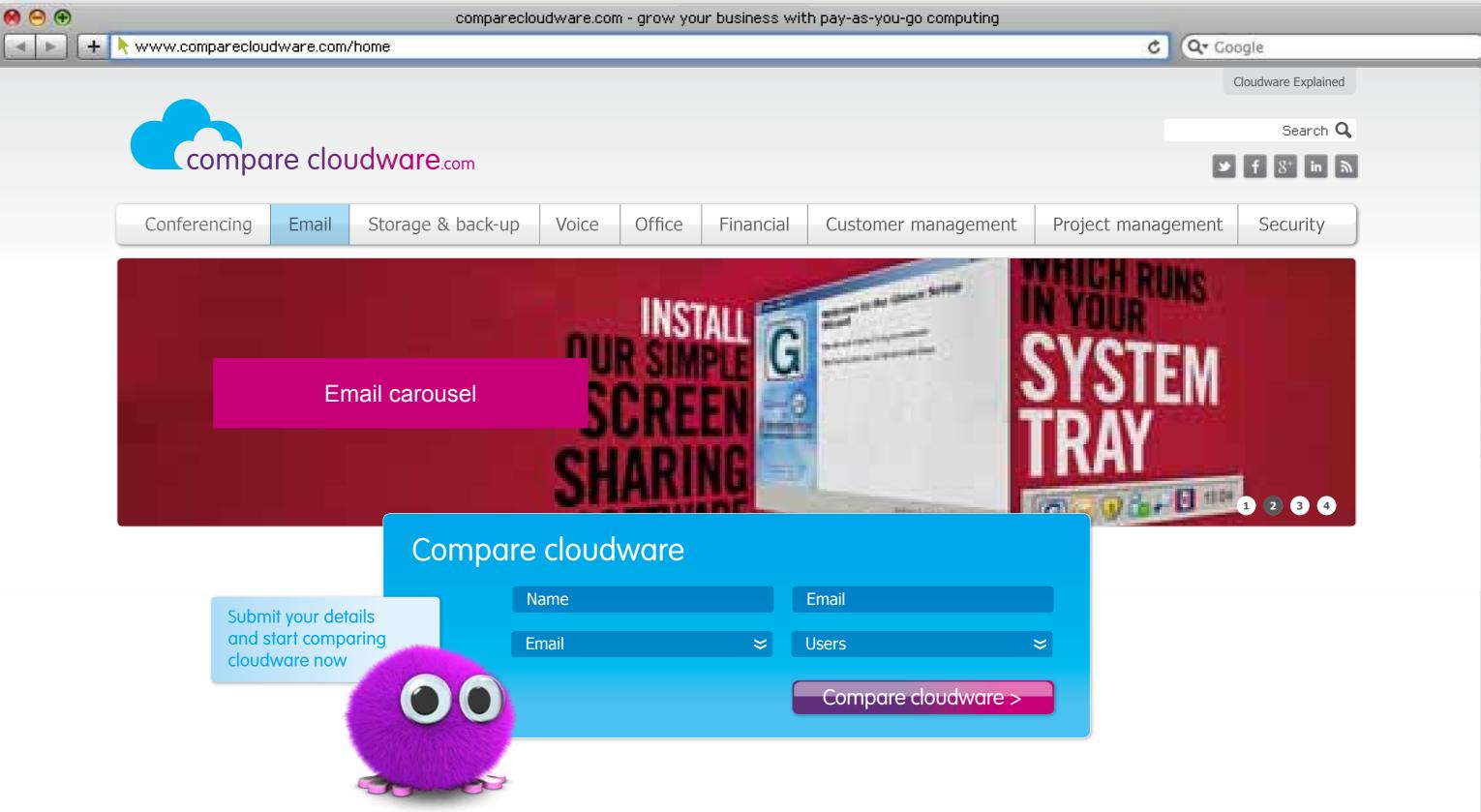
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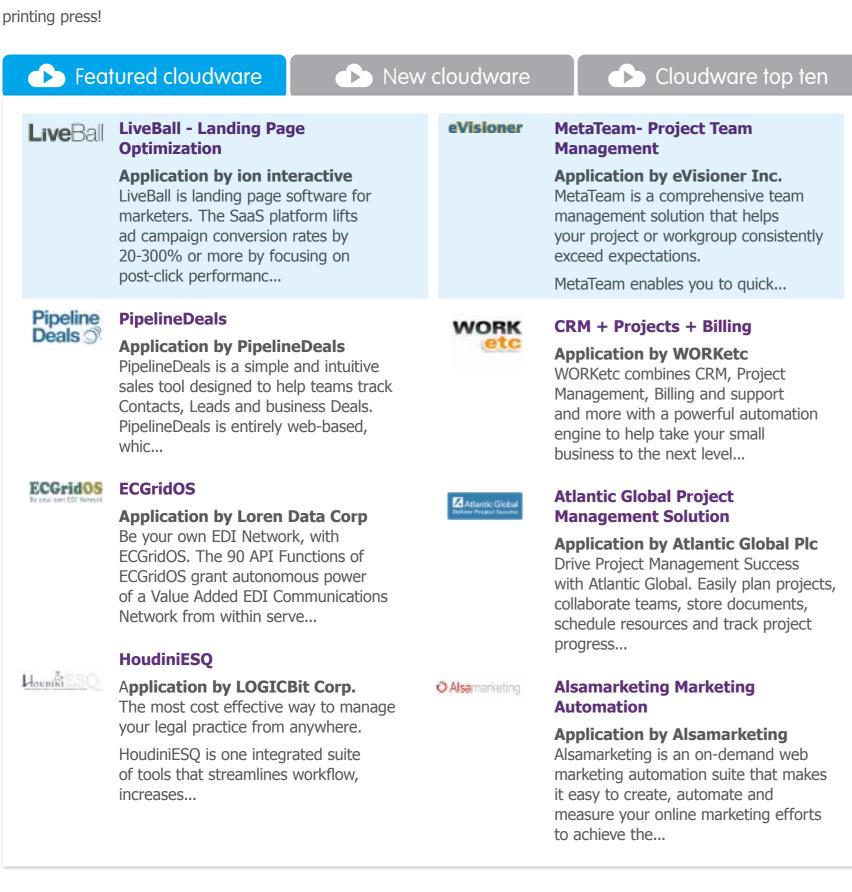
Email

