PROFESSIONAL SERVICES: Top 5 Questions when Moving to the Cloud

Professional services firms are modernizing by moving legacy, on-premise systems to the cloud. The advantages are numerous: increased efficiency and streamlined processes, reduced human effort, lower cost of ownership, the ability to enable flexible workplace options and an improved customer experience.

Once the decision to move to the cloud is made, firms typically have questions about the process of implementing cloud platforms. **Here are the top five questions our software consulting team hears from professional services clients:**

Q: How exactly does the cloud increase efficiency and streamline processes?

A: Cloud software eliminates manual work and tasks that are time-consuming and rote. By letting machines handle the processes for you, your staff is freed up to focus on higher value work. Additionally, systems that are integrated can "talk" to each other, which enables a smoother process and eliminates redundancy.

Q: Can all of my systems be integrated?

A: Systems that have open application programming interfaces (APIs), which allow different systems to freely communicate, can generally be integrated. Some systems require a **custom integration** to enable them to work smoothly together.

Q: Will my cloud platform do everything from a real reporting perspective?

A: Yes, plus more. The cloud is all about increasing the data efficiency across your processes. With the right data architecture, the cloud can automate data entry at each point so that reports can be created automatically and are based on accurate, reliable data.

Q: How can we be sure users will adopt it?

A: You need to make sure you don't **fail at change management.** With any new process or tool, having a clear communication plan and involving users early in the process sets the stage for better adoption. People resist change, but when they are clearly informed about how new technology will benefit their daily work and what is expected of them and are kept informed of the process, they are more likely to adopt it.

Q: What about integrating my professional services automation (PSA) tool into the cloud?

A: A PSA helps project managers track projects operationally. While finance is typically concerned with the profit/loss statement and billing, project management teams are focused on the PSA. For project resource management, the cloud can streamline the billing process, direct costs, indirect costs and utilization metrics. It's important to understand if your current finance tool will integrate with your PSA. Generally, if there is an open API, the systems will integrate.

To learn more about choosing a solution, moving to the cloud and integrating your systems to drive success in your professional services organization, contact us.

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