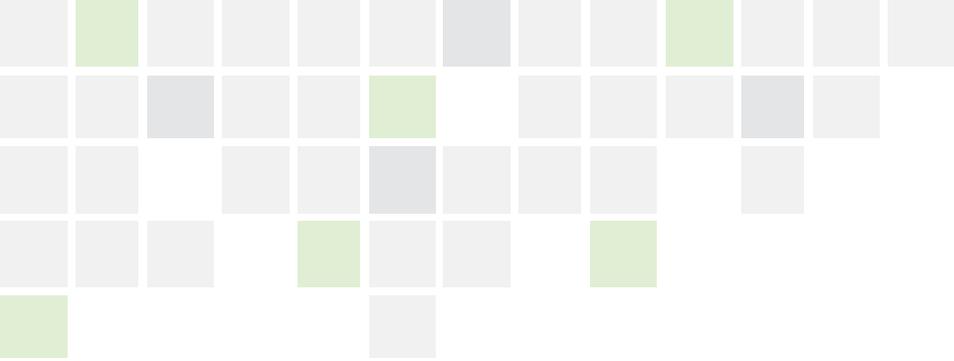


Keep it safe: **Protecting sensitive data** in the cloud





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Introduction

A considerable number of organizations use the cloud for a variety of purposes, including as a storage platform and to boost the accessibility of mission-critical content. While CompTIA research shows that 90 percent of companies in today's business market use the cloud in one form or another, some groups still wonder if the technology is safe for archiving and connecting with sensitive data. However, due to the range of available options, security measures and use strategies, the cloud can provide a secure environment that can be safer than other systems.

How are companies using the cloud?

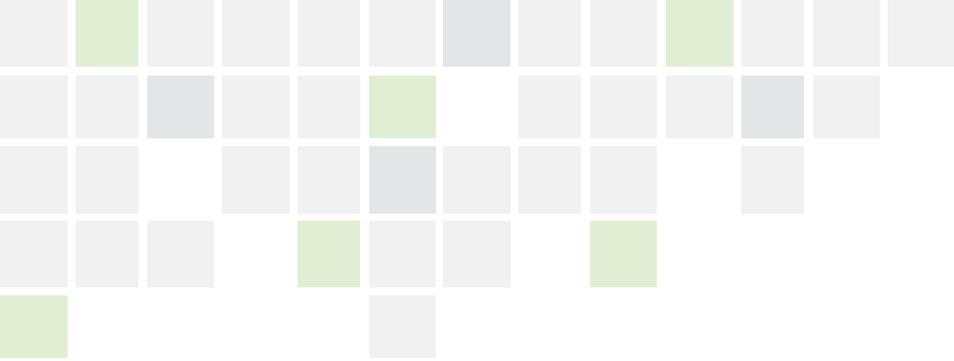
As previously stated, the vast majority of organizations have leveraged the cloud. But how are these groups utilizing their cloud systems to provide the most benefit to the business?

The CompTIA report noted that of those that participated in the survey, 59 percent use their cloud systems for storage purposes, and 48 percent rely on the computing infrastructure for disaster recovery. These groups are migrating important content to the cloud for archiving, as well as to ensure that critical documents and programs are available in the event of a natural disaster, service disruption or other occurrence that makes on-premise and other IT systems unavailable. The research also showed that 44 percent use the cloud for overall business security, illustrating the safety that an off-premise solution can provide.



Businesses
using the cloud
in some form.

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In addition, IBM found that organizations that have implemented cloud technologies have a competitive edge over others in their industry. Groups that have adopted the cloud report significantly increased growth, including nearly double the revenues and almost 2.5 times higher gross profit than those that have yet to utilize such a solution. Furthermore, IBM discovered that these same companies are 117 percent more likely to leverage the cloud for data-based decisions, to boost collaboration, to bolster key relationships and implement new technologies.