Email is one of life's little treasures isn't it? In fact with all the spam, junk mail, holiday competitions, cash prizes and coupons, finding the email message you want can sometimes feel like searching for hidden Aztec gold. So ask yourself the question, when was the last time you reviewed your email set-up? Go on admit it, it was probably when the X-Files was still on primetime.

Now whisper it quietly but email has lived in the Cloud for quite a while and our guess is that you're already using it with at least one account somewhere in your digital life; whether at home or out and about on your smartphone. For most businesses, however, there are two catches:-

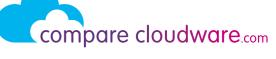
- 1. Keeping your email address that everybody knows.
- 2. How to ditch the expensive DIY email server that sits in the corner of the cupboard with the other blinking boxes!

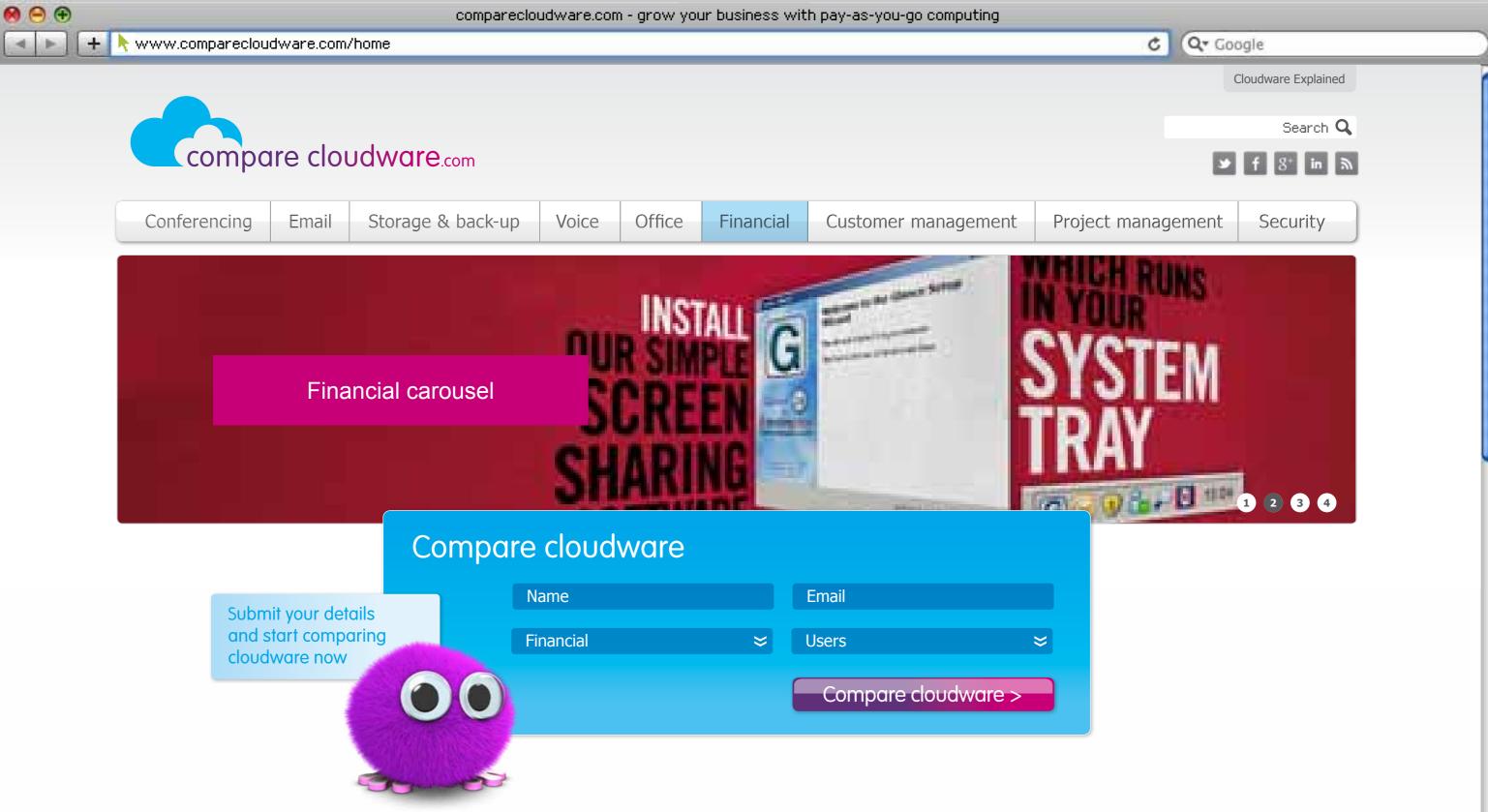
Well, like everything in the Cloud, you don't need a dedicated box of electronics to run anything and migrating to another provider with your existing email address is simple and straightforward. Even better you can archive all your email in the Cloud for instant back-up and disaster recovery. And for those of you that are still promoting your Internet Service Provider (ISP) brand in your email address? Shame on you, you're missing the biggest marketing opportunity since the printing press!









