

Reliable. Resilient. Ready.

5 Reasons to Put Your IBM i in the Cloud



Your business runs on IT

IBM's platform is often the cornerstone of a strong IT infrastructure. It's likely that you've relied on IBM Power Systems and IBM i (aka iSeries/AS400) for many years, maybe even decades. Your organization may have customized mission-critical applications to run on the IBM i operating system (or possibly AIX/Linux). **You know this system, and you trust it to keep your business up and running.**

But sometimes that is easier said than done. The IBM platform is known to be resilient, steady and reliable, but there are several factors that can make it more expensive over time. As a result, some companies take shortcuts to save money. In the long term, these shortcuts can result in increased business risks.

You need to keep your IBM resources performing while minimizing business risk. Are you taking the right steps to protect your business?

Consider the challenges IT faces with the IBM platform:

- IBM i expertise is increasingly difficult to find and, when you do, it can be expensive to hire
- As hardware ages, maintenance and support contracts become more costly, and some platforms are nearing end-of-life status (Power 7 is end-of-life)
- Existing customized applications and software licensing make migration to a new platform extremely difficult

Your business needs your IBM platform to be running smoothly—around the clock without any hiccups.

It's time to consider moving your IBM i to the cloud so you can focus on your core business and the applications that support it, not the infrastructure it runs on.

Explore five reasons to put your IBM i in the cloud:

- 1 Gain access to a team of IBM i experts
- 2 Take advantage of flexible, scalable IBM Power cloud infrastructure
- 3 Leverage superior backup technologies and processes
- 4 Take your disaster recovery plan to the next level
- 5 Break the cycle, turn CapEx into OpEx

REASON #1:

Gain access to a team of IBM i experts

Maintaining IBM i expertise in-house can be challenging and expensive. Existing resources in the market are aging and retiring. Simultaneously, there are few entering the workforce well versed in this technology, and many who are reluctant to develop the necessary skills.

Too often, IBM i administration falls to an employee who is not an IBM expert, and they are asked to perform these duties in addition to their current responsibilities. With their limited knowledge, they are the linchpin holding it all together, they become the difference between your business being up and running and scrambling to recover. What happens if your IBM i resource is out of the office, faces a problem he can't solve, or worse, chooses to leave the company?

Hosting your IBM i in the cloud provides you with access to a team of experts with years of experience managing the IBM i platform.

These experts understand the intricacies of the platform and operating systems (iSeries, AIX, Linux) as well as what it takes on a daily basis to provide management and administration (performance, tuning, updates, backups, etc), most important, these experts are available 24/7/365.



REASON #2:


Take advantage of flexible, scalable IBM Power cloud infrastructure

Buying your own IBM Power Systems infrastructure means you're on the hook for everything—not only what you need today but also what you'll need in the future. But what if you grow faster than expected or face a downturn? What if the minimum hardware configuration is more than you need? In no time, you could be negotiating upgrades or find yourself stuck with expensive IT resources you're not using.

And the expense doesn't end with your primary server, you also have to take into account a system for backups and the redundant infrastructure required for disaster recovery.

When you move to the cloud, you are able to take advantage of a flexible, scalable IBM Power infrastructure.

You have the option to contract, and pay for, the resources you need now and adjust capacity over time. Instead of buying a full CPU, you can get a partial CPU, with the ability to burst above that threshold when resources are needed and are available. Memory and storage can be purchased in a similar manner, with flexible growth always being an option. All this flexibility is supported by a fully redundant infrastructure that bridges any service interruptions.



“For the 11th straight year, IBM Power Systems servers achieved the highest server reliability rankings in the ITIC 2019 Global Server Hardware and Server OS Reliability survey.”

—IBM Systems Magazine, August 2020

REASON #3:

Leverage superior backup technologies and processes

Are you taking advantage of new, reliable backup technologies, or are you still changing tapes? Are you confident that if you needed to recover your data you could do so and do it in a timely manner? Companies that don't have well thought out backup and recovery processes put their businesses at unnecessary risk. As a matter of fact, an incomplete backup plan can be as bad as no backup plan at all.

The 3-2-1 best practice for backups calls for making three copies of your data on two different media types with one copy held off-site. However, many companies on the IBM i utilize tape, which provides them with a single backup copy on a single media, which they fail to take off-site, falling short of the 3-2-1 best practices model. Additionally, it's worth noting that recovery from tape tends to take about three to four times as long as the backup took. So plan accordingly!

In the cloud, backups are built on superior technologies and supported with processes that are tried and true.

Many of these technologies are simply too expensive for small to midsize companies to afford, leaving them forced to rely on older technology. By leveraging Storage Area Networks (SANs) and Virtual Tape Libraries (VTLs), cloud providers can perform backups faster, make them more resilient and replicate copies to other locations for safe keeping.

