



OPINION PIECE

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Seven ways that Cloud-hosted Intranets will transform your business

The business case for Cloud migration is compelling

By Marc Fletcher, Head of Marketing & Sales at Intervate, a T-Systems company

- Cloud-based intranet models have matured and are gaining traction
 - They offer clear advantages over on-premise Intranet options
 - The sooner one migrates, the sooner they can start capitalising on the benefits
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Analysts are predicting that Cloud adoption in corporate South Africa will reach a tipping-point in 2017, as the early adopters start showing clear results, and race ahead of their peers. In the years that follow, we expect almost every organisation to join the race to digital transformation – with Cloud migration at the core of this.

Looking specifically at the company intranet, Cloud-based models are also starting to gain traction. For many organisations, the intranet is its central nervous system – connecting people, projects, documents from every corner of the business – and so making wholesale changes to this can seem risky.

We believe that Cloud Intranet technologies, such as Microsoft's Office 365 SharePoint Online, have now matured to the point where their advantages over traditional on-premises intranets are clear. Let's look at seven ways in which moving the intranet to the Cloud will help catalyse your digitisation efforts.

1. Rapid speed to get to 'Minimum Loveable Product'

The most immediate benefit to the Cloud model of an intranet in SharePoint Online is the speed at which you can get a quality offering up and running. Usually, within just



weeks, organisations can shape their hosted intranets by customising the modules they want to add, integrating into core systems, testing, and releasing to users.

2. Elastic scalability

Your intranet demands may grow and shrink over time. With a Cloud model, you can flexibly add new users and new capacity without having to worry about physically bringing in new infrastructure. These advantages are particularly pronounced in cases of rapid business expansion, skunk-works projects that quickly grow to become mainstream business units, and the integration of companies following mergers or acquisitions, for example.

3. Continuous flow of new enhancements

Microsoft's approach to SharePoint Online is a great example of Intranet vendors making clear their commitment to focus on the Cloud. Those clients that still use on-premises solutions in the future will find that new updates will dry up – leaving them with outdated software.

In contrast, those on the hosted platform benefit from a regular stream of new enhancements and features that are fed into one's Intranet environment. No need for dramatic 'big bang' upgrade projects, change management, or training... just a continual flow of intuitive refinements and new innovations.

4. Get creative... customise to suit your unique needs

It's vital to choose an integration partner with experience, with a mature catalogue of intranet modules, and the skills to build new custom components. You'll benefit from a broad range of modules when getting started; and as your own unique requirements start bubbling to the surface, your partner will be able to design tailored modules that solve each requirement.

5. 99,9% Service Level Agreement for uptime and support on-demand

While it may seem like Cloud migration means losing some degree of control, hosted intranets like SharePoint Online are highly reliable, guaranteeing 99.9% uptime, to ensure your business continues running. Support requirements are delivered as part of



the licensing package for any queries that administrators or users may have. Over the last 7 quarters from Q2-2014 to Q4-2015 Microsoft reports an average 99,97%

6. Smoother integration for external users

Digital business ecosystems demand fluid but secure integration between your organisation and its partners, suppliers, or other key players. With SharePoint on-premises, a walled garden effect was created (where there was no simple way to share SharePoint content with external users).

With SharePoint Online, administrators can establish policies for external data sharing and create permissions-based rules for users to share sites, folders, and individual documents with external users, who simply tie a Microsoft Account to their corporate e-mail address.

7. Reduced IT staff costs

With your Intranet maintained by a hosted service provider, the need to train and employ IT personnel to maintain the intranet is drastically reduced. From a human capital perspective, your IT resources can be redeployed from low-level maintenance and support – to higher-value activities like new innovations, new business models, and enhancing the customer experience.

For many companies, moving their intranet to the Cloud will bring other advantages as well. Ultimately, the sooner an organisation takes the leap of faith, the sooner they can start taking advantage of these benefits, and capitalise on 'digital transformation in action'.

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About Deutsche Telekom



Deutsche Telekom is one of the world's leading integrated telecommunications companies with around 151 million mobile customers, 30 million fixed-network lines and more than 17 million broadband lines (as of December 31, 2014). The Group provides fixed network, mobile communications, Internet and IPTV products and services for consumers and ICT solutions for business customers and corporate customers. Deutsche Telekom is present in more than 50 countries and has approximately 228,000 employees worldwide. The Group generated revenues of EUR 62.7 billion in the 2014 financial year – more than 60 percent of it outside Germany.

About T-Systems

Deutsche Telekom considers the European business customer segment a strategic growth area. Deutsche Telekom offers small, medium-sized and multinational companies ICT solutions for an increasingly complex digital world. In addition to services from the cloud, the range of services is centred around M2M and security solutions, complementary mobile communications and fixed network products, and solutions for virtual collaboration and IT platforms, all of which forms the basis for our customers' digital business models.

With approximately 47,800 employees worldwide, T-Systems generated revenue of around EUR 8,6 billion in the 2014 financial year.

Since the inception of T-Systems in South Africa in 1997, the company has cemented its position as one of the most successful T-Systems companies outside of Europe. A leading ICT outsourcing service provider locally, T-Systems offers end-to-end ICT solutions in both the ICT Operations and Systems Integration markets. Their extensive portfolio of services covers the vertical, horizontal, IT and TC space. T-Systems South Africa's head office is located in Midrand with another major office in Cape Town, and 20 further representative offices in locations throughout southern Africa.



About Intervate

Intervate, a T-Systems company in South Africa, is an enabler of digital transformation, delivering digital workplace solutions and customer experiences that drive business value and improve productivity. We have over 14 years' experience in delivering innovative solutions that enable digital transformation including Enterprise Mobility, Enterprise Information Management, Customer Relationship Management, Business Process, Cloud solutions and Enterprise Application Integration. Our technical expertise is supported by an understanding of the strategic drivers and challenges that enable us to provide our customers with professional guidance regarding the best practices proven to deliver successful projects and business benefits.