

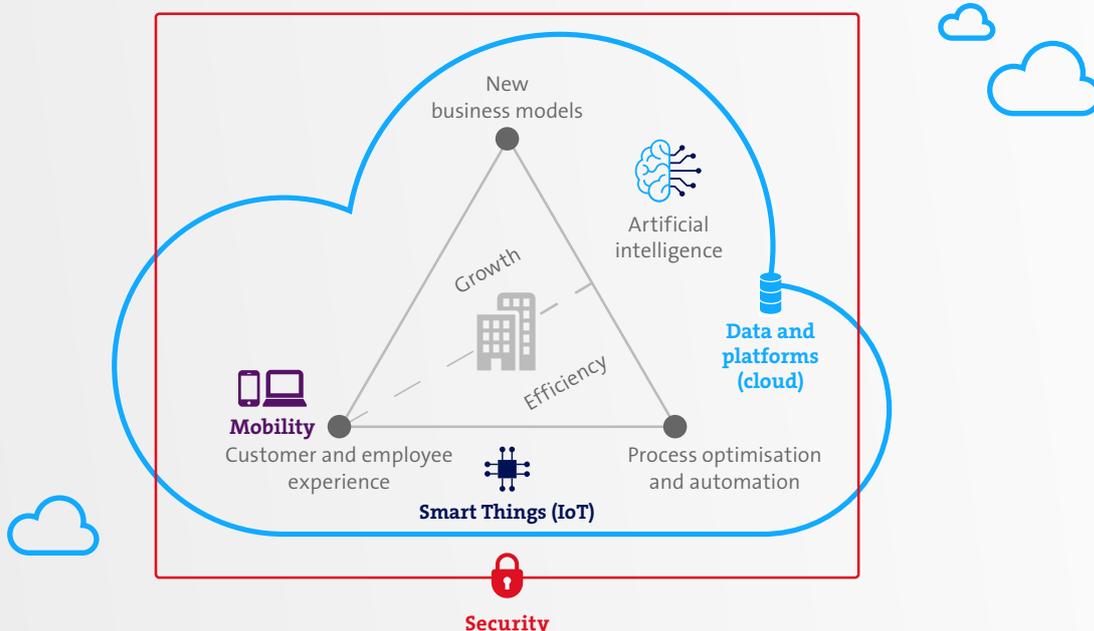
5 recommendations

The cloud as an accelerator for your digital transformation

It's one of the most-used buzzwords of the business world: digital transformation. Digital technology is the force behind almost all start-ups whose market valuation and revenues increase from zero to billions within months. Even seasoned companies can achieve greater efficiency and open up new opportunities by digitising existing business processes and entering into new business models based on digital channels.

Digital transformation is much more than just the evolution of IT from the age of the mainframe to the web era. Digitalisation enables new business models, optimisation of business processes and cross-channel experiences for customers and employees. The indispen-

sable basis and accelerator for digital transformation is a flexible IT infrastructure, which is best achieved in the cloud. The following five recommendations summarize how you can initiate the digitalisation of your company.





Recommendation 1 Act strategically

Digital transformation is only partially an IT issue. It concerns the whole company and is therefore a management issue, although it's highly advisable to test the opportunities and risks of digitisation with individual projects – whether these are initiated by IT or by the specialist departments. Ultimately, however, there should always be a digitisation strategy to ensure regulation of the company's positioning in the digital world, clear definition of responsibilities and open support and continuous monitoring of future development.

Ask yourself where in the company which digital technologies would bring benefits. Be inspired by competitors and dare to take a look at other industries. But also develop your own unprecedented ideas about new products and services. Take advantage of professional advice from experienced specialists when designing your digitisation strategy. But don't hesitate to establish in-house digital expertise within the company.



Recommendation 2 Use the advantages of the cloud

Even though digital transformation takes effect throughout the company, IT is nonetheless the basis for all digitisation projects. New business models often involve rapid growth. Transaction volumes and data volumes explode. Specialist departments want new applications and ad-hoc analyses at short notice. All this can only be handled with a flexible, automated and quickly scalable infrastructure.

Cloud computing has now overcome its teething problems. Providers of cloud services work with stable hardware and software platforms and use mature automation tools. The cloud is now reliable and secure – the proof lies in the numerous companies that have successfully outsourced their IT to the cloud. Now is the right time to switch to the cloud. Choose a reputable provider, preferably local to you, who can guarantee the security of your applications and data and can offer you individual advice.

