

Many of you are already taking your organisation on its journey to the cloud. You may be just starting the journey, or you may be nearing completion of moving your business to being completely cloud-based. You feel that your own organisation's journey to the cloud is unique because of your history, ways of working, competitive positioning, and needs. However, cloud computing is now twenty years old, so there are many lessons to be gained from the pioneers on how to succeed in this critical transformation for your business.

## Your Journey to the Cloud in Three Easy Steps

We at K2 Consulting Partners have taken part in many of these pioneering journeys to the cloud with a wide range of companies, from small start-ups to large multi-national businesses. From this experience, we have distilled some lessons learnt that we would like to share with you over a set of three articles, covering:

- [Cloud Assessment & Planning](#)
- [Cloud Transformation & Implementation](#)
- [Cloud Optimisation & Improvement](#)

### Part 1: Cloud Assessment & Planning

As with any major business transformation, you need to have a clear picture of where you want to get to (Cloud Vision), your roadmap and plans of how to get there (Cloud Strategy), and a compelling value proposition that balances benefits, costs, and risks (Cloud Business Case).

#### Cloud Vision

As the key foundation for your journey, your cloud vision should:

- Be a clear articulation of how the organisation will operate and benefit from moving your current legacy systems and processes to an on-demand, agile set of business services that can change and scale to meet your corporate objectives
- Be supported by use cases that show the improved customer journeys in their interactions with your organisation and the enhanced front and back-office efficiencies
- Provide a platform for a nimble business operating model that can rapidly break into new markets and quickly launch new products and services.

**Top Tip:** *Make it real for your stakeholders by mocking up a key customer journey enhanced by cloud to show how the future state will revolutionise customer experience, slash costs etc.*

## Cloud Strategy

The clearest way we have found to convey the roadmap and plans to your stakeholders is a series of slides showing:

- Your “As-Is” spaghetti diagram of your current messy application estate, highlighting business blockages, risks and costs
- A transitional slide with some services moved to Software / Platform / Infrastructure as a Service, with an indication of the early benefits of starting the journey
- A “To-Be” slide showing all your business and IT services happily sitting in a white cloud, highlighting the improved customer journeys and simplified business processes.

Behind these slides you will need a detailed plan of the tasks and resources to accomplish the transformation, along with a roadmap showing the key transformation and business milestones along the journey.

**Top Tip:** Highlight some quick business wins on the milestone plan to show early benefit realisation along the journey for the key sponsors.

## Cloud Business Case

Ultimately, any proposed change, such as a move to cloud, needs to be supported and underpinned by a solid, compelling business case that provides your executives, particularly the Chief Financial Officer, with all the information they need to approve the business case. Of course, you will have already engaged with the key executive members for sponsorship by taking them individually through the specific value propositions that will improve their personal objectives. It is crucial that you fully align the plans with their business goals and targets. Our experience is that there are a few specific characteristics of a cloud transformation business case that need to be addressed:

- **Commercial Model:** Traditionally, large application changes have typically been funded by CapEx, amortised over the life of the system. Moving to Software-as-a-Service, there are fewer up-front costs, with most of the expenditure being monthly or annual subscriptions that fall in OpEx. This can have a significant impact on the P&L and EBITDA, so will need full finance involvement to work through the implications
- **Cyber Security:** With so many scare stories of companies being hacked, and customer data being lost, your exec will want significant reassurance on cyber security, given that it will be they, not you, who could go to jail

- **Network Dependency:** With everything in the cloud, your business operation and survival will be highly dependent on the connectivity to these cloud services. Network bandwidth and resilience need to be significantly enhanced to provide the required SLAs. This will not be cheap and must be addressed as part of the cloud business, not later when performance becomes an issue

**Top Tip:** *Provide some options and phasing in the business plan to allow the business to tailor the journey to their desired outcome, rather than present an all-or-nothing proposal that will get rejected or deferred.*

So, in summary, the Journey to the Cloud starts with a well-crafted Vision, Strategy and Business Case. K2 Consulting Partners has helped many organisations begin their cloud journey by assisting them in getting these crucial foundations right.

In the next article we will describe the Cloud Transformation and Implementation leg of the Journey to the Cloud. Follow our blog to stay updated!

[Contact our team](#) for more information on starting or improving Your Journey to the Cloud.