



WHAT YOUR CORPORATE LEGAL TEAM NEEDS TO Understand about The Cloud

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UNDERSTANDING AND COMPARING CLOUD PLATFORMS

Efficiency, productivity, and compliance are each pillars of a high-performing team. However, in practice, it is an ongoing struggle to strike a balance between these three—often competing—needs. Harmonizing these pillars has been the catalyst for many legal operations professionals to consider cloud-based software for their corporate legal teams. Cloud software built for lawyers improves existing workflows and also provides new ways to ensure peak efficiency and improved compliance *without* sacrificing productivity.

To understand how cloud solutions could help your firm, it is critical to understand the core architecture of the cloud system under consideration. Comparing cloud platforms can get technical (and confusing) fast, which means what you think you see isn't

always what you get, and a wrong decision could not only stifle system flexibility—but worse—require more time and money down the road. This is why understanding the differences between these systems and what they mean for your business is key to maximizing your valuable time and resources.

In this quick guide, you'll learn about the two main cloud architectures – how they are different, and why these details matter. This way, you can compare cloud offerings with confidence, avoid pitfalls and false promises, and your team can take advantage of all the cloud has to offer.

HOSTED CLOUD VS. CLOUD-BASED SOLUTIONS

Two types of cloud architecture you should know are hosted cloud and cloud-based, or true cloud. They might sound similar, but they differ greatly in the benefits they can offer your team.

HOSTED CLOUD	CLOUD-BASED / TRUE CLOUD
The software is designed for and similar to on-premises environments but is hosted on a dedicated server(s) for your organization managed by the vendor. Hosted cloud services are also called “single-tenant clouds,” because each customer has its own isolated cloud.	The software is specifically designed, developed, and deployed to take advantage of the cloud environment where all customers have continuous access to the same cloud solution. True cloud software is also known as “multi-tenant cloud,” because all customers who use the service share the same instance.

Both solutions enable remote access and reduce the need for on-premises hardware and other resources. But that’s where the similarities end. Cloud-native or “true cloud” systems are very different from hosted cloud applications.

Where Hosted Clouds Fall Short

A hosted cloud application is frequently built on or derived from cloud-adapted technology, meaning the platform’s system architecture was originally designed for on-premises environments. This means hosted cloud solutions directly inherit many of the same problems as legacy on-prem systems (the ones you’re trying to get away from in the first place).

By their very nature, **hosted clouds have reduced flexibility, limited support, and delayed updates and bug fixes** when compared against true cloud competitors. This is because each instance of a hosted cloud is a stand-alone implementation of that service, and each implementation requires individual care, maintenance, and upkeep. All of this adds up to curbed efficiency and endless frustration for customers who use hosted cloud software.

KEY FEATURES COMPARISON

Below are various key features and how they compare when in a hosted cloud vs. cloud-native solution, and what this means to your team.

	HOSTED CLOUD	CLOUD-BASED / CLOUD-NATIVE	RESULT
Implementation	Longer implementation as vendor completes server setup, software installation, and any necessary customization.	Almost instantaneous—no hardware or software installation is required.	Your team gets started faster with a cloud-based solution.
Bug Fixes	Customer's instances are individually contained and customers operate on different versions of the software. Bug fixes and patches must be deployed manually by the vendor until they can be rolled out into a larger release, sometimes several months later.	All customers receive bug fixes simultaneously as soon as they are available. All customers use the same instance of the software, so the vendor is able to quickly address any issues that may arise.	Cloud-based solutions offer less platform downtime and reduce strain on IT resources.
Platform Updates	Updates must be performed manually, causing customers to get stuck or "locked-in" to outdated product versions.	All customers operate on the most up-to-date version of the cloud software without having to perform manual updates.	With a cloud-based solution, your user experience is always improving—without ever interrupting the flow of work.

	HOSTED CLOUD	CLOUD-BASED / CLOUD-NATIVE	RESULT
Security	Vendors <i>may</i> devote more resources to security than customers can, but security updates remain limited and/or delayed.	Providers constantly monitor and respond to new threats in real time, updating software for all customers immediately once a defense is built.	Faster security updates reduces time exposed to threats with cloud-based solutions.
Support & Maintenance	Each customer is tied to a specific instance and software version, so maintenance must be scheduled with a vendor support representative who has knowledge of that instance. Support is often performed in the vendor's timeframe.	Cloud-based systems are designed for continuous and universal maintenance for all customers at once. Every vendor support representative has knowledge on the current instance. If needs arise an expert resource is only a call away.	Cloud-based systems require little (if any) scheduled maintenance (i.e. downtime), but when customers do require support it is easy to contact a knowledgeable support representative.
Disaster Recovery	Customers and their data are often connected to traditional server configurations made up of primary and secondary systems with separate data backups. If the primary servers experience a disaster, it may require extra time, effort, and cost to reconfigure connections, deploy the secondary systems, and restore access to data backups.	Leading cloud-based systems use advanced data storage technologies to provide continuous, instantaneous data redundancy, supported by replicated service infrastructure, so customers always have access to their data and their applications with little or no service interruptions.	In the event of a disaster, cloud-based systems ensure your users can get back to work with little or no disruption.

CLOUD-BASED IS CLOUD AT ITS *BEST*

You can't work inspired when your tech is swimming against the current. To maximize efficiency, improve compliance, and supercharge productivity, you need high-performing, modern tools.

Cloud-based platforms are better adapted to the demands and expectations of the modern workplace than hosted cloud solutions without compromising security or confidentiality.

For corporate legal departments, a cloud-based solution offers greater efficiency, a continuously improving user experience, fewer security and support concerns, and seamless scaling—a true cloud experience at its best.

Learn how your legal team can achieve optimum efficiency with true cloud technology.

Book a consultation with a business expert today >

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