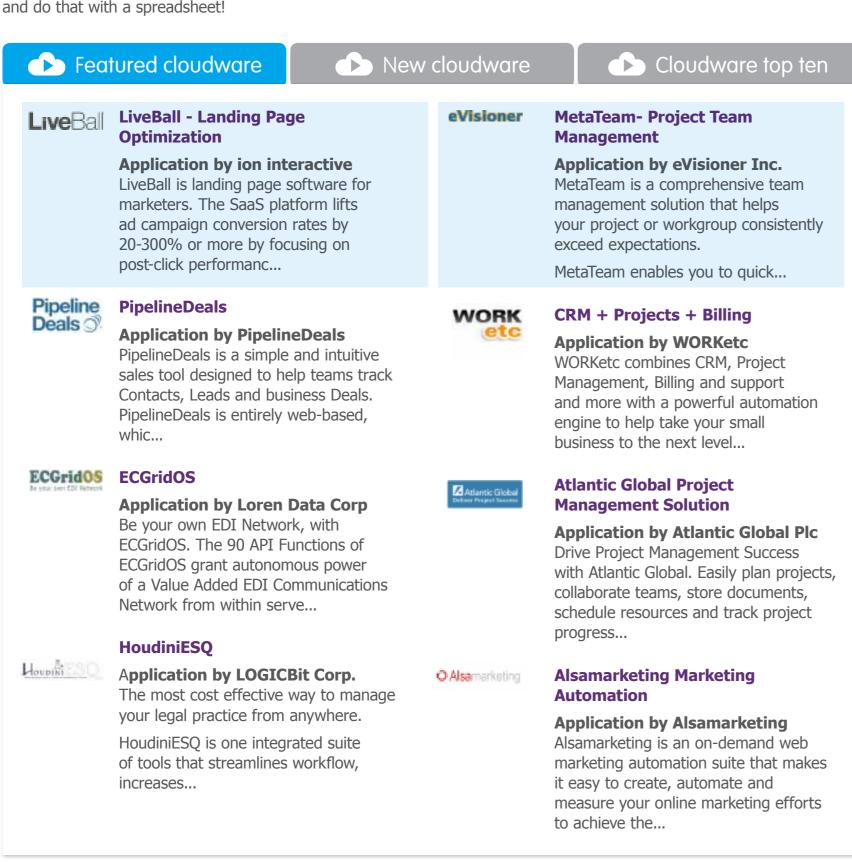


Financial

Are you still using spreadsheets to track your spending and payments? Are you still manually cross-referencing bank statements? Or worse, creating customer invoices using a word processor? Keeping track of the pennies is tough enough without creating more mess to try and keep on top of it all. Of course spreadsheets may have been a step-up from the handwritten ledger book but let's be honest it's still a major hassle.