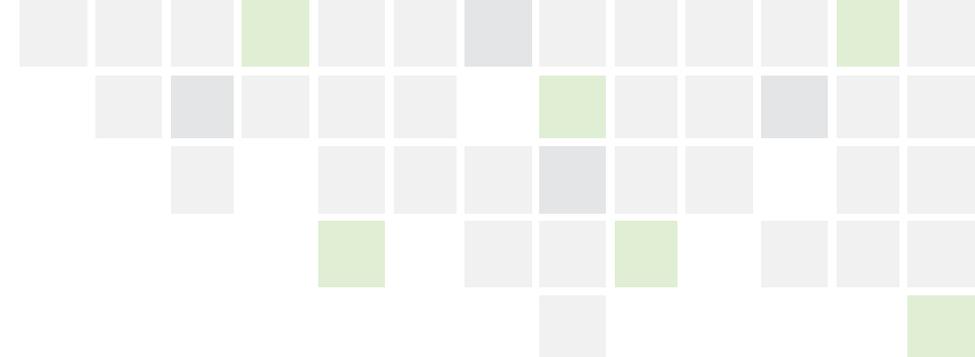
Other common uses of the cloud include email and messaging platforms, file sharing and customer relationship management. Additionally, some firms utilize the platform for collaboration purposes through editing and adjusting shared documents. However, the cloud can be leveraged for a nearly endless list of capabilities depending on the needs of the business and the cloud infrastructure being utilized.

Research by IBM found businesses that embraced the cloud reported near double revenues and almost 2.5 times higher gross profit.

Cloud security features

In addition to being a highly versatile platform, quality cloud systems come with built-in security measures to ensure that information being stored and accessed via the system is constantly secure.

Cloud services come in several different flavors, including private, public and hybrid. Regardless of the type, however, enterprise-grade security measures can be applied. A cloud service can be used to share information either publicly or with authorized users, although some popular brands are designed for sharing less sensitive documents. Other cloud services may require individual authentication and authorization of each user, and some services can even tie in to an existing enterprise directory to allow for single sign-on capabilities. The range of security options vary from service to service, but the full spectrum of security options are found in all cloud-based services.



Cloud vendors also leverage encryption solutions such as SSL to prevent cyber criminals from accessing information stored in the cloud, and typically encrypt data in transit as well. An encryption code scrambles data, making it unreadable to anyone but the person in possession of the decryption code.

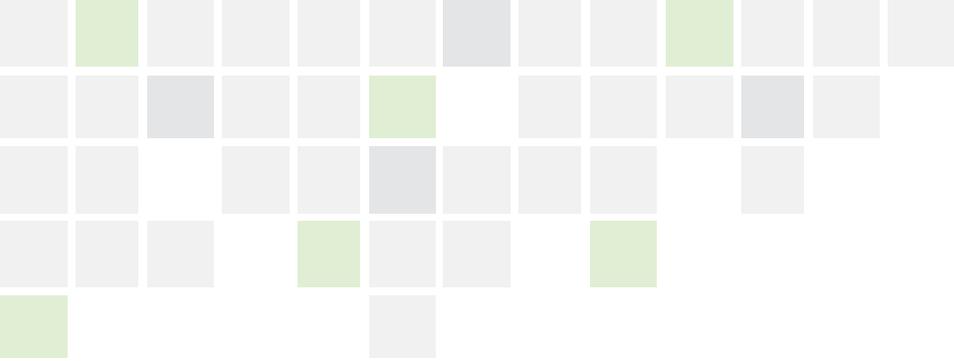
TrackVia utilizes a unique approach to ensure the protection of customers' information that includes a multi-layered strategy extending from the data center to the end user. Highlights of this comprehensive system include annual independent auditor reports and certifications including SOC 1, SSAE 16 and ISAE 3402. TrackVia also has special protections for compliance with the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA), the Gramm-Leach-Bliley Act and the Payment Card Industry (PCI) Data Security standards, as well as US-EU Safe Harbor compliance.

Why the cloud is safer

Recently, a number of security events highlighted the security drawbacks of on-premise systems, illustrating how the cloud can provide a safer means of access and storage.

In 2013, Colorado officials were tasked with notifying 18,800 current and previous state employees that their personal information may have been compromised due to the theft of a single flash drive. The USB device contained names, addresses and Social Security numbers and was lost by an employee as the individual traveled between work locations. The event prompted the state to contact each person individually to alert them that their personal information may have been compromised and to apologize for the occurrence. After discovery of the misplaced data, the organization worked to recover the lost drive and disciplined the employee responsible.

