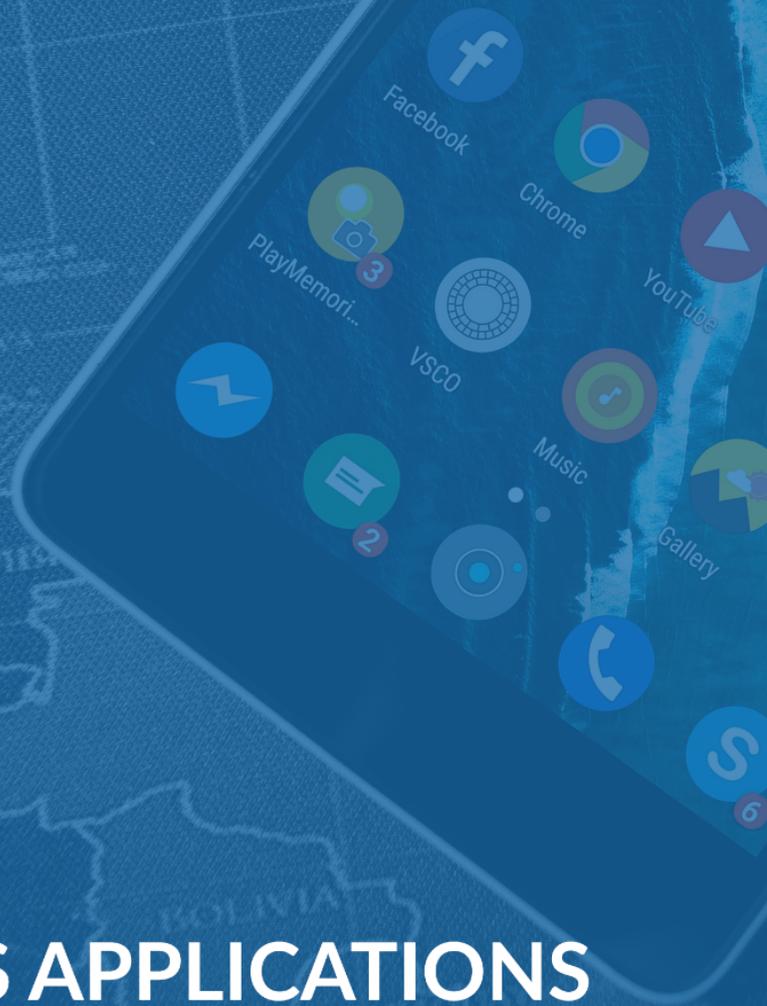


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# The True Value of **CLOUD COMPUTING TECHNOLOGY**



**ONLINE BUSINESS APPLICATIONS  
WORTH INVESTING TIME**

# The True Value of Cloud Computing Technology

By Steven Brough

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## Introduction

Cloud computing is a logical extension and development of our growing reliance on the Internet. We now live in a paperless environment and require little, if any, space to be entirely productive with our administrative functions. All we need is a web browser to be able to access an array of software solutions provided "as a service." Using a web browser, we can store all our relevant, important information "in the cloud," instantaneously. For the Virtual Assistant (VA), it is a perfect combination.

## 1. Understanding Cloud Computing as a Concept

Cloud computing is a rather unfortunate name for a trend that has been slowly creeping up on us for years. Whenever you mention the term to the average person, you are met with a blank stare. Yet, when you explain the concept, they do seem to be quite familiar with the idea. After all, some of us have been using cloud computing for our personal e-mail requirements for decades with browser-based e-mail services like Gmail.

Let us look at it this way: In very simplistic terms it is like renting somebody else's capacity and facility to handle your business, allowing you to free up your resources, time and money for other purposes. As such, it is certainly ideal for anyone considering self-employment or for anyone whose business has a top-heavy administration.

In the world of the VA, cloud computing is extremely beneficial. This is because it enables a new type of collaboration that enables the VA to be more productive and allows the entrepreneur to outsource using a variety of different applications and software solutions hosted "in the cloud."

We may find cloud computing to be one of the most positive developments for small businesses in many generations. Just think about what you had to do to establish a small business before cloud computing became a feasible alternative. Often, you had to invest in large upfront expenditure regarding hardware capacity and software licenses. Beyond this, you also had to engage highly skilled technicians and IT personnel to set up your configuration and train your employees.

The advent of cloud computing is perfectly timed when you consider the general trend in downsizing personal and laptop computers. One of the innovators in this