Whether you work from home, run a shop or look after a medium sized business, there is a cloudware service for you that makes finance and accounts a picnic rather than a dog's dinner! So whether it is recording bank payments, looking at cashflow, creating invoices, running a payroll or helping with the tax return, you'll find something tailored to your needs in this category.

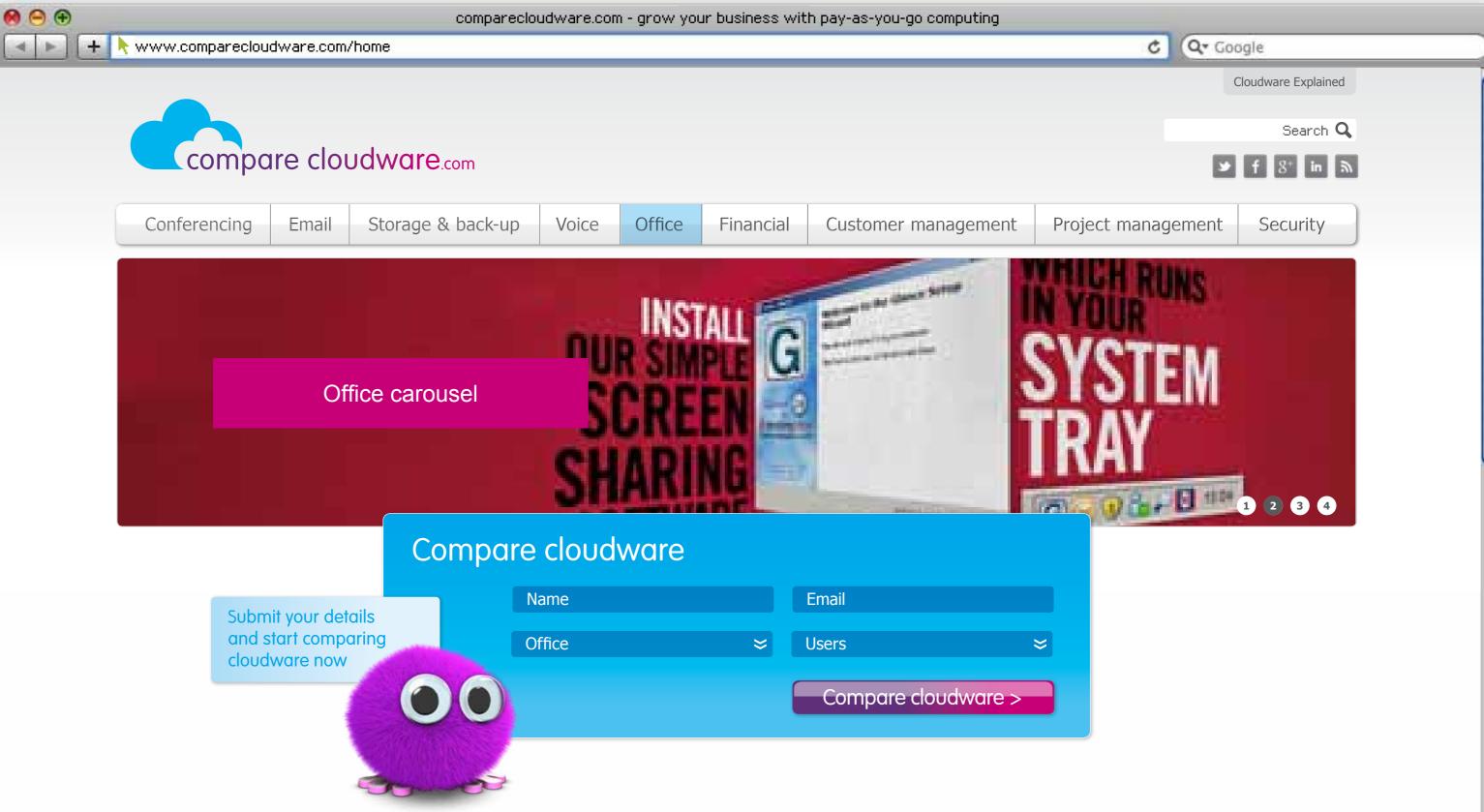
The good news is that if it does all get too much you can give access to your accountant to help tidy things up, now try and do that with a spreadsheet!









