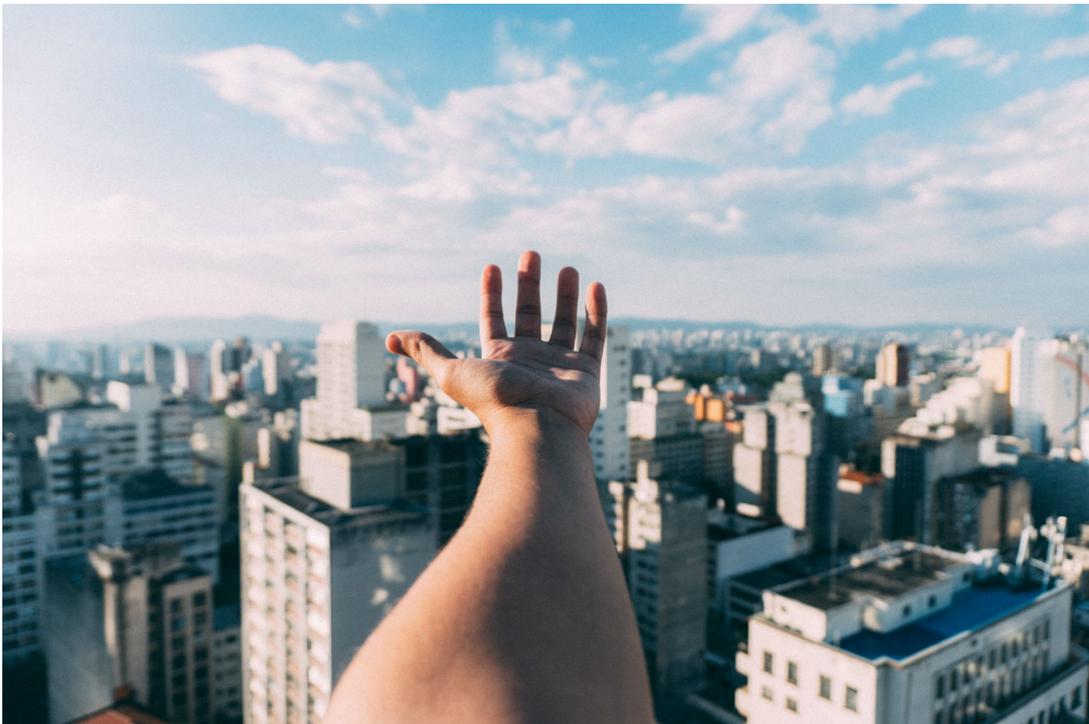# practices

Migration to the cloud is a core component of many companies' digital strategies, and that brings huge benefits for all kinds of activity – including building systems management, says Priva General Manager UK & Ireland Gavin Holvey.

The ability of the cloud to deliver greater accessibility, scalability and resilience to the corporate world was established long before the dramatic events of the last 12 months. But no one could deny that the pandemic has served to further underline the advantages of cloud-centric operations – and as such is destined to result in accelerated migration to the cloud for all kinds of businesses.

A recent blog by a team at global management consultancy McKinsey summarises many of the key factors at work here. Suggesting that recent events make "cloud computing more important than ever", McKinsey highlights the centrality of the cloud to achieving corporate agility and effective "digital strategies". With customer demands becoming more extensive and nuanced, the cloud can also help companies respond more quickly – paving the way for the deployment of "new digital customer experiences in days rather than months, [as well as] support analytics that would be uneconomical or simply impossible with traditional technology platforms." (1)

But the huge internal benefits of shifting to the cloud should also not be underestimated. For remote workers dialling in to on-premise systems can be an option, but sharp spikes in traffic can mean significant challenges if spare capacity is not available. Far better, then, to have employees reliably connect through their home broadband to company networks via the cloud – and then use only the systems or materials they actually require for their work. Resources can be managed more effectively in the cloud, whilst there is also the benefit of having access to the kind of robust security measures built into leading platforms such as Amazon Web Services' S3 and Microsoft Azure.

A recent report by recruitment agency Manpower leaves one in no doubt that this trend will continue post-pandemic (2). With the cloud contributing significantly to business continuity, the agency cites a recent finding by Centrify that 51% of business leaders think a shift to a cloud-based business model has "saved" their company during Covid-19. As a majority of employers plan to increase their reliance on the cloud, it is evident that "cloud adoption has come of age" in the past year.

'Freedom and flexibility'

With employees also relishing what Manpower describes as the "freedom and flexibility to be able to work from anywhere", the overall direction of travel is now clear. For a technology developer such as Priva, this translates to a sustained focus on solutions that complement this emerging ethos of cloud-centric operations.

The good news is that we are already some way down this road thanks to developments such as Priva Remote Management, which uses the cloud to allow building management systems to be operated, managed and maintained remotely. Like all of our cloud-related products, it was built using Microsoft's Azure cloud platform, which was chosen for reasons including its scalability and advanced security measures.

Whilst there is still likely to be a role or on-premise solutions for purposes such as archiving, the probability that is the vast majority of active business operations will be cloud-based within a few years. As employees working from home more routinely adds to the momentum, it is the organisations who take steps now to achieve a seamless migration to the cloud who will be best-positioned for the future.

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