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Cloud Computing Security – Safer Than you Think

SME and large corporations alike are expressing concerns about the safety of their data, software, and intellectual property being stored in 'the cloud'.

Now proud providers of cloud solutions, Ironbark Software wish to clarify a few common questions and debunk some 'cloud computing' myths.
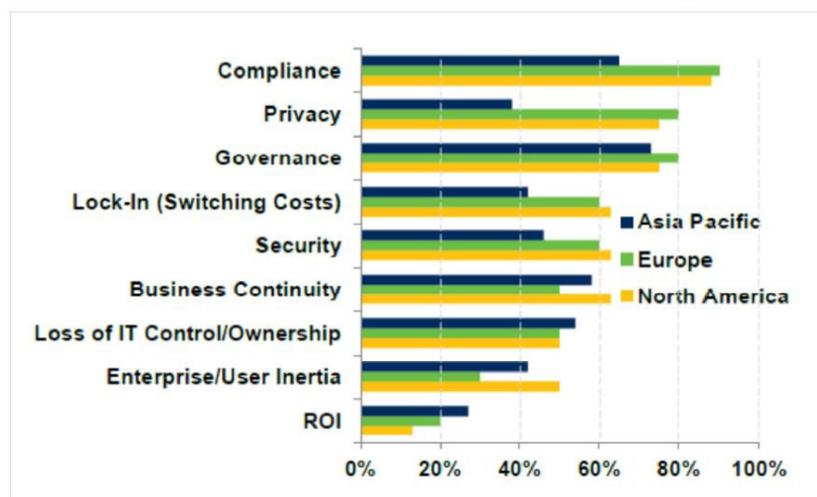
The love child of outsourcing and Software-as-a-Service (SaaS), cloud computing has developed very quickly into a household term, yet it is still surrounded by an aura of mystery.

An excellent working definition of Cloud Computing is that defined by Gartner using five criteria.

1. **Service-based.** Interface is service based rather than technology focused.
2. **Scalable and Elastic.** The service is scalable depending on client requirements.
3. **Shared.** The infrastructure and resources of the software are shared for maximum efficiency.
4. **Metered by Use**. Multiple payment methods are allowed based on tracked usage compared to the cost of set up or equipment.
5. **Uses Internet Technologies.** The service is delivered using Internet identifiers, formats and protocols, such as URLs, HTTP, IP and representational state transfer Web-oriented architecture.

Having a solid definition greatly assists in removing ambiguity. Establishing that cloud computing is a definable service, Gartner have also listed further challenges for cloud computing such as, security, compliance, privacy, governance, lock-in (switching costs), business continuity, lost of IT control and ownership, enterprise and user inertia, and ROI.

Figure 1. Public Cloud Concerns in the Public Sector
(Source – World Economic Forum 2009 Cloud Computing Survey)

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But the facts are, akin to most cloud computing servers, Ironbark's data centre is based in a secure facility that is protected from both physical and online intruders.

Both the intellectual property of clients and Ironbark software's security and privacy are of the utmost importance, and several measures are taken to ensure the continuity of this safety. Not only is this data secure and private from outside influence but also from other clients.

To assist in further debunking of any cloud insecurities, Ironbark have compiled a list of facts true to Ironbark Software's data centre and cloud computing technologies.

1. There are no clouds involved. We promise.
2. 'The Cloud' is not a mythical land that floats in the sky. Data is stored on servers that are located in warehouses, or in Ironbark's case, a secure, temperature controlled room in our offices.
3. Ironbark's servers are in a N+2 environment. In laymen's terms - internet, cooling, and power are all backed up.
4. Cloud hosts take care of ownership, maintenance and administration of hardware, clients pay for the software and hosting.
5. Cloud Computing is not just a trend or fad - a Bloomberg report states that the cloud computing market will reach $270 million by 2020.

The SaaS market has been a key growth area over the past five years, and is not predicted to stem in the near future. Both Forrester and Gartner have forecasted a large increase in the Supply Chain Management sector in particular.

Transferring your business management software to the Ironbark Data Centre will reduce upfront costs, financial risk, operational expenses, and downtime and delays while increasing standardisation throughout the organisation, sustainability, and ROI.

Call Ironbark Software today on 1800 649 524 to discuss customised ERP solutions hosted on the Ironbark Data Centre for your business.

Sources:
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