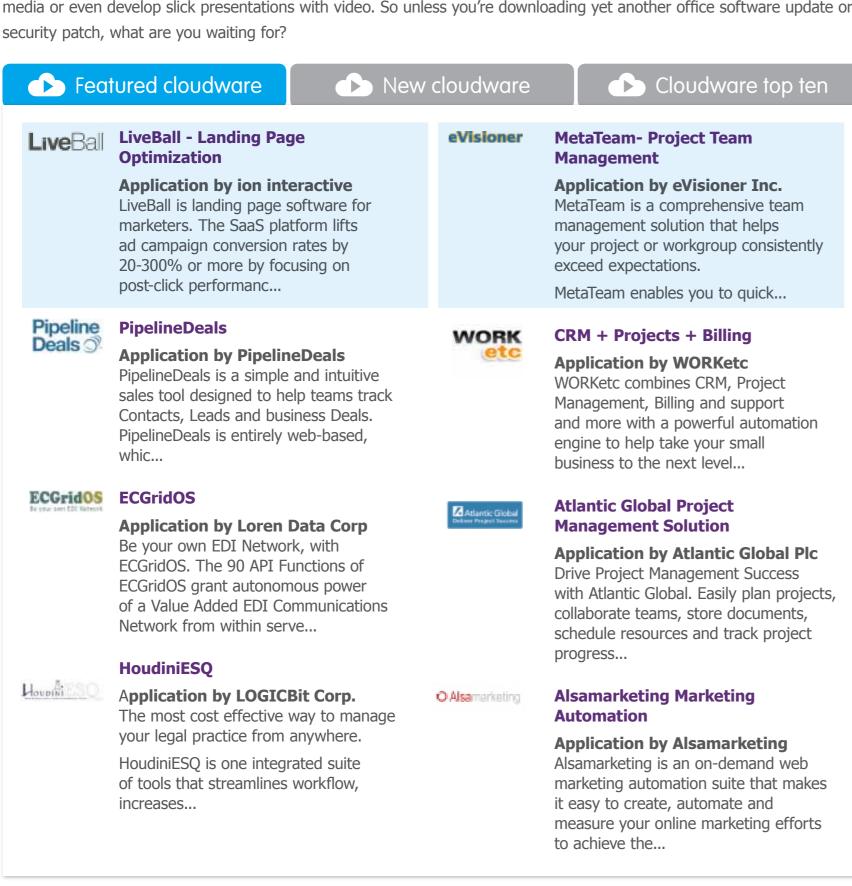


Office

Do you buy expensive pre-loaded software because it's less hassle than downloading or using CDs? We have all been guilty of that particular offence but now it's no longer a sin that needs committing.

