



# Winning MPS Deals

## How cloud software can elevate your business

by: Aleya Ericson, In Time Tec

**T**he old adage is “work smarter, not harder.” But the big question is: “How?” After all, no one sets out to create a bunch of unnecessary work. Plus, there is always the consideration of what will actually make your life easier. Thankfully, there are many technological solutions ready to swoop in and make your business run more efficiently.

But what is actually worth your time? For managed print services (MPS) providers, an important consideration is the benefits of cloud software. Cloud software — software that can be accessed and installed remotely via the internet — offers many improvements over traditional software models.

### Why the Cloud?

First of all, cloud software is much easier to install. When you can install software remotely, you save IT expenses such as on-site installation and management. This cloud installation also works with an existing fleet, so it saves you the hassle of having to update many devices.

Cloud software also offers greater opportunities for customization. When they are starting, businesses often default to general-use software (like Microsoft Excel) that *sort of* works to fulfill a critical requirement. The general-use software works for a while, until the lack of specialization snowballs into a bigger problem. Cloud software allows for software to be more customized and better suited for your business’ unique needs.

Another major benefit of cloud software is having access to your software and data on the go. You can remotely access up-to-date statistics, printer designs and other information critical to MPS at the push of a button. If you are still Googling MFP statistics, your business is behind the times.

### Design a Better Print Fleet

So, how can cloud software empower your business? There are many options available. Cloud software can help you design a better print-fleet layout, look up the latest device statistics and make stunning client presentations. Excel cannot offer you these client-impressing feats.

There are also ways to improve your print offerings above the competition with MPS cloud software. With preloaded apps, you can specifically tailor your printers to your customer. What apps do schools use? What apps would an accounting firm use? Thanks to cloud software, you can add premade apps to your printers to help them stand out from the competition.



### Manage MPS Better

Once the printer fleet is set up, the next stage is monitoring it. An important step is ensuring your print security. People leave documents unattended all of the time without thinking about what would happen if an unauthorized person was to grab them. Worse, hackers can access your print fleet to uncover all of your classified data.

So how do you protect your documents? Cloud software enables you to secure your devices by mandating your print settings. You can make it so only authorized users can print and that documents can only be printed when the user is physically at the printer. There are also other security settings that can decrease the number of unattended documents. Cloud software even enables you to monitor an employee’s printer use while he (or she) works from home, to ensure consistent print drivers and prevent him from printing restricted documents.

Using MPS cloud software tools can also save you a lot of money. You can more accurately track who is printing what and where. This helps improve the print environment by capturing user data. Plus, thanks to not needing dedicated servers for printers, your business saves significantly on infrastructure costs.

## Moving to the Cloud

So, how do you get started? First, it is helpful to understand the various ways cloud software can be priced. There is the traditional licensing model where you make a one-time purchase to gain access to the software. There is the software-as-a-service (SaaS) model, where you pay a recurring fee to access the software. The SaaS model can also have seat- or usage-based pricing. Seat-based pricing is when you pay based on the number of people using the software. Usage-based pricing is when you pay based on the volume of software used (e.g., number of tests run, the amount of time the software runs, etc.).

Two major benefits of SaaS are the alternative pricing models and the motivation to keep it updated. Smaller companies may want to only pay for those who are using the software versus committing to a lifetime license for anyone who

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needs a license. Plus, with a subscription, the software company is motivated to keep the software up to date. Out-of-date or bug-riddled software means people will cancel subscriptions, driving down profit for the software company.

Cloud software represents a new and exciting field that offers many possibilities. Most importantly, it offers your MPS business the best way to work smarter, not harder. Make sure your business does not

miss out on cloud software's vast potential for MPS. ■

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