

Quick Questions Before Choosing Your Provider

Cloud computing provides companies the option to focus on core business and let cloud providers handle IT-related tasks such as data security, storage, and backup. It allows businesses to enhance workflow and innovate faster while reducing costs on IT hardware building and maintenance.

As business research firm Frost & Sullivan predicts steady growth for the cloud market in the next two years, the number of cloud-based service providers is also increasing. Choosing the right provider is essential to ensure compatibility and seamless system integration.

Asking the right questions will lead you to a smarter and more informed decision. To start, here are quick questions to ask possible cloud vendors before signing up for their service:

1. Ask what type of service they provide

Simple data storage, online office suites, and up to complex platform hosting, cloud vendors offer a wide range of services to fit your cloud needs. Confirm with cloud providers if they can meet your business requirements.

2. Ask about their pricing scheme

Among the main benefits companies can enjoy from the cloud are affordable and flexible fees. Reputed cloud vendors offer pay-as-you-go models that allow companies to treat technology as operational cost and not as a capital expenditure.

Cloud-based services should always be scalable and free from high upfront costs. Their pricing should always be flexible as your needs can grow and shrink on demand.

3. Ask about their security

Protecting company data should always be a priority for all types of business to avoid critical loss of sensitive information. Ask cloud vendors about their security measures such as firewalls, user authentication, anti-virus technology, and data encryption.

You can also inquire if they follow government security standards about specific industries such as healthcare and banking. It is advisable to get an idea of the locations of their data centres and ensure if they are well-guarded from threats such as disasters and theft.

4. Ask about set-up, and customer support

Similar with any new technology you are installing on your system, cloud computing requires a set-up and configuration process. Inspect on how much help you can expect from them during configuration to know how easy and smooth the migration will be.

It is also smart to gain knowledge about their customer support in case of technical difficulties and downtimes. Big cloud providers boast of 24/7 responsive customer service. Remember, you are moving to the cloud for a faster access to your data from anywhere and at any time. Excellent technical support must be available at all times to ensure your business can run even during holidays.

5. Ask about their cloud scalability

As mentioned, cloud computing allows companies reduce IT costs while concentrating on main business to achieve growth. You need to know that your cloud provider can handle your cloud needs that come along with a growing business. Research if a vendor can manage not only larger amounts of data but also more complex process once your business starts growing.

6. Ask about downtime management and data loss

Even with the biggest cloud providers, downtime is inevitable, and downtime will often hurt your business. It is essential to ask cloud vendors about how they cope with unforeseen downtimes. Choose a provider who can ensure that they have minimal downtime so you can enjoy data access anytime and anywhere.

It is also important to inquire about the unlikely event of data loss at the fault of your provider. Knowing responsibilities and liabilities in case of major accidents relies on concrete Service Level Agreements between both parties. Confirm that cloud vendors are willing to sign SLAs to determine the roles of both parties when it comes to managing your digital assets.

Moving your operations to the cloud allows your company to be more innovative with your business and help you trim down operation costs. With the increasing number of cloud vendors, it is vital for your business to find a good cloud service provider that is both compatible with your system and can easily have their service work for you. Use these questions for screening cloud providers and get an idea on who can help your business the most.