**Cloudware Explained tab**

**What is the cloud? (Lower case for cloud)**

The term ‘Cloud’ or ‘Cloud Computing’ is now a common term that simply means accessing programs and services directly over the internet rather than using a local computer or network. Instead of using time-consuming CDs or downloading programs you simply access programs directly through your internet browser such as Explorer, Firefox, Safari or Chrome.

In fact you are most certainly using the Cloud already if you use Facebook or Twitter, make phonecalls on Skype, stream music on Spotify, watch a You Tube video or send an email. These are all Cloud services that require huge processing power in a centralised locations (called Data Centres) around the World.

**What is cloudware?**

Cloudware is simply any software, service or application that is delivered via the Cloud to any internet enabled device such as a computer, tablet or phone. Cloudware allows virtually any IT and Communication servicess to be available on-demand through the internet. Think of it as internet generation software and services with little or no upfront cost and without the supporting cast of bulky hardware, lengthy installations, annoying updates and expensive maintenance agreements.

**What is Compare Cloudware?**

Compare Cloudware is the first comparison website for a range of everyday and specialised IT and communication services, software and applications. It provides like-for-like comparisons against key criteria including number of users, support levels, price, languages and features. By doing this it simplifies the selection and purchase from hours (often days) to a few minutes.

Without the need for endless search, time consuming assessment and awkward evaluation, Compare Cloudware offers knowledgable search, intuitive comparison, relevant product reviews and independent user reviews which enable you to choose the right Cloudware for your needs.

The result? Compare Cloudware makes IT and Communications applications and services comparable and accessible with the click of a button

**What do I need to run Cloudware?**

To get started all you need is a broadband internet connection and a device capable of connecting to the Internet e.g. a PC, Laptop, Netbook, Tablet or Smartphone.

Nearly all internet capable devices made in the last 3 years will run Cloudware quite happily. Even mobile devices such as smartphone and tablets using Apple’s IoS or Android will work effectively with most Cloudware.

The majority of users will use a PC, laptops and/or netbook. Here is a run down of the minimum operating requirements as recommended by Cloudware poviders. For Windows PC users: The minimum systems requirements are: Windows 7, Windows 8, or Windows 2008 R2 with .NET 3.5 or later and Microsoft Internet Explorer 8, 9, or 10; Mozilla Firefox 10.x or a later version; or Google Chrome 17.x.. For OSX Mac users: The minimum system requirements are: Mac OS X 10.6 or later; Apple Safari 5 or above.

**10 reasons for using Cloudware tab**

**Reduced risk**

It’s distressing enough that personal data loss can mean a lifetime of memories gone forever but for a business it can be fatal. Simply put, data loss kills businesses. According to the UK’s Department of Trade & Industry, over 70% of businesses that suffer data loss close within 18 months.

All Cloudware providers have comprehensive back-up processes and procedures which ensure your data is fully protected around-the-clock in leading edge facilities using the latest infrastructure. Commonly, data is stored in multiple locations to ensure that any single point of potential failure or attack is fully mitigated.

**No or Little Upfront Costs (make lowercase except for ‘No’)**

The purchase of traditional IT and communications equipment and software is an expensive undertaking. This often involves some compromise due to sizeable upfront costs which most smaller businesses struggle to afford.

Not so with Cloudware, as there’s no upfront equipment cost or software licences to buy. With little to no commitment, Cloudware is offered on a monthly subscription allowing customers to renew or cancel their terms without major repercussions. In fact , many businesses find that Cloudware actually eases cashflow as they can usually enjoy a free trial period, paying monthly on a per-user basis with a short notice period in the event of cancellation.

**More Control (lowercase for ‘control’)**

Keeping up to date with the latest IT and Communications services has traditionally been a problem for smaller businesses. With little or no ‘IT budget’, the idea of updating software or replacing old hardware normally arrives when something doesn’t work anymore or simply breaks!

With Cloudware, there are no nasty surprises as charges are typically priced on a flat rate and you pay for what you use (rather like renting a car or paying your electricity bill). Spend can be tightly controlled and some firms have cut IT delivery costs by as much as 90% simply by switching to a Cloud alternative.

**Easy Management (lowercase for ‘management’)**

At some time or other, everyone suffers from an IT headache, it may be a simple re-boot, a software re-installation or ringing ‘IT Bob’ down the road. Most businesses don’t have IT staff on hand to fix the myriad of hardware and software problems which wastes valuable time and resources whilst trying to figure things out.

All Cloudware is available through your preferred internet browser with software patches and updates automatically applied. Cloudware is always kept ‘live’ as providers fix systems in real-time without any service disruption. This leaves you to get on with running your business trouble-free. In the world of Cloudware, you’re buying a service and not a problem waiting to happen.