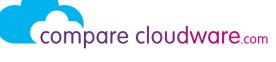
Like all cloud services, office applications and services are delivered on-demand, cheaper than their downloaded counterparts and using the latest version (so no more expensive upgrades!) With most office applications you can even work offline. Even better is the ability for members of a team to work on the same document in real time and retrieve files they need directly from the Cloud rather than somebody's hard drive.

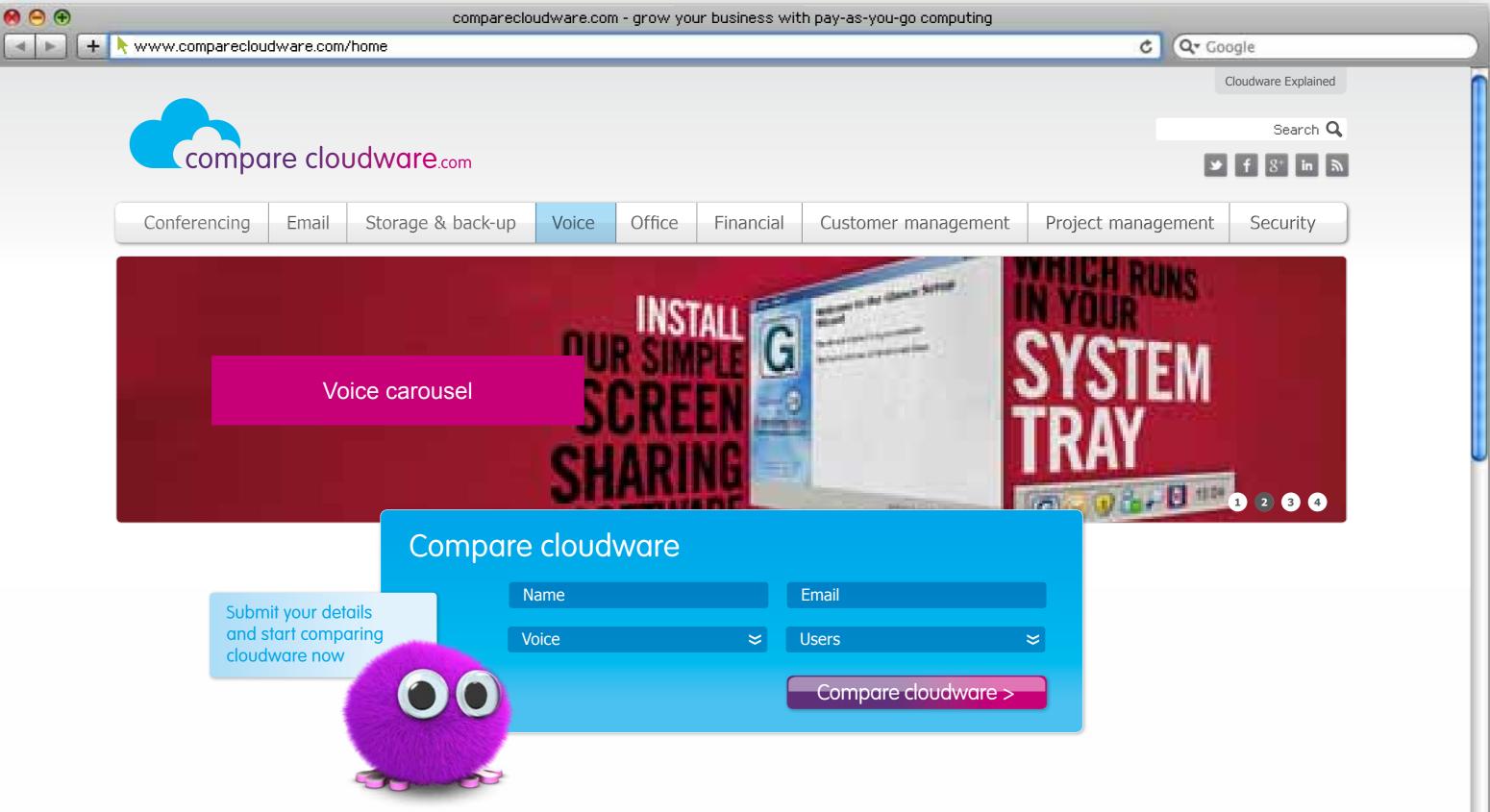
You can also forget about USB storage keys and emailing large documents, all you need is a username and a password to access your documents from anywhere. In addition to the standard fare of office suites, there is an abundance of specialist applications that enable office features on your smartphone, publish directly to a website, integrate with social media or even develop slick presentations with video. So unless you're downloading yet another office software update or