Are you still using tape to back-up your IBM i?

Make the move to digital backup technology and experience faster, more reliable backups.



Take your disaster recovery plan to the next level

Disasters are a fact of life, and regardless of whether you are facing a natural disaster, such as a fire, flood or pandemic, or a massive hardware failure, you need to be prepared to recover. But developing a comprehensive disaster recovery (DR) plan for IBM i can be complex and expensive.

Complexity comes into play as you determine your Recovery Time Objective (RTO)—how fast you need to be back up and running—and Recovery Point Object (RPO)—how much data you can afford to lose—as well as what technologies you need to meet these objectives.

The smaller these numbers are, the greater the expense is as you are forced to deploy the infrastructure, technologies and processes to meet these objectives. This means having a secondary location with duplicate hardware and infrastructure and the means to keep them in sync.

With a cloud based solution, you can build an infrastructure that is ready for any disaster.

Your IBM i cloud services provider has the expertise, technologies and processes in place to help you meet your RTO and RPO with less expense than if you were to try to do it yourself. Consider this, if you deploy your own DR infrastructure, you have to duplicate everything in a 1:1 manner. With a cloud services provider, they take on the cost and responsibility of designing an infrastructure that is capable of supporting primary, backup and disaster recovery needs for customers. With experts on hand 24/7 and well defined processes, a service provider can deploy a high-availability (HA) solution that has you back up and running in less than 30 minutes.

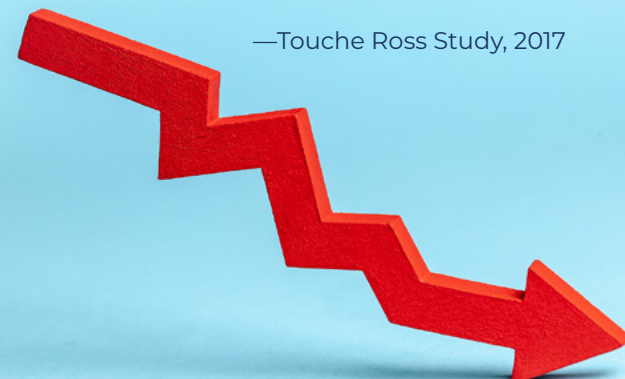


of businesses with
no disaster recovery plan
will fail after a disaster.



will fail within six months
of the incident.

—Touche Ross Study, 2017



REASON #5:

Break the cycle, turn CapEx into OpEx

If you are like many companies, your organization is caught in the never-ending cycle of making large capital investments in IT infrastructure, depreciating them over time, and then repeating the cycle over and over again. This approach will often lead to running your business on old technologies and paying expensive maintenance and support contracts in an effort to stay within budget and avoid a capital outlay. While it may be the cheaper alternative for the short term, long term you will need to migrate, and the longer you kick that can down the road, the more expensive, and risky, it can become.

Moving your IBM i to the cloud allows you to shift from a capital expense model to an operating expense model.

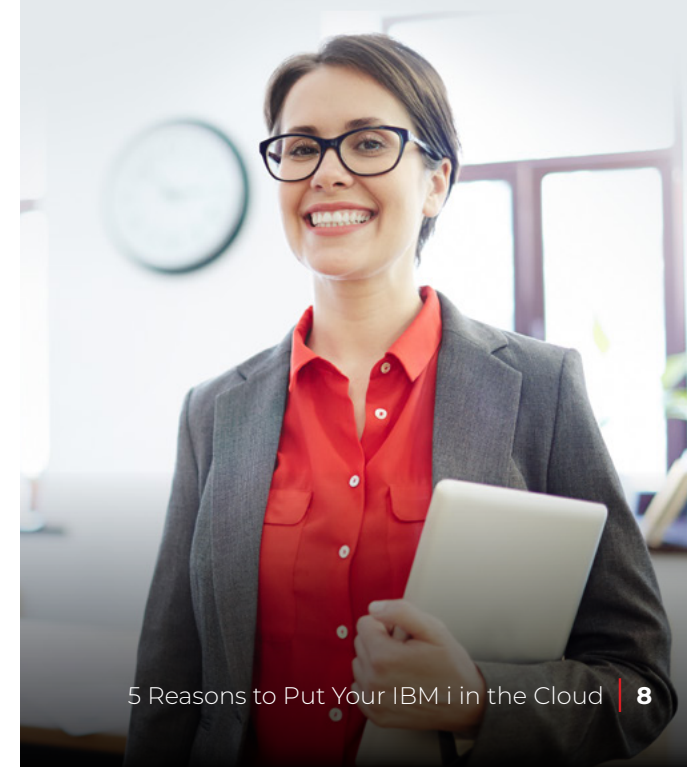
This breaks the capital investment cycle and gives you a predictable spend each month. In addition, by shifting to an operating expense model you also get the following benefits:

