

# TRANSITIONING TO THE CLOUD

Jan De Roeck explores how cloud freedom delivers operational efficiency, data security and flexibility for print and packaging suppliers



Jan De Roeck, Esko Director of Marketing, Industry Relations and Strategy

**Across the global print and packaging sectors, packaging converters and premedia trade shops are wrestling with competing demands on their operations. To remain competitive, converters are in the market for strategies and technologies that will provide them with a competitive differentiation. Whether that be on cost, speed, quality, flexibility or consistency, the challenges faced by today's prepress and print converters are significant. Combine these demands with a lack of skilled labour availability and decreasing run lengths, the need for management teams to strategically address business digitisation, and automation and connectivity becomes clear.**

Following the successful launch of its Digital Maturity Model ('DMM') program in 2020, designed to help management teams meet the growing need to strategically address business digitisation, automation and connection, Esko has examined the benefits of packaging industry businesses transitioning to the cloud.

## THE PATH TO DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION

Building on its DMM for packaging suppliers, Esko set about articulating the need for proactive management of the digital transformation process to meet these challenges head on. The DMM provides a clear roadmap of strategic decisions that today's CEOs, Operations, Prepress and IT Managers can take to address process and operational efficiency gaining long term competitive success and profit improvement.

Digitisation and the adoption of cloud-based solutions has been an ongoing theme within the industry for some time now. Indeed, the opportunities to drive efficiency, deliver at

scale and differentiate have driven businesses across the industry to embrace digitisation:

- Around 90% of businesses today have adopted cloud technology in some form.<sup>2,3</sup>
- This figure is only expected to rise, with 69% considering moving additional applications and services to the cloud.<sup>4</sup>

Like any transformation, there will be bumps along the road and moving to the cloud can be fraught with challenges. Driving company-wide transformation towards digital maturity is a multi-functional task, where the entire organisation needs to engage if it is to truly receive the full suite of benefits on offer. It also requires cultural and procedural change at every level of the organisation.

Having different employee groups, teams or facilities at different stages of digital maturity can create issues, leading to waste and a slowing down of the business. While this is true for single site businesses, where departments may be progressing along the path to digital transformation at different

with waste in materials, time and resources continuing in pockets of operation around the business. Nearly 2/3 of businesses maintain they have not achieved the results expected of their cloud initiatives to date.<sup>6</sup> Businesses continue to be understandably confused by the terms, and wary of the IT overheads and inevitable disruption to operations.

## SECURING A COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGE

Recent disruptions have underlined and reinforced the fact that the cloud is not merely a future aspiration, but an urgent requirement going right across the business. Now is the time to make your business more efficient, resilient and customer-focused; to differentiate, build and protect; using the cloud as a catalyst to enable innovation, automate processes and systems.

In its simplest form, cloud computing means storing and accessing data and programs over the internet, instead of on

*"The cloud is not merely a future aspiration, but an urgent requirement going right across the business"*

speeds, this issue is compounded where more than one physical site is involved. Indeed, inconsistencies and complexities in day-to-day operations emerge as different locations operate individual processes or tools.

With most companies, only about 20-40% of their workloads are in the cloud, the majority of which are the easier, less complex ones.<sup>5</sup> This fragmentation of approach creates communication breakdowns, reduces operational efficiency and limits success,

a local computer's hard drive. The 'cloud' is really just a metaphor for the internet and enables a company to remove the need to have a dedicated network, and the associated storage hardware or servers, on its physical site.

But why is this important? Cloud computing offers businesses the opportunity to free themselves and their employees from the constraints of physical infrastructure, bureaucracy and processes. It delivers new



An illustration of how cloud computing speeds up the entire prepress process



The latest version of Esko Automation Engine, featuring cloud capability and SaaS deployment

## *“Cloud computing allows businesses to free themselves from the constraints of physical infrastructure and bureaucracy”*

freedoms, not only in terms of their operations, but also in eradicating any IT challenges that might stifle their passion for prepress.

- 1) Whether the information is a simple Microsoft Word file or a complex Adobe graphics file, the information is no longer stored at one location (other than geolocation), as it was previously. The fact that a packaging design carries data supplied by a wide range of stakeholders that are traditionally working disconnected, is also a big challenge. A brand's marketing team may have the new marketing slogan, the design agency may have the latest version of the product logo, and the converter has the information about inks, resolution and dot gain compensation. All this information, crucial for quality reproduction of the job, currently resides on the hard disks of different disconnected computers. Today, the cloud means that this data is accessible from anywhere, by any licensed user, 24/7, and can never be lost due to the back-up capabilities of the cloud.
- 2) Data was historically vulnerable – if an on-site server 'went down' due to power, virus problems, or hackers intent on stealing data, or if there was a fire or flood, data would be lost. Today, businesses can be 'back up' in minutes as the data lives on virtually in the cloud and can be restored back to service quickly.

