

# CPD - IT Services - Data & Internet

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The cloud offers professional services firms many opportunities. Now let's consider what technology you need to run these services.

One of the best ways to get a sense of your technology requirements is to get up from your desk and go for a walk. Take a pen and paper with you. What do you see?

Work stations, servers, phone systems, modems, routers, network terminals, power and blue data cables, backup tapes and external storage devices are just some of the commonly used technologies in small to medium businesses. Some of these technologies can be moved to the cloud.

This section of the digital business kit considers potential changes to these business technologies, should you want to adopt a cloud solution.

To keep this instructional video as simple as possible, I'm going to group your business systems into three areas:

- 1. Data and internet**
- 2. Communications - your phones and PABX and,**
- 3. Hardware - which covers your PCs, Servers, Network equipment, Backups and associated IT Infrastructure.**

The video will also refer you to content in the digital business kit for further reading as we go.

Let's start with data and internet.

Most small businesses run an ADSL2+ internet connection.

ADSL is low cost, and good for browsing the internet, but the speeds and service are not reliable enough to be used for making business grade internet phone calls (VoIP) or sending and receiving large files.

If you are considering moving some of your traditional IT software and systems to the cloud, then your data service will most likely require upgrading.

The new connection will need to be a high-speed internet service that is both reliable and secure.

An internet search for 'business grade' or 'dedicated service' will return a range of service providers, plans and pricing.

These internet connections are more expensive than a shared service, however they provide more reliable broadband access.

Instead of cancelling your existing internet service, you can now use this connection as your redundant service in the event the primary new connection fails.

If all your key applications are in the cloud, then having a redundant internet solution is critical to minimize the risk and exposure associated with not being able to access your key business applications and systems.

Before purchasing a new internet service I recommend you complete a detailed audit of your IT systems and attempt to predict your data usage and speed requirements.

Lastly you will need to match your new data service with a new router and an upgraded firewall.

An IT consultant can assist you to complete an audit, should this task feel overwhelming.

For a list of key considerations for when purchasing data services, go to Module 13.