- Eliminate upfront capital investment in IT infrastructure, allowing you to shift that investment to projects that drive growth in your core business
- Reduce the risk of technology obsolescence as the cloud services provider takes on the responsibility of upgrading and modernizing the infrastructure to support the latest technologies and market demands
- Avoid the growing expense associated with maintenance and support contracts for infrastructure that is aging and out of support, possibly even at end-of-life
- Gain flexibility as you are able to make changes to your infrastructure to meet the demands of the business without making another capital investment



“By 2022, up to 60% of organizations will use an external service provider’s cloud managed service offering, which is double the percentage of organizations from 2018.”

— *Gartner*



Why Racksquared?

We deliver IBM i in the cloud, while you focus on your core business. How do we do it?

EXPERTISE



Racksquared's IBM i subject matter experts have over 25 years of experience managing and supporting this platform. This team manages, monitors and supports our infrastructure around the clock.

TECHNOLOGY



Racksquared's IBM i cloud leverages the latest IBM hardware (Power 8/ Power 9) and software. It is continually updated with the latest patches and versions, so the environment is always operating at its best.

INFRASTRUCTURE



Racksquared's data centers and network are designed to be secure, reliable and resilient so you can always get to your IBM i systems. Our infrastructure is built on industry- leading technology.

A red semi-truck with a white grille and headlights is driving on a multi-lane highway. The truck is moving towards the viewer, and the background shows a blurred landscape and a guardrail.

CASE STUDY

IBM i expertise keeps Mercer Transportation rolling

CHALLENGE:

When Mercer Transportation's IT director decided to retire, the company's management realized they would lose their only IBM i administrator. The organization would not have anyone in-house to manage this business-critical platform.

SOLUTION:

They turned to Racksquared, which was already providing IBM i backup and disaster recovery solutions for the company. Racksquared implemented an IBM i program that ensures expert day-to-day remote monitoring and management of their platform.

RESULTS:

Mercer Transportation now has a clear path forward for their IBM i. Their benefits include:

- A single point of contact for all their IBM i infrastructure needs, including management, monitoring, support, backups and disaster recovery
- The ability to focus on the business-critical applications that run on IBM i and support the core business
- Freedom from the need to recruit IBM i expertise or train an existing employee to backfill the role
- Peace of mind knowing that their IBM i systems are being managed by an experienced team of IT professionals with deep domain knowledge

What our customers say

“I want my team focused on driving value for the business. I rely on Racksquared to take infrastructure support off my hands.”

— Shane Hart, Vice President, IT, Ryder Last Mile

“Racksquared keeps our IBM i up and running so everything from our order entry through our warehouses are always online and meeting customer demands.”

— Brad Wasserstrom, President, The Wasserstrom Company

“We moved to Racksquared from another provider and found a more helpful, knowledgeable staff and a lower hosting cost. Highest recommendation!”

— Tom Keyes, IT Director, Sun Coast General Insurance Agency, Inc.



Get started today

Interested in moving your IBM i to the cloud?

LEARN MORE

Learn about the IBM i solutions we have available to support your needs (iSeries/AIX/Linux):

- IBM i colocation with management and monitoring solutions
- IBM i cloud solutions
- Local and remote management and monitoring solutions
- Disaster recovery solutions

SCHEDULE AN ASSESSMENT

Racksquared works with you to understand your business needs as well as your current IBM i infrastructure and processes. The holistic assessment includes:

- Current environment—Review what you have in place and your underlying challenges
- Potential risks—Identify hardware and software that is not updated, out of support or approaching end-of-life
- Site audit—Evaluate the physical risks of your environment
- Backup system and processes—Understand how backups are performed and identify any gaps that should be addressed
- Disaster recovery—Review your systems and processes to evaluate your ability to recover in a timely manner

At the end of the assessment, we provide you with a summary of our findings as well as recommendations on the best approach for deploying solutions to meet your business needs.

CONTACT US

Our IBM i team is available to work with you to understand your current environment, the challenges you are facing and how we can help address them.

Give us a call at (855) 380-7225 or email sales@racksquared.com.

Your business runs on IT. Let Racksquared keep your business up and running.



Racksquared can help simplify IT so that you can focus on growing your core business and evolve to meet the changing demands of customers. We do this by providing access to technical expertise, the latest technologies and a secure, reliable, resilient environment for your IT systems. We become an extension of your team, providing flexible designs and solutions while managing, monitoring and supporting your infrastructure, so that your business is always up and running.