Future focused cloud solutions from the Access Group

A guide to driving agility for Access Supply Chain customers
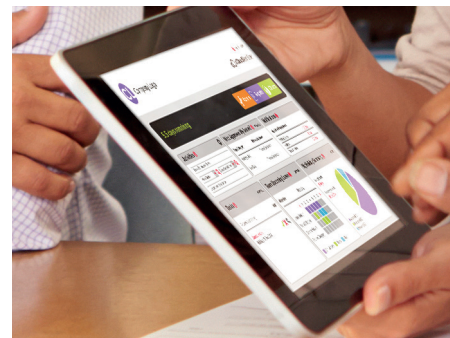
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For most supply chains the path to growth relies on addressing two key issues:

1. Maximising the productivity and effectiveness of the workforce:
   Employees are a major fixed cost and inefficient administrative processes can stand in the way of optimising productivity, increasing costs across the business

2. The need for more effective operational and strategic decision making:
   The business intelligence required to reduce your overhead whilst improving service is often locked up within the organisation

Organisations use cloud-based software to address these challenges so that the potential to thrive and grow is fully realised.

In other words, cloud computing means that instead of computer hardware and software sitting on your desktop or in your company's network, it's provided for you as a service by an external company and accessed online. This allows for reduced costs of implementation and maintenance, and allows more flexible access across a range of devices.

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Cloud and on-premise work together

Cloud computing has revolutionised the IT industry. Besides offering a different model for business computing, the most compelling aspects of the cloud to a supply chain business are:

- Reducing the cost of deploying and maintaining software

- Providing access anytime, anywhere

- Improving speed of use, adoption, and overall user experience

The major component of driving down 'cost to serve' is reducing reliance on large-scale IT infrastructure. However, the lowest cost does not necessarily equate to the best value. For businesses, the value of software is determined by how well it meets specific needs.

Furthermore, smart businesses now think about how cloud software can sit alongside or integrate with existing infrastructure. Cloud solutions boost the effectiveness and value of on-premise software by complementing and enhancing specific features and benefits.

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Tackling administrative inefficiency

Administrative tasks that are supported by paper-based or antiquated systems are both a burden and a drain on your resources. Employees shy away from completing time-consuming tasks, adding to overall operational inefficiency. Intuitive and easy-to-use automated software will help tackle these issues by providing:

- The power to address routine administrative tasks from anywhere, on any device. This drives better productivity by freeing employees to undertake tasks on the move or from remote locations

- The ability to reduce the impact on management time by simplifying processes and accelerating task completion

"Software automation gives time back to managers by simplifying processes and accelerating task completion."

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Empowering your sales team

Customer-facing departments such as sales, marketing, and support have a key requirement to store and access business critical data with speed and ease.

Without a comprehensive Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system, tracking ROI and managing customer accounts is often a slow and inaccurate task. Inflexible and complex CRM systems slow an organisation down because they're unable to evolve with a business's needs.

Cloud CRM applications integrate with your existing finance system to manage quotes and contracts, forecast revenue, track and share contacts and opportunities with key suppliers, and monitor performance through dashboards.

A cloud-based CRM offers:

- Accurate and accessible contact, account, and opportunity information for your sales team

- Minimal running costs and scalability to meet your needs

- The ability to access key metrics and information on the move

- A 360 degree view of customer interactions in real-time

Automating your invoice processing

Inefficient data entry and invoice-chasing negatively impacts your supplier relations and cash flow. Unmanaged paper and spreadsheet invoices result in missing payments, errors, low productivity, and low engagement.

By automating your invoice processing and accounts payable procedures in the cloud, you save time and reduce the overall administration of your payment processes.

Taking your invoice processes to the cloud lets you:

- Save time and money through faster processing

- Improve supplier relations with quick and accurate payments

- See rapid return on investment through fast implementation and immediate reduction in processing load

- Reduce the chance of making mistakes or losing invoices

"Without a comprehensive CRM system, it can be a slow and often inaccurate task tracking ROI and managing customer accounts."

