



**Redesigning managed IT services
to transform your business**



Managed services today

Taking the management burden of technology away from a business has been commonplace in the IT industry for over 20 years. Today and even more so in the future, a business decision is always, even in the smallest way, a technology decision. That's why IT is changing.



Managed services today

So why are we talking about this subject now?

Well, the reality is that the way businesses interact with service providers (like us here at Cloudhelix) is changing... and for good reason. The way we see it is that instead of paying a managed service provider (MSP) to manage your headaches for you, providers should be better aligned with adding business value by building the foundations for future innovation.

It's all about realigning the perception of IT through adjusting how we work, think and approach what we do.

Over the course of this ebook, we'll assess the IT situation in enterprises today, what's going wrong and as experts in improving business performance by making technology work harder. Then offer steps that every business can take to ensure they're prepared for the IT transformation that's already beginning to take hold.

Through working closely with our clients, we're beginning to see a new type of IT function emerge, and we think that this realignment of IT will become the new normal. It's an exciting, remarkable and considered change in an industry that never stands still. We believe it will become the new standard.



The businesses frustration within IT

Most IT professionals are living with the decisions of previous IT professionals, whether good or bad.

As various IT leaders come in over the years, all looking to have an impact on the business, we end up with a lot of approaches muddled into one company. While this has gone on, the business has changed drastically; It's changed to the point that we can no longer avoid those skeletons in our server racks. IT needs to be firing on all cylinders to support businesses that operate in a world that shows no signs of slowing down.





The businesses frustration within IT

As cloud experts, we hear frustrated sentiments from businesses about technology. It's our job to make them go away. We regularly hear things like...

"We're used to getting pushback from IT when our project is already in motion, so for our latest project, we've used a few paid-for tools instead of involving the tech guys."

"I needed a development test space for our new corporate website, so I took out a free tier account with AWS"

"I get in touch with IT when things stop working. Often, they tell me it's too late and there's little they can do"

The Business

"Technology changes too rapidly, by the time we understand how to make best use of it, it has moved on"



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"We are constantly upgrading/updating off-the-shelf software to keep up with the latest version."

"Why am I always the last to know about a product roll out?"

"People are buying bits of cloud storage without involving us and we have no way of stopping or controlling it."