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Recommendation 3 Transform your IT step by step

Proceed gradually – you don't have to migrate your entire IT to the cloud all at once.

- > Consider which cloud model is most suitable for your needs by using an assessment of the existing infrastructure and the goals to be achieved with the migration to the cloud. As a first step, standardise your hardware platforms, virtualise your server, storage and network and use automation tools. Continue using non-replaceable legacy systems and develop interfaces to the new cloud-based services. This is how you create your individual hybrid cloud.
- > Check whether the existing software is suitable for cloud operation and consider whether older applications could be replaced with modern solutions.
- > Next, assess whether individual tasks can be handled using standardised Software as a Service (SaaS) offers instead of with your own software. The first specific steps towards virtualisation and the transfer to the cloud are best planned together with a partner you trust.
- > In the next step, think about how you can stay innovative in the future. With business becoming more and more digital, all companies are increasingly faced with developing and providing software applications. Use cloud services not just for operating systems and specialist applications but also for your own software development. Platform as a Service (PaaS) provides your software engineers with extensive tools and development platforms, which are ideal in particular for creation of flexible, scalable cloud applications – both for internal use and for customer interaction – and support modern methods of software development such as Agile Development and DevOps.

Complete or partial migration of your IT to the cloud is no longer a risky business. On the contrary: Since their introduction, cloud offers have matured and the greater risk now lies in not virtualising your IT and thus missing out on the opportunities offered by the cloud. Without extensive expertise and corresponding practical experience, cloud projects cannot be implemented successfully. Get the support you need from a competent partner. Make sure that the partner you choose looks into your requirements and not only offers technical skills, but is also familiar with your industry. In this way, you can obtain a customised solution – there's no such thing as a "one size fits all cloud".

Questions on the journey to the cloud

- > **Assessment of the corporate requirements:** Where are we today and where do we want to go?
- > **Assessment of the existing infrastructure:** What should move to the cloud, what can move to the cloud?
- > **Weighing up benefits and challenges:** What are the opportunities and risks of a cloud migration?
- > **Choice of cloud model:** (Virtual) Private Cloud, Public Cloud, Hybrid Cloud? Which model for which services?
- > **Preparation for cloud migration:** Is the IT already standardised, consolidated and virtualised? Is the software suitable for cloud operation?
- > **Choice of partner:** Who will support the company during the migration to the cloud?
- > **Choice of provider:** Which cloud providers offer the desired reliability, security and confidentiality?



Recommendation 4 **Benefit** **from your data**

Of course, digitised companies accrue a lot of data. This is useful for more than just statistical analysis of the current business position. The analysis of large data volumes – whether customer data, market data or data from sensors, machines and plants – provides valuable information and findings that can be incorporated directly into the improvement of existing products and processes as well as acting as the impetus for new projects.

Don't be alarmed by "big data", but use the possibilities actively. Gain experience by beginning with individual projects that should answer specific questions. If you find you need greater processing power and memory capacity, this is no problem at all with a cloud-based, spontaneously scalable infrastructure. The following is true for big data too: Know-how is crucial. Just as for cloud migration, rely on a partner who is familiar with the analysis of large data volumes and who can help you to obtain the right findings from them.



Recommendation 5 **Adapt your processes and** **organisation – and inspire** **your employees**

Digitisation makes many business processes more efficient. It's impossible to imagine new customer interaction and sales channels without fully digitised processes. Intelligent systems and machines can be controlled digitally and supply revealing data. The flexibility and scalability of cloud services makes it easier to design and use digitised business processes. But you don't have to digitise all corporate areas, nor do you have to do it all at once. You can develop your company gradually, at your own pace, thanks to modular service and consultation offers.

Digital transformation bears most fruit when everybody is on board. Let your employees benefit from the advantages of digitisation. Allow home office working, mobile working and co-working.

In the digitised company, there are shifts in many responsibilities, roles and accountabilities. The role of the CIO and his team changes, moving away from being a provider of specified services towards being a business enabler. Specialist departments initiate IT-related projects and assume responsibility. The corporate culture has to allow for such decentralised initiatives and actively support them. Create an environment that accommodates project-based, interdisciplinary networks with specialists from all areas involved and is based on collaboration instead of blinkered thinking. This will help you to get the most from the advantages of cloud-based agile IT.

Act now!

Take the first step now. Discuss the potential of cloud solutions for your business with our cloud experts.



Sign up now for a non-binding cloud session.



You can find all information about our cloud services on our product page.