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# TIME KEEPS TICKING, TICKING, TICKING

## HOW FAST CAN YOU TRANSITION TO THE CLOUD?

It's a go! New infrastructure and systems strategies are increasingly geared around a cloud-first philosophy. But just how quickly can you get up and running? And are expectations of on-demand provisioning realistic or even desirable?

"With the agility provided by cloud, the pressure is on IT to stand up end-to-end environments in a matter of minutes – not weeks or months," [writes noted cloud expert David Linthicum](#). "But how does management avoid overextending capital budgets and know that they won't be stretched thin down the road?"

It's a real conundrum for IT executives. They know that business units can often surreptitiously self-provision cloud services if they feel that IT is slow to act or resistant to meeting end-user needs. But simply flashing the green light every time a request is made is a surefire way to lose control over IT costs.

## IT'S HAPPENING

It is clear that IT is no longer dragging its feet when it comes to cloud. [The Uptime Institute 2016 Data Center Industry Survey](#) finds that half of senior IT executives expect a majority of IT workloads to reside off-premises in either cloud or co-location services – and 70% say it will happen by 2020.

[McKinsey & Co. surveys](#) also indicate that "enterprises are planning to transition IT workloads at a significant rate and pace to a hybrid cloud infrastructure, with off-premises environments seeing the greatest growth in adoption."

Enterprises are [signing up for IT and business-process outsourcing at record rates](#). But the expression "haste makes waste" is something to consider as IT takes charge of the cloud transition. The Uptime survey finds that 40% of survey respondents are paying more for colocation contracts than initially planned, providing ready proof that the reality of shifting from on-premises to off-premises environments can sometimes deviate from expectations.

## HOW FAST IS FAST?

Still, you can't afford to go slower than your competitors, or even appear to be dragging your feet. It's important to have a clear picture of how your cloud spending rate compares with competitors and other industries. IDG and Microsoft teamed up on a nifty [Cloud Innovator's Assessment Tool](#) to do just that. And you can compare your company's cloud strategy against those of your industry peers using proprietary data from IDG Enterprise's 2015 *Cloud Computing Survey*. It's a worthwhile exercise.

Another useful tool is the "[Getting Started with the Cloud](#)" [blog post](#) by Rackspace. It's a high-level, step-by-step enterprise implementation guide designed to help you avoid the most common pitfalls, while securing the best possible ROI from your migration.

Make no mistake, there are benefits in the cloud to suit just about any company:

- Startups can get up and running on enterprise-grade infrastructure without having to build it
- SMBs can focus on running the business rather than managing IT



**YOUR CLOUDS.  
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- Enterprises can drive down costs and deliver increased operational efficiency, productivity, agility, and flexibility

To reap those rewards, you need to identify what you want to achieve and ensure there is consensus among leadership. And, of course, lining up the human and capital resources is essential, along with a solid implementation plan to follow step by step.