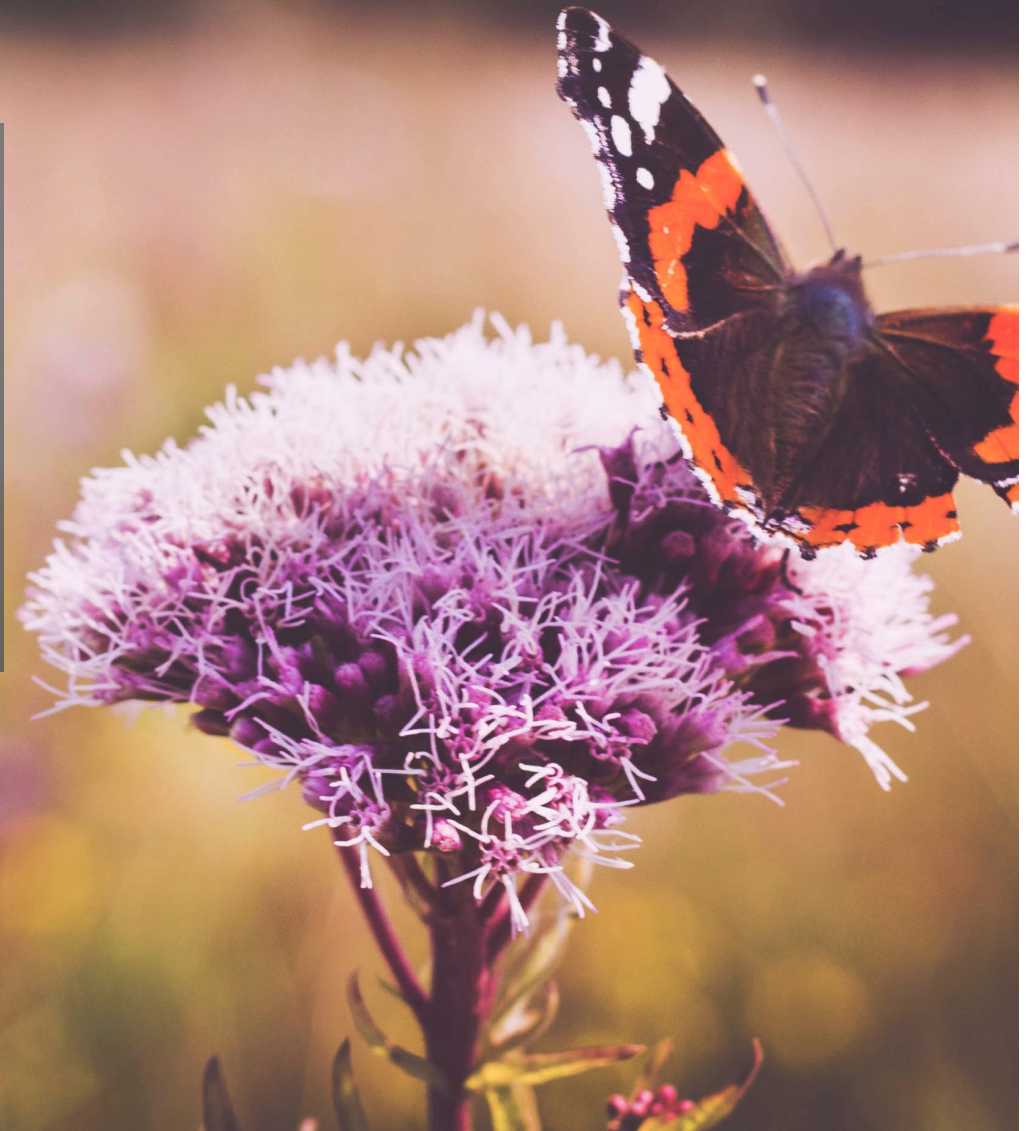
The IT Team

"There's a lack of trust which means we have to explain ourselves to directors and managers that have nothing to do with technology decisions."





Technology can unlock the potential for full scale business transformation. The challenge we face is having enough control to put the right tools in place to **make it happen.**





What's happening on the ground

The view from the Deloitte 2016-2017 Global CIO Survey

At Cloudhelix, we feel that senior IT staff are beginning to realise what the future will ask of them. As an industry, however, as you'll see below from a Deloitte survey of 1,200 CIOs in 48 countries, we're yet to truly take hold of the responsibility for innovation we have to the businesses we serve...

What we're really drawing from these number is that senior IT staff need to align the race for digitalisation with personal success. It's their duty to make this happen.



78% of CIOs say strategic alignment of IT with business strategy was critical to their success but only



5% of CIOs say they were a leading-class capability in their IT organisation.



47% of CIOs say "fostering innovation and disruption" is a capability essential to their success.



82% of CIOs say their spend on legacy systems and core modernisation will increase or hold steady over the next two years.



21% acknowledged they're in the process of building core IT capabilities around project execution and solution delivery.



“Innovation is a bottoms-up, decentralized, and unpredictable thing, but that doesn’t mean it cannot be managed.”

Eric Ries – The Lean Startup



What do we need to change?

Just some of the reasons IT is run ragged...

IT director

IT is trying to justify itself and its value to the board.

"I've saved us six grand this month"

CEO

Jumpy security concerns from senior people + keeping up with the changing security landscape.

"I've read lots about Ransomware on The Guardian and Forbes this year. How are we protected and what are we doing to actively avoid it?"

Board

Being involved in business digitalisation but held back by the board's decisions and lack of understanding in terms of delivering it properly.

"Make us more digitally relevant!"

Techies

We live in a data-driven world, but that doesn't mean it's easy for IT to feed this data into the business at a rate that the business requires it.

"We get reams and reams of data from every facet of our business. Our business wants data, but I'm not sure they know why they want it or what they want to achieve with it."



Looking for justification for your department by looking to cut costs is a search to the bottom. If you're an IT director on a cost-saving mission, what will you do when there's no more money to be saved, and is cheap the same as good?

IT is guilty of seeing the rest of the business as a distraction from the tech projects they are working on. Technology supports the business, so IT needs to work in harmony, not feel distracted by, the rest of the business.



What's the answer?

A new relationship with your service provider

The new dawn we're talking about won't just affect businesses, it will also require service providers to step up and help you take the lead. The strengths of many providers is in migration, networking, security and monitoring, but as we transition toward doing "more than just keeping the lights on", this must change... and what better time to start than today.

