



Seeking Technology Alternatives? Look to the Cloud

Is your company using cloud-based software-as-a-service (SaaS) computing? If not, it may be time to investigate how your organization might benefit from computing in the cloud.

Generally, cloud computing means using IT resources and storing data on the Internet rather than on your own desktop computers, servers or network. SaaS is one model of cloud computing that involves using software hosted in the cloud, which users access via subscription.

According to a study by research-based consulting firm Mint Jutras, 22 percent of manufacturing and distribution software is now SaaS-based. The firm expects this to grow to 45 percent in 10 years.

Cloud-based technology offers significant benefits to manufacturers and distributors:

- **Budgeting:** Cloud users basically “rent” their software rather than buy it. This allows better budgeting by spreading out IT costs.
- **Convenience:** Updates are constant and seamless, with potentially fewer and less disruptive interruptions to your business processes.
- **Security:** The average company has difficulty keeping up with security threats. Using SaaS, software security is the responsibility of the vendor, not the user.

According to a May 2013 Fortune article, savvy manufacturers are using cloud computing in several important ways:

- **Collaboration:** New product development and introduction strategies are streamlined when collaboration is easy and happens early in the design cycle.
- **Speed:** Real-time order status and forecasts allow for more accurate demand and inventory management.
- **Sales:** Tracking results by individual, group and division allows a quick dashboard view of the profitability of each sale.

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Now may be the time to look to the cloud for your technology resources. We hope you find this information valuable. Contact us to discuss your technology options and any other questions or needs you may have as year-end draws near.



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