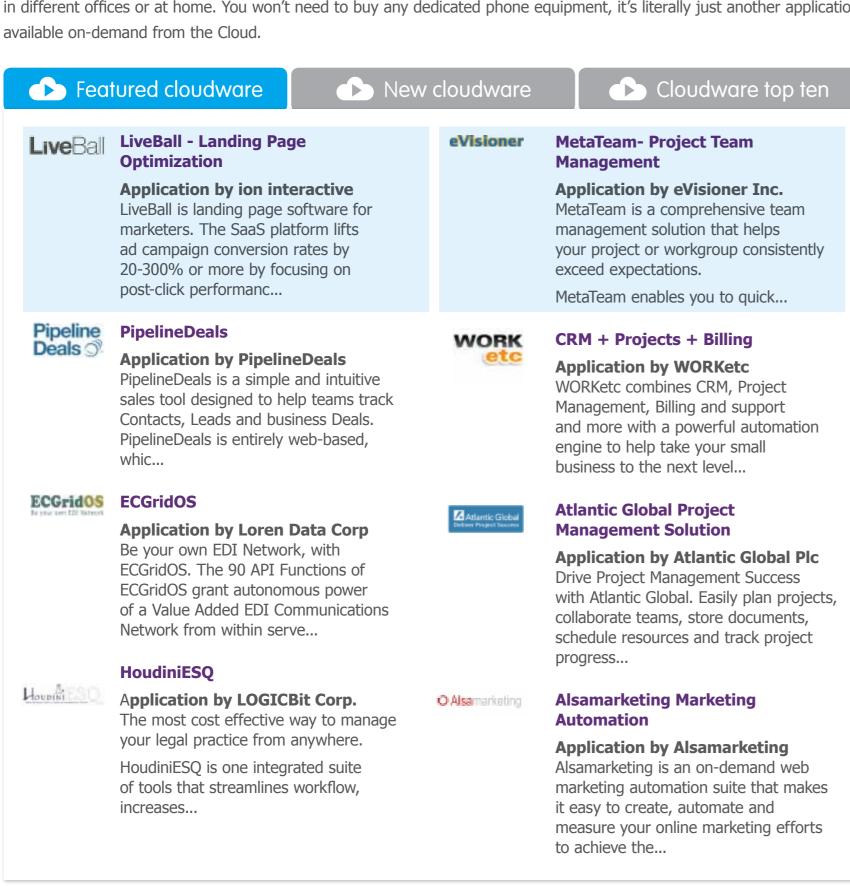


Voice

The humble phone, great isn't it? When all else fails at least you can pick-up the phone and talk to somebody. The reality is that one standard phone line only goes so far, well in fact one conversation at a time! How many calls are you missing from prospective customers or worse can existing customers get through to you? In the past, the answer was to get an expensive phone system and multiple phone lines.

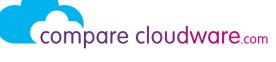
Now with Cloud based phone systems you can have up to 8 lines with a single broadband connection with the ability to add smart functionality such as who answers the phone, automatic call routing, out-of-hours messaging, call forwarding, music-on-hold and separate direct dial extensions. Some providers even offer sophisticated call centre functionality with the ability to record calls.

