Hybrid Cloud for Business Communications

THE ESSENTIAL GUIDE

Mitel®

Powering connections

So you're considering hybrid cloud for your business communications. You're not alone! In fact, more and more businesses are turning to cloud communications (a.k.a. hosted communications), as witnessed by its tremendous market growth of roughly 25 percent year over year.
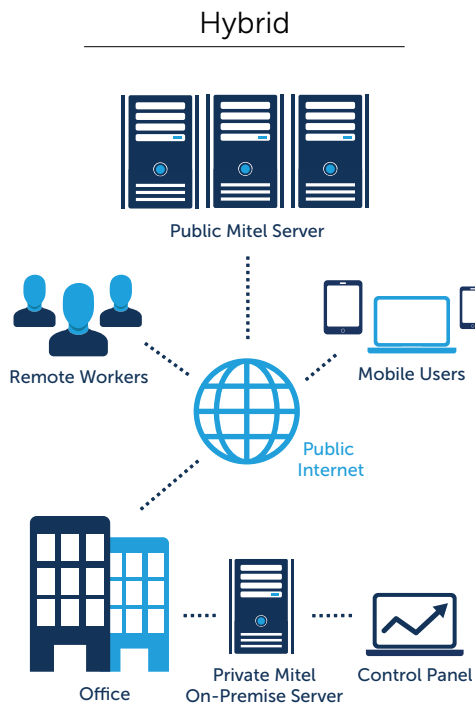
Why choose hybrid cloud? What do you need to know about hybrid cloud? And what are the next steps on your path? Before diving in, you must have the answers to these key questions. That's why we've prepared this handy guide to take you through the basics of hybrid cloud and what you need to know before taking the next step.

What are the main reasons to deploy communications in a hybrid cloud model?

The best of both worlds: A hybrid cloud deployment offers the advantages of both premises- and cloud-based deployments. You can house certain servers internally and leverage the cloud for others, providing a highly tailored approach for companies of any size.

Gradual transition to cloud: A hybrid cloud communications strategy is often adopted by organizations as part of a transition strategy, building from a traditional on-premises phone system to a more robust cloud-based unified communications solution that provides unlimited scalability and advanced business capabilities.

Privacy and control: More than just a transition strategy, hybrid cloud can be a long-term solution. In a hybrid cloud model, you can maintain complete control of certain aspects of your communications infrastructure while leveraging the resiliency, management, and scalability benefits of the cloud.

Hybrid

Public Mitel Server

Remote Workers

Mobile Users

Public Internet

Office

Private Mitel On-Premise Server

Control Panel

Facts about hybrid cloud communications

- *Hybrid cloud communications are ideal for medium and large businesses, especially those with large campus environments and geographically distributed locations.*

- *Organizations with limited IT resources and coverage can embrace a hybrid cloud solution for its unified management tools to easily manage users across sites.*

- *Combining existing on-premises equipment with mobility-enhancing cloud services protects existing investments while increase resiliency and efficiencies of scale.*

Determining what to keep on-premises and what to bring to the cloud

YOUR HIGHLY SENSITIVE AND REGULATED DATA

If your business is in financial services, healthcare or any other industry with data privacy concerns, you may be subject to strict regulations on where your data lives. Examine your regulations carefully and evaluate whether patient or customer information is best left on-premises to stay compliant.

YOUR CONTACT CENTER

Cloud-based contact centers provide a level of agility at the workforce level. With all key functions, features, applications, and services hosted in the cloud, employees can be recruited from anywhere and the workforce can be scaled up or down easily as needed. The cloud also adds a layer of protection in terms of business continuity. Picture it: if the fiber to your premises-based contact center was cut, would you have a backup plan? When you move these functions to the cloud, workers can access your contact center applications from virtually anywhere with an Internet connection.

A FAILOVER SERVER

In the event of a network failure impacting your cloud provider, having a redundant on-premises environment can minimize costly downtime. For this reason, hybrid cloud deployments add an important layer of reliability to your business communications.

DATA THAT REQUIRES INSTANT AVAILABILITY

If you have data that must be constantly accessible with minimal latency regardless of network bandwidth — for example, large multimedia files that are frequently edited — it might be best left on-premises.

