

# (The Cloud)

## Advantages Vs Disadvantages (Important Issues To Consider)

***“The Cloud”***, refers to data that you can send and access from a remote server. In other words, your data and applications are being “hosted” on someone else’s server, not exclusively on your own hard drive. Hosting Services is a specific type of cloud computing technology, provides several key benefits, including:

- Flexibility
- Cost-efficiency
- Ease of use
- Backup and recovery
- Off-site access

A good Hosted Services provider also offers another benefit: unconditional 24/7 support. Consequently Hosted Services is an excellent choice for companies who want to leverage the capabilities of an entire IT department without having one in-house.

The above is known as a third party hosted solution. The other hosted solution would be hosting web application in-house the agency’s own data center. This would give the agency the data assurance they need to maintain their data on-site anywhere as long as there is an internet connection.

### **Here are some key disadvantages to consider using a third party:**

#### **1. Network Connection Dependency**

*In order to reap the benefits of cloud computing, your agency must always have an internet connection. Unfortunately, there is no way to get around this fact. You need a network in order to send files to the cloud and retrieve them.*

#### **2. Limited Features**

*Not all cloud providers are created equally. When you use cloud computing for storage and backup, you should ideally be working with a provider who offers the value of unlimited bandwidth. You may also experience limited storage space or accessibility. (SaaS) Software as a Service offerings may usually begin with a free package, but you will be charged for premium offerings and extra space. Can your agency afford the costs as your agency needs grow?*

#### **3. Loss of Control**

*You are, essentially and trusting another party to take care of your data. You are trusting that they will maintain their data centers and servers with the same care as you would, if not more. You have to trust that your provider’s data centers are compliant and secured both physically and online. Some find the lack of in-house control of the server unnerving.*

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#### 4. Security

Cloud hacking cases as recent as the past few months have shown that not all cloud providers are as secure as they claim to be. As an agency, you can't afford to have sensitive information about your cases or your clients fall victim to hackers. One of cloud computing greatest disadvantages is that you don't always know which providers you can trust. Cloud computing companies have been known to move displace server information to other providers without granted permissions and this could disrupt software/connections support and other issues.

#### 5. Technical Issues

*If you experience any technical issues, you have no choice but to call your hosted provider's technical support for help. You cannot fix your cloud computing problems in-house, and some providers do not offer around-the-clock technical support. In The Cloud services there will be an additional cost factor because of multi Internet/corporate providers.*

#### 6. The Unknowns:

*Breach of trust is increasing every year; the average cost for each lost or stolen single record containing sensitive and confidential information increased from \$188. To \$201 in the year 2014 and organizations paid roughly \$5.9 million dollars as a result. (verify by Google 'cloud advantages and disadvantages') for updated loses)*

#### In Summary: (Microsoft Access System)

*All software systems are not alike and some require lots of RAM memory and others require much less. Our VAMS 'The Victim Advocates' Partner' software requires minimum space and RAM memory. The data entered is stored on a server 'locally' as if you were hosting your own web application and the software is called from each local advocate's computer. VAMS also operates from Off-Site with the use of various remote software systems also working from the advocate's local computer or the server. This operation as described is not from a cloud base server, it's from a local server assigned and setup by the agency with assistance from Carolina Crisis Software LLC.*

*Item number (5) spoke of technical issues and they are addressed with our software. Our company is responsible for all technical issues required of the software and the agencies server related to the software. We provide ongoing instructions to IT departments or contracted IT agencies provided by the license agency at no additional charge.*

*It's always been a question as to cost and ongoing support. That's always addressed based on the number of local advocate computers. There is not a cost for remote access to VAMS software.*

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### **(Important Issues To Consider)**

*We have found that IT departments are making the final decisions; Go or No-Go with a Cloud Processing environments. This should be a decision with the respected departments involved and they should understand the disadvantages as well as the advantages. Understand that 'The Cloud' third party hosting reduces IT department's workload.*

*There's a final question that always ask of our agencies. This question relates to modifications to the agencies software and if the agency requested their software be tailored to their specifications. The answer to these questions can always be answered by our current agencies and the answer is 'yes' we modify and tailor software to agencies needs. The suggestions offered are generally installed into the master source and in the last twenty-three years this has been favorably accepted by all agencies.*

**END**