A similar event occurred in October 2013, when two laptops were stolen from the administrative offices of AHMC Healthcare, Inc. The theft affected approximately 792,000 patients whose information was stored on the stolen hardware. Although the devices



were password protected, the data is still at considerable risk. Later investigations showed that 10 percent of Medicare patients had their Social Security numbers compromised as a result of the theft. Overall, the event affected patients at a number of locations. Had this information been migrated to a highly encrypted cloud solution, these events could have been prevented.

BIG BENEFITS IN THE CLOUD



ROBUST DATA ENCRYPTION
AND SECURITY MEASURES



MISSION-CRITICAL DATA
REDUNDANCY



REDUCTION IN AMOUNT OF
DUPLICATE AND 'DIRTY' DATA

Overall, a recent study discovered that organizations that utilize on-premise storage are more often victims of these types of attacks than cloud service providers, TechTarget reported.

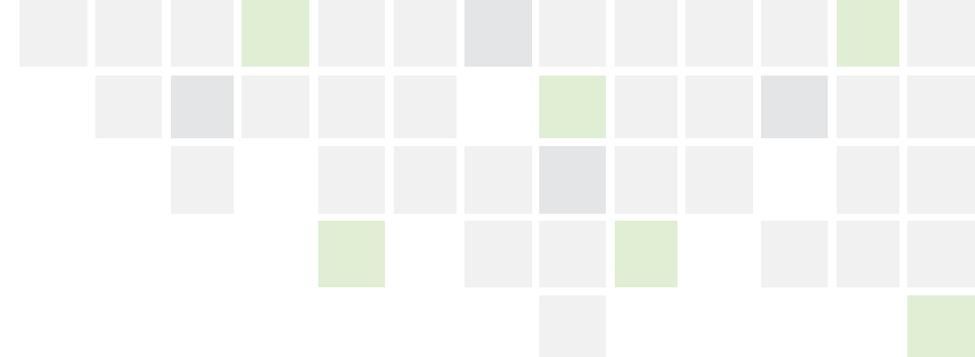
“However, on-premises environment users or customers actually suffer more incidents than those of service provider environments,” TechTarget stated. “On-

premises environment users experience an average of 61.4 attacks, while service provider environment customers averaged only 27.8.”

For this reason, sensitive information is often much safer with a cloud vendor than stored on location at the business.

Some of the most convincing arguments of cloud safety come with use cases. For example, branches of the U.S. military have begun using the cloud. The U.S. Department of Defense migrated its network applications from an “application silo” to a cloud computing arrangement, illustrating that if such a platform were unsecure, it would surely not be employed by military agencies.

Additionally, the cloud is also being trusted to store confidential patient information in the healthcare sector, as evident by a London hospital that has implemented pilot programs. The Chelsea and Westminster Hospital foundation trust, for instance, replaced its physical



paper records with an electronic cloud-based patient information portal. Besides being a secure online location for this information, the technology provided other advantages.

“Our system allows for data to be stored with its context, such as where it was captured, and then used in whatever way is necessary through well-managed clinical services,” said Bill Buchanan, a professor at Edinburgh Napier University.

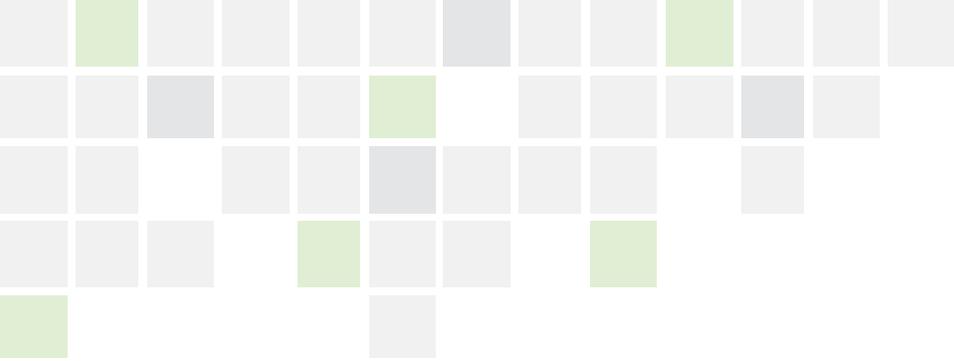
Benefits of cloud security

The security measures that come with cloud services provide a number of benefits to a range of organizations. In addition, the market is seeing considerable growth, according to Gartner, illustrating an ever-increasing focus on maintaining the safety of cloud data. Gartner Research predicted the cloud security market will reach \$3.1 billion by 2015.