"Unmanaged paper and spreadsheet invoices result in missing payments, errors, low productivity, and low engagement."

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Taking control of expenses

T&E (Travel and Entertainment) business expenses are often the highest area of uncontrolled spending in an organisation. In manual systems, expense processing can be an end-of-month paper chase: gathering receipts, form filling by employees, copy-keying by the finance team, and scrutiny by line managers and financial controllers. Combined with the inability to control T&E spend, efficiency issues damage productivity and result in cash leaking from the organisation in multiple places.

Key benefits of automating expense management:

- Control spend with pre-set policy limits

- Maximise reclaim of VAT and tax

- Better working capital management by eliminating expense related cash flow issues

- Seamless integration with your Access finance software

"Travel and Entertainment business expenses are one of the highest areas of uncontrolled spending in an organisation."

Managing your greatest asset

Whether you are a start-up or a well-established supply chain business, the efficient management of your staff is crucial to your success. Keeping up with the day-to-day needs of a growing workforce affects efficiency and puts a strain on administration.

The right HR solution removes the strain of paperwork, approvals, requests for information, and the worry of remaining compliant.

Major benefits of cloud-based HR software include:

- Cutting the cost of absence through self-service holiday and sickness recording

- Reducing administration time, paperwork, and complex Excel spreadsheets

- Automated training and appraisal processes

- Document management for important HR records, including expiry reminders to help you stay compliant

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Uncovering BI

Successfully managing a supply chain relies on monitoring workplace productivity, tracking inventory and logistics, and evaluating the status of clients' requests. Business Intelligence (BI) can simplify these daily operations by connecting and compiling huge volumes of data from multiple sources and presenting it in real-time with easy to understand dashboards.

A cloud-based BI tool lets you identify issues, evaluate inventory management and logistics, and helps you manage your supply chain to its full potential. With easy-to-read, customisable reports, you can monitor key performance indicators (KPIs) across your entire supply chain.

BI obtained through cloud software solutions lets you:

- Share and access data, reports, and dashboards online and on mobile devices

- Uncover issues, optimise resource allocation, and improve inventory control through sophisticated analyses

- Automate critical production and fulfilment processes

- Evaluate supply chain performance through scorecard functionality

"Business Intelligence can simplify these daily operations by connecting and compiling huge volumes of data from multiple sources."

"Cloud-based BI lets you evaluate inventory management and logistics, helping you manage your supply chain to its full potential."

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Leveraging the cloud for business growth

It's challenging to root out inefficiency from non-core business activities. Cloud software overcomes this challenge, eliminating labour-intensive admin tasks to give time back to employees and management.

Access aCloud offers a suite of integrated solutions to improve key areas of any sized business. This includes invoice automation, CRM, expense management and business intelligence. By pinpointing specific areas of inefficiency, aCloud helps you run your supply chain with the speed and ease necessary for growth.

Get in touch with your Access account manager today or contact us directly to book your tailored demo.

✉ **hello@accessacloud.com**

📞 **+44 (0)845 075 6000**

"Eliminate labour intensive tasks to give time back to employees and management."

"By pinpointing specific areas of inefficiency, aCloud helps you run your supply chain with speed and ease."

Increasing productivity and growing your supply chain business

Our in-house development team focus on making aCloud the simplest suite of integrated solutions on the market. We offer a wide range of cloud-based products including absence management, expense management, finance, HR and business intelligence. We provide tools that will help you to work smarter and improve your performance.

About

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Access aCloud is a suite of integrated cloud-based applications developed, marketed and provided by Access Group, a company with over 7,000 UK business customers. Access was founded in 1991 and is dedicated on providing vertically focused industry specific software solutions.

Our team of over 800 people includes 100 support engineers and 130 developers across 14 UK offices. This enables us to provide consultancy and support with a personal touch.

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Sales:
+44 (0)845 075 6000
hello@accessacloud.com

accessacloud.com

Write to us:
aCloud
One Aldgate
London
EC3N 1RE