**Scale Up or Down (lowercase for ‘up’ and ‘down’)**

With traditional IT and communications, small businesses often need to gaze into a crystal ball and predict their requirements long in advance. Like so many predictions, this typically ends up being wrong. The result? Wastage at one end or a shortage of available resources at the other. Either way, it’s bad news. With Cloudware, you simply buy the service you need on a per person basis as you need it.

Even if you don’t have desk space available, there is the flexibility to work from another office or home using the same systems. This can be beneficial for any seasonal changes or where a large order comes in which may need some additional help. In any case, the crystal ball can be replaced with the certainty of real life ups and downs.

**Increased Security (lowercase for ‘security’)**

Security and safety can be a concern with anything perceived as ‘new’. Small businesses generally have lower physical security deterrents making the hardware closet and devices such as desktop computers vulnerable. Worse still, they have no or few resources available to monitor and combat cyber threats In almost all cases Cloudware is far more robust than anything a small or even medium-sized businesses could reasonably afford.

Cloudware providers have facilities that are shielded by many layers of security, operational best practices, multi-site disaster recovery, military grade firewalls and internet security with frequent patching and testing.

**Greater Flexibility (lowercase for ‘flexibility’)**

In the small business world, things can change very quickly. It’s a pain having to wait for new software to be deployed, phones to be set up or training to be organised. Worse still, such delays can have a major influence on taking a large order or servicing new customers.

The flexibility afforded by Cloudware can mean the difference between being an innovator or being late to the game. The Cloud’s self-service approach makes it easy to select and buy the right solution in hours rather than days. With Compare Cloudware, that job is made even easier.

**Simpler IT setup**

As businesses grow, the need to offer more and more users more and more applications on their PCs, laptops and smartphones can become an IT headache. Because cloudware and the data it generates is accessed remotely, it removes the need for a large IT infrastructure.

**Go Mobile (lowercase for ‘mobile’)**

The globe has gone mobile with more laptops, smartphones and tablets on our little blue planet than people. This has lead to an increase in mobility working but the consequences can actually lead to disconnection. The Cloud offers the ideal opportunity to reconnect. Managers can keep in touch swiftly with real-time updates and reports.

Road warriors can follow-up on the status of an order without calling and chasing the office first. Remote workers can seamlessly integrate as part of a virtual team as though they are in the same room. Sounds great doesn’t it? It is and with Cloudware it takes little effort to hook everyone back up on any device, at anytime, wherever they may be.

**Always Up-to-Date (lowercase for ‘up-to-date’)**

Office and home PCs and laptops are cluttered with old and out-of-date software. This often results in poor performance which over time gets slower and slower and increasingly frustrating for the user. The dilemma is often between the cost of replacement and the cost of doing nothing whilst waiting for another re-boot or a software patch to download.

Forget obsolete software, with Cloudware you’re always up-to-date and able to enjoy updates, new features and and improved functionality as part of the service without any disruption. Better still, there is no annoying re-purchase after three years to get the latest version of something you already have.

**What does my business need to run cloudware tab**

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| |  | | --- | | Cloudware is changing the way companies and organisations do business. Naturally, however, there will be some reservations about turning to a subscription-based software service. | |
| |  | | --- | | We’ve tried to answer the most commonly asked questions about how to ensure your business is ready for cloudware below, but if you have other questions, take a look through the Forums to see if they have been asked before, or raise the question yourself. | |

**What versions of browsers are required?**

Most cloudware applications and services run with all of the most popular internet browsers including Internet Explorer, Firefox and Safari. They will normally run using older versions of the browsers, but for optimum performance we recommend downloading the latest version. For specific details, check the ‘Internet Browser’ section of the comparison table.

**What broadband speed is required?**

Cloudware applications and services are designed to run on any broadband connection, whether at home, in the office, or through a mobile. Do be aware, however, that typical business broadband speeds are around 20 Mpbs, while broadband speeds at home and on mobiles are lower. Applications and services will therefore always run faster in office environments.

**How many users can access the same cloudware at the same time? (the line height needs adjusting on this)**

This depends on the cloudware application or service being used. Some products are limited to a small number of users, others can be accessed by hundreds of users. Check the ‘Users’ section in the comparison table to confirm the exact number.

**What mobile platforms are supported?**

The three major mobile platforms in the UK — Apple, BlackBerry and Android — are supported by cloudware applications and services, with some vendors working on one or two platforms and others working on all of them. When you compare different products, check the ‘Mobile platform’ feature to ensure your mobile platform is included.

**What level of mobile broadband is required?**

One of the big advantages of Cloudware applications and services is their ability to be accessed on mobile devices like smartphones. To ensure the optimum performance, we recommend a minimum 3G connection. Check with your mobile phone provider to ensure your mobile devices are 3G or 4G with Wi-Fi ‘hotspot’ capability.

**What settings need to be turned on within the Operating System? (lowercase for ‘operating system’)**

Cloudware applications and services typically use a combination of plug-ins and Java. This allows them to work on multiple devices. You should therefore check the preferences in your browser settings to ensure plug-ins, Java and JavaScript are all enabled.