Cloud security can benefit end users in other ways as well, including by providing the means to improve upon existing internal information protection practices. For example, the Software and Information Industry Association pointed out that millions of security nodes can be interconnected via a cloud computing arrangement, providing boosted detection abilities for identifying threats. Furthermore, the cloud can lessen the risk of malicious insider activity as well.

SIIA also pointed out that individual end users are among the top threats to overall company security, and are

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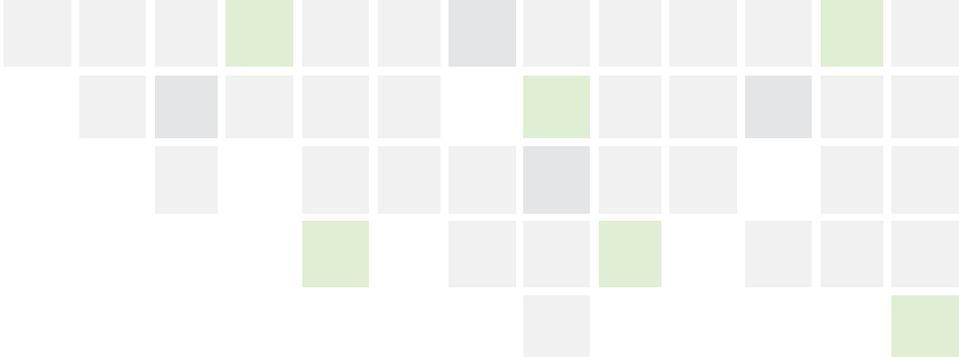
main sources of data loss. However, if information is protected in the cloud, administrators have better oversight as to what content is being accessed by which employees, reducing instances of content theft.

According to the Software and Information Industry Association, individual end users are the primary source of business data loss.

Also, the cloud can solve security issues with hardware management. Because cloud technologies leverage multiple servers, if one piece of equipment is experiencing issues, the workload can be transferred to another machine. This keeps mission-critical processes continually functioning and prevents instances of data loss.

Furthermore, when important content is copied and archived in the cloud as part of a business continuity strategy, the device and geographic redundancy allows for added information security.

Due to the security measures in place, as well as an online platform's ability to improve upon standing protection strategies, the cloud provides a very secure alternative for storing and accessing mission-critical documents and applications. Cloud computing systems are already trusted by government agencies, the military and the vast majority of businesses as a way to ensure that materials are safeguarded while still being accessible for the benefit of the organization. Therefore, the cloud provides a more secure environment for sensitive information than that of on-premise storage systems.



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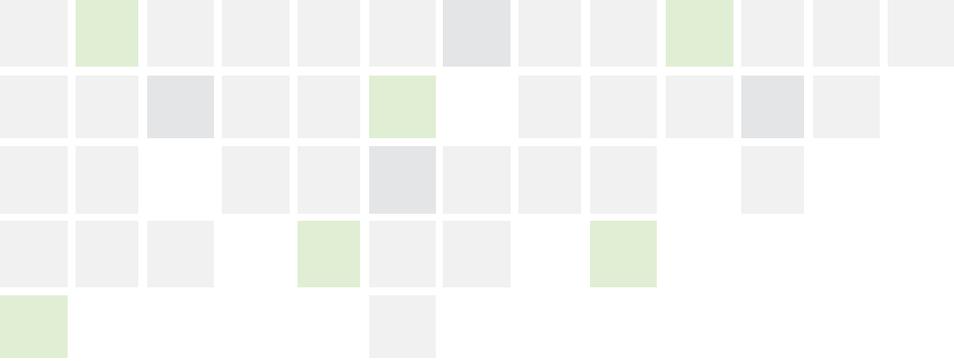
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About TrackVia

TrackVia is a do-it-yourself online database and application platform for business users. TrackVia gives you the power to build custom applications for your business with no programming required. As easy as drag and drop, business users can quickly build applications for CRM, marketing automation, support ticketing, project management and more, tailored exactly to their needs and at a fraction of the cost of out-of-the-box software.

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