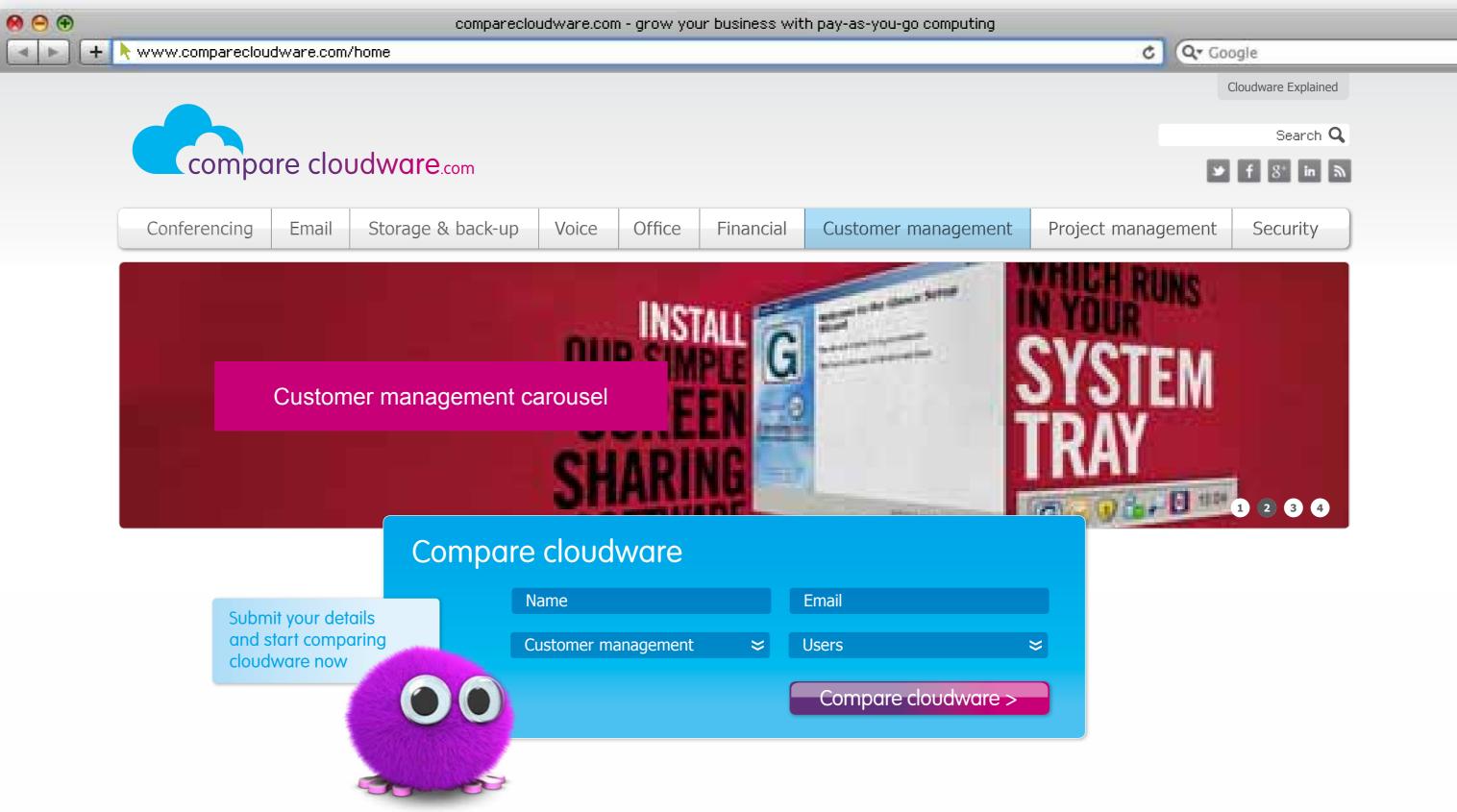
In most cases you can keep your existing number and buy additional extensions as you need them even for staff located in different offices or at home. You won't need to buy any dedicated phone equipment, it's literally just another application











Customer management

What is your most important business asset? Well aside from that top of the range coffee machine that makes dreamy cappuccino, it should be your customer (even if you happen to be Costa Coffee!). The cold hard truth, however, is that customers are often neglected instead of being cherished and nurtured like an eggnog latte at Christmas. Frankly, if you have only a couple of clients you can probably get away with personal after-sales calls, spreadsheets and invoices created on a word processor.

The reality is that if you're out and about, have more than a handful of clients and a few staff that need to share customer information, you need something better than scraps of paper, post-it notes, email and office software. With Cloud based customer relationship management (known in the IT trade as CRM), you can keep in touch with customers or prospective customers at a touch of a button.

Most services are easy to set-up and even work with cloud based email and phone systems. You can even integrate enquiry forms on your website to generate new business or help existing customers whilst using your smartphone to keep on top of what's happening. Before you know it, you'll be running customer campaigns, running a virtual helpdesk and