Connecting to your hybrid cloud

Your hybrid cloud communications solution can be accessed through private connection lines or a secure, encrypted connection over a public network. This is achieved through multiprotocol label switching (MPLS). MPLS is used in high-speed telecommunications networks to transport packets over virtual links. Data transmitted via MPLS contains known information about the network's topology, meaning it can be routed efficiently to its destination.

MPLS offers high call quality and is currently a popular option many businesses rely on. Connecting multiple locations to an MPLS network can be more expensive than other options, making it best suited for larger organizations.

MPLS supports numerous access technologies, like:

- *T1/E1*
- *Asynchronous transfer mode (ATM)*
- *Frame relay*
- *Digital subscriber lines (DSLs)*

Some cloud communications providers offer MPLS networking as a fully-integrated service that provides additional benefits. For example, quality of service (QoS) monitoring can help businesses ensure that voice and video traffic is always prioritized above other types of network traffic to ensure good quality and low latency.

This service also alleviates the burden of identifying different circuits, deciphering different invoice formats (even multiple invoices from the same provider), recognizing bill cramming or toll fraud—all responsibilities that require many hours of management attention each month.

However, not all service providers offer networking services — some won't even allow customer owned/managed links into their data centers — so you need to carefully evaluate different service provider options with your business requirements in mind.

Assessing your business requirements

Now that you've learned the basics of hybrid cloud communications, it's time to assess your organization's structure and requirements. Don't forget, there are always public or private cloud options if you're not sure a hybrid cloud deployment is the best fit for your business needs.

Here are the next steps to take on your way to hybrid cloud communications:

1. CAREFULLY EVALUATE ANY PRIVACY REGULATIONS POLICING YOUR DATA

Determine if your data is subject to explicit regulations on where it can live, or if you feel more confident with in-house security for compliance.

2. ESTABLISH WHAT STAYS ON-PREMISES AND WHAT MOVES TO THE CLOUD

Build a strategy for your new architecture that leverages the benefits of cloud- and premises-based infrastructure most effectively. Look at your organization by department or function to build your structure.

3. PLAN FOR THE WORST

What's the cost of downtime for your business? Can you afford to lose network connection without a backup plan? If not, you'll need to build a strategy for high availability to avoid leaving your users stranded in the event of failure.

4. EXPAND YOUR VENDOR EXPECTATIONS

As you evaluate whether hybrid cloud communications is the right choice for your business today, consider the future as well. Hybrid cloud is a great option if you want to test the cloud waters without fully migrating over. When shopping for a provider, be sure to select one that allows you to move freely between on-premises, cloud and hybrid deployment models rather than having to commit to one long-term. Additionally, ask your vendor questions about their data centers, service level agreements (SLAs) and the total value of their offering—what can they provide beyond dial tone that will enhance your business and, ultimately, your bottom line?

How Make-a-Wish connects its massive network with hybrid cloud communications

With 27,000 volunteers and 62 local chapters, Make-a-Wish required a high performance solution to connect its network. See why Make-a-Wish turned to hybrid cloud communications to boost employee collaboration and focus on its goal of making dreams come true.

Watch the video to see how Make-A-Wish is using hybrid cloud to boost employee collaboration.

MAKE·A·WISH®

Your best path to cloud communications

There's a reason more subscribers choose Mitel for their cloud communications needs than any other brand. We work with customers to determine the best model for their unique business needs and implement a solution that delivers confidence and peace of mind, freeing you up to focus on your customers and your bottom line.

Your business communications are critical—that's why Mitel only uses top-tier data centers to offer the highest level of security and power for your cloud deployment, and a geo-redundant environment to reduce disruption in the event of unforeseen circumstances.

With public, private, and hybrid cloud deployment options, we offer a cloud deployment option tailored to your specific requirements today and designed to grow or change with your business to keep you covered in the future. And, no matter which model you choose, our expansive portfolio of customer experience, mobility and collaboration solutions provide a unified, comprehensive platform for your business communications

Find out more

Contact us today to speak with an expert about your best path to the cloud. This guide contains excerpts from Cloud Communications For Dummies®. Click here for your complimentary copy.