With more and more businesses, and not just Software as a Service (SaaS) companies, integrating a DevOps philosophy across their technical teams, the quality of applications produced is improved as networking and hardware concerns are alleviated. In the future, this approach will rule whole IT teams across all industries. With monitoring, downtime and security now baked into the production cycle, what do you need a service provider for?



A new relationship with your service provider

Well, integrating new ways of working is much easier with the outside eyes of experts who've done it before, for one thing, but it's also about offloading the large-scale disruption internal projects can cause to keeping things up and running.

Having experts who know what good looks like, and a track record for making it happen, means that, from day one, you get the advice and input you need to avoid vendor lock-in, retain control, build a business case for change, modernise your infrastructure, work towards IT automation and free up your team.

Once everything has died down and is working as you and your MSP planned, begin to use your MSP for strategy and ongoing insights plus a little bit of maintenance for your platform.





How to acquire managed services today... for the future

While it's nice to think about the future and what it might hold, the reality is that, for many businesses, this is all a long way off. To be honest, that's fine; some of our clients run scarily old physical servers held together with sticky tape when we first start working with them. It's in realising that change needs to happen, and having a loose idea of what that change looks like, that we can begin to move forward.

Let's envision tomorrow, make plans and build business cases so that as a business you can begin to think about a time and a place where nothing holds you back. Here are a set of questions to ask a provider new or incumbent to see if they are thinking with the mindset you require to make change happen...



What does good look like?

Today, if you head to the IT department within the London offices of JML, a global organisation specialising in ecommerce and TV shopping, you won't find the kinds of chaos we've described in this ebook. Instead, you'll find a workshop environment that's ready to welcome in stakeholders and staff across the business.

It's not just for a quick cuppa either, through migrating and fully virtualising JML's once physical, office-based infrastructure onto Cloudhelix's flash storage array dedicated cloud platform, we've transformed the role and perception of IT within the business.

The team's old setup was a brilliant example of IT focusing on one thing... management and maintenance. With servers regularly failing and network problems plaguing the team, our work has set the technical team at JML free to unleash their skill and creativity upon the whole business.



Technology can guide your business

Now, instead of coming to IT with problems and expecting fixes (while IT are busy wrestling with their physical infrastructure), stakeholders at JML sit down with IT to discuss projects in the formative stages. What does this mean? Technology teams can guide projects down a route that's feasible and cost effective while being kept in the loop from day one. It's a much more harmonious way of IT supporting the business and provides an opportunity to add real value to projects of all sizes.

It seems silly that IT, who have a holistic view of the businesses technology, are usually the last party to be involved in business decisions... especially when you think about the fact that our world is made up of an increasing amount of technology. Today, and even more so in the future, a business decision is always a technology decision.

Today, IT is more valuable to the JML business than ever before, focusing on building innovation that propel the business into the future. With your infrastructure modernised, virtualised and generally taken care of, imagine what your teams can begin to focus their attention on.

A five step process to move your business toward its future

Fearing information overload, we'll be delivering our five step process to kickstart change to you via email over the next couple of weeks. We've covered a lot of ground so far and we can't wait to share the Cloudhelix transformation process with you shortly.

The end result we're trying to reach is where we allow the business to be our inspiration. You don't need to come up with ideas, but steer and support the ideas from the business. In turn, you can drastically boost the value of IT.



IDEAS

ANALYSIS

PLANNING

REALIZATION

SUCCESS





Thanks for reading

"At Cloudhelix, we believe that the world today isn't just about technology, it's the power of what people do with technology. We see highly qualified and talented technical staff held back by the tech they've inherited all the time, and we want to see their creativity and skill unleashed on the business, not hindered."

By David Blesovsky, CEO of Cloudhelix

About CloudHelix

Cloudhelix is a forward-thinking cloud consultancy helping businesses improve performance through the applied use of technology. Our clients include large scale tech-reliant businesses such as FRP Advisory (the UK's largest insolvency practice) and JML (e-commerce and teleshopping specialists) through to young, bright scaling startups such as DataJar, who specialise in leasing and managing Apple products. Our client engagements are defined by a will to create solutions that free up IT teams to unleash their creativity on the business.

If you have any questions about anything in this ebook, require support in building a business case for change or would just like to run ideas by our experts, drop us a line on hello@cloudhelix.io or call us right away on +44 1273 987 920.

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