Cloud Fax Adoption:
An Easy Win for Cloud Migration

Faxing has been an integral part of many organizations' business communications, both internally and with partners, for decades. Learn how cloud fax is changing things for the better for organizations today.

FOR ORGANIZATIONS MIGRATING APPLICATIONS TO THE CLOUD, replacing traditional fax systems with cloud fax creates significant opportunities. Faxing has been an integral part of many organizations' business communications, both internally and with partners, for decades. As a result, it is often so deeply embedded in key workflows that replacing it with another mode of communication is simply not an option. Furthermore, because fax is a secure and direct connection between sender and receiver, faxing remains a trusted method of sharing sensitive information—a critical consideration for companies in which security and compliance are paramount.

The fax promises to be with us for some time to come, but traditional fax methods are actively hindering business performance. A recent IDG survey shows that IT departments can deliver a quick win to the business by adopting cloud fax, which supports security and compliance, cuts costs, and boosts productivity. Beyond that, a reliable enterprise cloud fax solution that eliminates the shortcomings of traditional fax systems can actively improve customer satisfaction and reduce time to revenue, affecting the bottom line of businesses.

Finding #1:
Companies are frustrated with current fax methods

IDG survey respondents reported intense frustration with the shortcomings of traditional fax methods. Nearly half (44%) reported that paper-based processes slow employee performance. The security of fax printouts worries 40%. The many things that can go wrong with a fax system, from busy signals to running out of paper, have made 38% of respondents miss business opportunities. And more than a third (34%) complained about the high overhead costs of fax servers and software, dedicated phone lines, fax machine maintenance, and other aspects of their traditional fax solutions.

Finding #2:
Fax is one of the many workloads that companies are increasingly shifting to the cloud

In general, organizations are sold on the value and benefits of cloud computing. Indeed, nearly two-thirds (64%) of the survey respondents said they are moving most, if not all, applications to the cloud, and 90% reported migrating at least some applications.

Fax is increasingly popular to outsource to a cloud provider: 35% of the respondents have already adopted cloud fax, 44% expect to do so in the next 12 months, and well over half (56%) expect to have done so over the next three years.
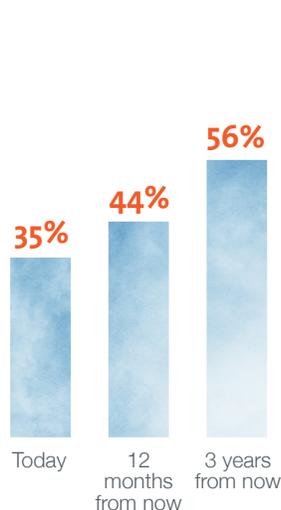
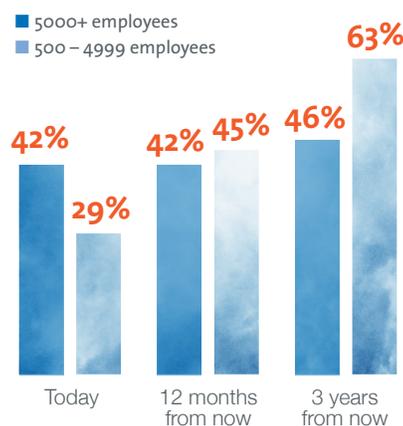"Fax isn't often considered strategic, but it is

Cloud Fax Growth Is Increasing

Percentage of Faxing Done in the Cloud

- Today: 35%
- 12 months from now: 44%
- 3 years from now: 56%

Percentage of Faxing Done in the Cloud
(by company size)

- ■ 5000+ employees
- ■ 500 – 4999 employees

	Today	12 months from now	3 years from now
5000+ employees	42%	42%	46%
500 – 4999 employees	29%	45%	63%

Source: IDG Research

Most Appealing Reasons to Move to Cloud Fax

Cost savings
(e.g., overhead, maintenance) **44%**

Improved security/compliance **40%**

Simplify and modernize faxing **38%**

Scalability to support
company growth **28%**

Built-in business continuity
for disaster recovery **28%**

Source: IDG Research

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necessary for day-to-day operations, so migrating it to the cloud is an appealing quick win as either the start or the continuation of a broader cloud transformation initiative," notes Christian Barckhahn, senior director of product marketing at OpenText, the provider of the leading enterprise cloud fax service OpenText™ XM Fax™. "It's a simple process of porting fax numbers and adding users to the service. Then users can exchange faxes right within their email client, making faxing quick and easy."

The trend toward cloud fax is even more pronounced among midsize companies (500 to 2,000 employees), which tend to have leaner IT departments and are presumably eager to free up those staffers to work on projects with higher priority than maintaining a fax infrastructure. Although midsize companies are currently less likely (29%) than average to be using cloud fax today, they say they expect their rate of adoption to spike to 45% in the next 12 months—and to more than double, to 63%, over the next three years.

Finding #3:
Cloud fax solves the business problems traditional fax systems create

Companies of all sizes told IDG that their top reasons for evaluating cloud fax solutions are to reduce costs (49%); improve the efficiency and productivity of their fax users (35%); reduce security and compliance risk (33%); and improve the capacity, availability, and uptime of their fax system (33%). The top three business benefits they expect from adopting cloud fax are cost savings (44%),

improved security and compliance (40%), and simplifying and modernizing faxing (38%). These align directly with the reasons they are dissatisfied with their existing traditional fax systems, including high overhead, productivity bottlenecks, and inefficient paper-based workflows.

"Time and time again, organizations that transition to cloud faxing are able to demonstrate a quick ROI by eliminating the cost and maintenance associated with on-site equipment, servers, and telephony for on-premises faxing," says Barckhahn. "When you consider that cloud faxing also improves employee productivity, speeds up business processes, and reduces risk, the business case becomes exponentially compelling."

Conclusion

Fax has been around for so long, and people take it so much for granted, that many companies barely think of it at all. When it's unreliable, though, it's a business liability. A company that has outgrown its fax system or needs to replace aging equipment will struggle with send/receive errors, content loss, fax failures, busy signals, and other problems that impede communication and lead to negative outcomes such as unhappy customers and revenue loss. On the other hand, a company that deploys a cloud-based fax solution that operates over the existing high-speed data network eliminates cumbersome, costly paper-based processes; turns faxes into electronic data that can be protected like any electronic data; and streamlines workflows for greater productivity and higher customer satisfaction.

"Even if an organization automated its fax system years ago, it likely hasn't reconsidered it since then—but technology has advanced," Barckhahn says. "For example, why should a company have an outdated on-site infrastructure that's overdesigned to prevent fax busy signals and ensure redundancy for failover traffic? A cloud solution provides the flexibility to accommodate those brief, intense periods of high demand for fax communications but eliminates the need to operate and maintain an on-premises infrastructure that's too big the rest of the time."

"The question companies should be asking themselves isn't why they should move faxing to the cloud," he concludes. "It's why they haven't made the move already." ∎

For more information on how OpenText XM Fax can help with your cloud fax needs, visit its website.