- 3) Importantly, the company no longer physically relies on hard drives and servers on site. While this not only eradicates data risk, it also leads to operational cost savings through a reduction in IT management costs.

### **BUILDING A PATH TO THE CLOUD**

One of the single most important parts of an enterprise's digital transformation strategy involves finding the right cloud service or services that complement an individual business model, culture and customer needs. One option to consider is whether to employ a single-tenant (i.e. dedicated) or multi-tenant (i.e. shared) cloud architecture. These are different types of cloud models that have emerged to cater for different scenarios or specific business needs.

The single-tenant cloud model is where a customer has its own independent database and software on a cloud. In the multi-tenant cloud model, a single instance of the software and its supporting infrastructure serves multiple customers. Each customer's data is isolated from the data of other customers and remains private. The key factor of the multi-tenant model is that there is a single instance of the software that serves multiple customers (tenants) while the data of each customer remains isolated and private. For example, Salesforce, HubSpot and Netflix are all multi-tenant applications.

For many businesses, the multi-tenant model is considered the optimum solution, regardless of their size. For smaller organisations – where the scale simply does not demand or warrant dedicated infrastructure – it delivers efficient servicing and lower costs, while for larger organisations it offers unlimited resources in one secure and private environment. Multi-tenancy delivers economies of scale for everyone involved.

Furthermore, it is important to understand that clouds can also be public, private or hybrid. In a public cloud, all hardware, software and other supporting infrastructure are owned and managed by the cloud provider. Each user shares the same hardware, storage and network devices with organisations on that cloud and with the other cloud tenants. Private clouds are those operated by a single organisation. Computing resources are isolated and delivered by a secure private network and are not shared. They are customisable to meet unique business and security needs and are proprietary to the organisation. Finally, hybrid clouds, as the name suggests, are where apps and data share the resources between private and public cloud deployment based on the business' policies around security, performance, scalability, cost and efficiency. The environment is seamlessly integrated to ensure optimum performance and scalability to changing business needs.

### **BRINGING PASSION BACK TO PREPRESS**

By using cloud software, you can free yourself – and your prepress business - from all the associated technical, overhead and IT issues and once again devote your energies to getting the job done without first overcoming a range of technical hurdles.

There is no longer any need to worry about painful file transfers, tenacious job onboarding and cumbersome load balancing over multiple production sites: cloud computing gives you freedom to regain passion in what matters – packaging design and glorious print production.

Transform your user experience without worrying about the technical architecture, but instead focus on beautiful packaging, stunning graphics and superior print quality. Ultimately, cloud freedom helps you to put passion back into your life, your work and your daily activities.

For more on Cloud Freedom and to download the full Esko whitepaper, visit [www.esko.com/en/lp/cloud-freedom/cloud-freedom](http://www.esko.com/en/lp/cloud-freedom/cloud-freedom) ■

#### **Further information:**

Esko, Gent, Belgium  
tel: +32 9 216 93 24  
email: [Jan.DeRoeck@esko.com](mailto:Jan.DeRoeck@esko.com)  
web: [www.esko.com](http://www.esko.com)

- 1 [www.esko.com/en/lp/dmm/dmm-whitepaper](http://www.esko.com/en/lp/dmm/dmm-whitepaper)
- 2 <http://www.information-age.com/uk-cloud-adoption-reaches-88-123464995>
- 3 [https://www.accenture.com/\\_acnmedia/PDF-111/Accenture-Business-Transformation-through-Multi-cloud.pdf#zoom=50](https://www.accenture.com/_acnmedia/PDF-111/Accenture-Business-Transformation-through-Multi-cloud.pdf#zoom=50)
- 4 <https://serviceteamit.co.uk/research/cloud-future-uk-cloud-survey-2017/>
- 5 [https://www.accenture.com/gb-en/insights/cloud/ascend-to-cloud?c=acn\\_glb\\_cloudascentschapgooole\\_11649023&n=psgs\\_1120&gclid=EAlaIqobChMI0q3zx\\_m77QIvWOR3Ch2H-gZpEAAAYiAAEglhqd\\_BwE](https://www.accenture.com/gb-en/insights/cloud/ascend-to-cloud?c=acn_glb_cloudascentschapgooole_11649023&n=psgs_1120&gclid=EAlaIqobChMI0q3zx_m77QIvWOR3Ch2H-gZpEAAAYiAAEglhqd_BwE)
- 6 <https://www.accenture.com/gb-en/insights/cloud/cloud-outcomes-perspective>