

# Focus Experts' Briefing: Top Advice for IT Workers Threatened by the Cloud

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## Executive Summary

There's no doubt that cloud adoption is on the uptake in both enterprises and SMBs. As Focus Expert Andrew Baker sums it up: "The cloud is neither panacea nor vaporware. Much of the hype is real, and proper utilization of it will benefit many businesses, large and small alike." But along with a move toward cloud adoption, many businesses are facing resistance from the IT department. Why are some IT workers dragging their feet when it comes to embracing cloud computing? More importantly, what advice should you give to IT workers who feel threatened by the cloud? In this guide, Andrew and his fellow Focus Experts Scott Archibald, Barry Dwyer, Ben Kepes, Todd Larsen, John McCoy, Dennis Morgan and JP Morgenthal share their top advice for IT workers who feel threatened by the cloud.

After reading this guide, check out the entire discussion and join the conversation: <http://focus.com/c/Fu8/>.

## Expert Advice

1. Get informed about cloud computing and learn as much as you can about it.
2. Get hands-on experience with cloud computing and experiment with it.
3. Learn how the cloud can help your business and help foster your own professional growth.
4. Understand that cloud computing, like other 'disruptive technologies,' doesn't spell the end of IT.
5. Lead by example, and envision yourself as a concierge for end users.

# Focus Experts' Briefing: Top Advice for IT Workers Threatened by the Cloud

## What are your top tips for IT workers who feel threatened by the move to Cloud Computing?

### 1. Get informed about cloud computing and learn as much as you can about it.

"Get informed. Cloud computing is not a nebulous, nefarious threat. It's an outsourcing model that is growing in popularity. The more you know about it, the less there is to be afraid of. Like all IT solutions, cloud computing is a mixed bag with strengths and weaknesses. The more informed you are, the better prepared you'll be to effectively utilize it or explain why it's not the best approach to solving your specific problem." (McCoy)

"Learn about it. Knowledge is a great tool for combating fear. There are many excellent sources of information about what constitutes cloud and what its potential benefits are for an organization." (Baker)

### 2. Get hands-on experience with cloud computing and experiment with it.

"Experiment with it. Start small, and at a personal/consumer level, but start looking at different technologies that are in the cloud. There's [a thread elsewhere on Focus](#) that speaks of people's favorite cloud apps, and products like DropBox, Evernote, Carbonite and others are mentioned. Seeing the benefit firsthand will have a positive impact. Cloud computing is a sourcing model for business resources, and by understanding how to use it, one can stay ahead of the curve, rather than being dragged along unwillingly." (Baker)

"IT folks are a very respected and innovative group. I know some of us hoard information from each other for survival and vanity. With that said, learn learn learn and find out ways to help your company utilize these new techniques, and you will be just fine." (Morgan)

"I would encourage IT workers to learn about cloud computing and how it can help them in their current job. Many cloud vendors have tools and best practices that can be leveraged for running your internal services better. The more IT workers know and understand about cloud computing, the more likely they are to be able to recommend a potential business use case within their company. Quite possibly that could be within IT to help IT run better. As a senior IT manager, I wouldn't be firing any of those people." (Archibald)

"There is nothing an IT person should fear about the cloud, as long as they are willing to educate themselves on the process, its differentiation and how to manage it appropriately." (Larsen)

### 3. Learn how the cloud can help your business and help foster your own professional growth.

"Do not be the doubting Thomas, and realize the cloud is inevitable. It is not a fad, or a short-lived experiment. Do not preach against it and act foolish toward its real benefits. While the cloud may not serve all purposes, it will for the most part positively improve all business types in one way or another. For this reason, as an IT professional you must perform your due diligence around these products and understand their benefits for your organization. Be willing to not just evangelize, but to explain, demonstrate and understand the possible bottom line improvements to your companies P&L. In other words, go the extra mile and outshine your competition." (Larsen)

“The world is changing. IT pros need to realize that and start throwing themselves headfirst into this brave new world. Don’t feel threatened, feel excited about this new challenge. Remember what got you into IT in the first place? The excitement, the ability to build something really cool, the hacking? That’s all alive and well and sitting in a cloud startup somewhere; meanwhile traditional IT has become a little old and dusty. So see this as a massive opportunity and embrace it!” (Kepes)

“Adopt strategies and policies for scale out, not just scale up. Most IT shops understand scale up, however, cloud brings a new facet to the table, which is scale out. IT has a great opportunity to define how this will occur and be managed within their organization if they get out in front of it. If not, a high-priced consultant will be brought in to assist at the executive level because management will not ignore the financial implications of cloud too much longer.” (Morgenthal)

#### **4. Understand that cloud computing, like other ‘disruptive technologies,’ doesn’t spell the end of IT.**

“In 1985 I read an article that talked about CASE tools and how their code-generating capabilities would eliminate programmers by 1990. There were other articles about how COBOL was a dead language, and if you were on that platform you’d better get off quickly. My company currently employs two COBOL programmers. As others have said, stay informed but don’t panic!” (Dwyer)

#### **5. Lead by example, and envision yourself as a concierge for end users.**

“Realize that IT cannot maintain control through continued innovation in IT, but instead must lead by example. Attempts to constrain the user will result in disastrous results as the end user does end runs around IT to achieve their goals as well as presenting poorly in the eyes of management. Instead of treating IT as rental property that is rented by the end user (customer) and acting like the landlord, change your mind-set to that of a concierge for a hotel and see yourself providing the best experience for your customers.” (Morgenthal)

**Read the entire discussion, and join the conversation:**

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