
NAV in the Cloud: The Future of Microsoft Dynamics NAV and Remote Hosting.

ERP software has been lagging behind other software categories, such as Google Apps. When it comes to adopting Software as a service (SaaS) technology, Microsoft Dynamics CRM Online has already been a success. At the Convergence conference last year Steve Ballmer of Microsoft expressed his commitment in bringing Dynamics NAV online as well. This means the hardware, software and the specialist IT skills required to make the software available to your business twenty four hours a day, seven days a week will be hosted off-site.

Organisations face a two pronged decision now when it comes to Dynamics NAV hosting. A traditional 'On-premises' solution is one option where you have a server in your office which requires in-house knowledge and incurs an infrastructure cost. The other option includes hosting elsewhere, and you pay for the space which you are effectively 'renting'. The agility enabled by Cloud computing has caused a heightened interest from I.T executives and directors and one cannot escape this technology buzzword. Flexibility and lower I.T costs are a big plus, and Microsoft is ready to fully engage Dynamics NAV Online.

The Benefits

- * The benefits of NAV in the cloud mainly include the flexibility it enables by connecting to your server wherever you are. This is particularly true for those who have multiple offices or have employees who work away from base. These people may need access to up-to-date information quickly whether in the office or on the road.
- * It becomes an operational, rather than a capital cost. This is because there are low set-up costs as you do not need to buy the infrastructure for the software, just pay rent to someone else.
- * It takes away the need for upgrading and maintenance as the host platform is updated automatically.

The Drawbacks

- * There may be security concerns: Where is the data being held? Is someone else's data being held in the same place? Who owns the infrastructure?

The major drawback which both I.T and non I.T executives are anticipating are the security issues associated with not having a tangible server. Despite this, many executives see cloud computing playing a big part in their organisation's future.

- * How does the Hosting centre control upgrades? All of its customers have to be on the same version – this could have the benefit that customers are all on the current version.

- * How do you control customisation? Can you have any customisation? Will every customer have to be on a Vanilla Version of NAV?

What Happens Next?

NAV 7 which is due to be released in Q3 2012 should provide the first opportunity for NAV in the Cloud.

How will that work and can it be as profound a move as Dynamics CRM was to the Cloud? Watch this space and we will keep you informed!

For more information about the features of Microsoft Dynamics NAV, please visit <http://www.adeptsoftware.co.uk>