Reliable, secure cloud connectivity for the future of your business

Build a solid foundation

Connectivity for your multi-cloud environment

When you think about digital transformation, it's tempting to focus on the prize: your business in the cloud, flexible and agile with on-demand control of your network. It's exciting to envision. It can be challenging to achieve. Having reliable, secure cloud connections designed around your business needs is key to making your digital transformation a success.

To help sort it out, we asked our AT&T Business cloud experts: What are the top considerations when connecting to cloud service providers—the third parties that host tools, applications, and data in the cloud?

We hope this guide simplifies your journey to multi-cloud connectivity.

The right skills and connections

Your keys to success

Evolving from physical infrastructure to virtual can be time-consuming and complex to manage. Often, cloud transformations fall short of their goals because of lack of skills and poor implementation.[1]

When you spread workloads across multiple cloud service providers, it's important that your connections:

- keep your distributed data secure
- support the priorities you've established for your CSPs
- provide visibility for managing your multi-clouds cost effectively

AT&T Business simplifies your journey to multi-cloud connectivity. Our cloud capabilities help you cut through the complexity of managing multiple providers, ease your security concerns, and achieve your cloud connectivity goals.

Today's digital technologies deliver rich experiences. They help businesses find efficiencies and new competitive advantages. They're also pushing the limits of traditional networks built on hardware.

A multi-cloud environment offers flexibility and freedom. In the cloud, you can embrace technology and drive innovation.

Platform as a service

Computer as a service

Software as a service

[1] "10 cloud mistakes that can sink your business" by John Edwards, CIO, March 21, 2023

Step 1:

Outline your business goals

As you consider the possibilities for your business, identify key goals that you can support with cloud connectivity.

Here are a few to consider:

Goal: Agility and digital transformation

That means transforming applications, platforms, tools, and processes into digital workloads you access in the cloud. Not a single cloud, but an ecosystem of public and private clouds with interconnections for moving data securely between them.

Good to know:

Choose a provider with relationships to a wide range of CSPs and related services. For the most flexibility, choose a provider who can deliver a seamless and secure experience designed around your business needs.
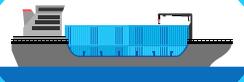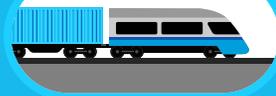
Goal: Streamline multi-cloud connectivity and improve security

The cloud is a great place to partner with developers and service providers who can fill in skill gaps and add unique expertise.

Good to know:

Costs for connecting to multiple service providers (and cross-connecting them) can add up. Look for ways to consolidate. Design your cloud connections for maximum efficiency.

Ensuring privacy and security can be a challenge, too. Think about sensitive collaborations like mergers and acquisitions or exchanging healthcare data and information. Private cloud connections and embedded authentication processes enable a seamless, secure experience that you can scale up or down quickly.

Security

Multi-cloud

Goal: Optimize costs

One of the most attractive features of cloud transformation is the prospect of leaving hardware costs behind. Related operational, maintenance, and upgrade costs? Gone. This frees up IT staff to take on other tasks or more strategic roles.

Good to know:

The cloud connectivity approach you choose matters. An on-premises model can be costly. You'll have to maintain not just software, but the equipment, hardware, and infrastructure that supports it. You'll also need a dedicated IT resource to manage it.

Network to public and private cloud integration eliminates the need for new hardware and speeds time-to-market. With a virtual connection, you can establish secure interconnects with CSPs on-demand in minutes, not days. Another plus: You can avoid long-term contracts and pay per use.

On-demand cost savings

Step 2:

Consider your requirements

As you shift workloads to the cloud, your infrastructure becomes more distributed. Your priorities for each connection will differ. It's a good idea to outline the requirements for each so you can make sure your connections support them. For example:

- Cloud applications that run in data centers require fast, secure, and seamless global interconnects and cross-connects to share data with other clouds across your ecosystem.

- It's important to have reliable connections that deliver consistent experiences no matter where you connect.

- If you're using virtual reality (VR), artificial intelligence (AI), or real-time IoT tracking, you need computing to happen closer to where it's needed in a local edge zone. You'll need connectivity that delivers ultra-high speeds and bandwidth with low latency.

The right connectivity provider will help you optimize, so you get the most cost-effective infrastructure to meet all your workload needs.

The new face of agility: Converged networking

Today's networks must process soaring amounts of data at ultra-fast speeds to deliver rich user experiences.

Virtual, software-defined networks make this next generation of networking a reality. They make it easy to bring different services together.

Converged networking enables applications and processes that meet in the digital realm to be managed in a flexible, virtual network model.

AT&T Business

6

AT&T Business

Match your workloads with connection options

Deciding what cloud connectivity capabilities make the most sense can be a challenge. To narrow your options, think about the level of security you need.

- Public internet: You'll have limited visibility and control over how your data is routed. This puts your business at risk for Distributed Denial of Service (DDoS) and other cyberattacks.

- Physical interconnects: Point-to-point connectivity from your site to the cloud offers more visibility and control, including the option to supplement and strengthen your defense. Your cloud performance will be stronger if it's built on reliable, secure connectivity that delivers the speed and capacity your business needs.

- Software-Defined Cloud Interconnects (SDCI): Software-Defined Networking (SDN) technology creates programmable connections between your sites and CSPs. With software-based solutions, you can enjoy dynamic scaling, routing, and options to add security.

Enterprises are becoming more selective when it comes to their interconnections. That's why private connections to the cloud are among the fastest growing connection types.[2] Private connections are also the go-to option for businesses that need to comply with regulations for protecting sensitive data.

Functionality in-a-(virtual)-box

In a hybrid, cloud world, having the flexibility to add new network services is important to maintaining a competitive edge. With a software-defined cloud interconnect you can also make use of virtual network functions. VNFs are software-based networking functions that can be deployed on virtualized infrastructure to automate tasks like prioritizing and routing traffic, provisioning access, and applying security policies.

Step 4:

Decide how you'll manage your connections

Think about the model you'll adopt to manage your connections. Do you need on-demand access and a highly-flexible, dynamic connection? Will your solution need to rapidly scale? Pay-as-you-go, on-demand connections offer more flexibility than managed options. If you don't have the right in-house expertise, a managed solution may be right for you.

On-demand cloud connectivity

On-demand, or software-defined cloud connections, are a good choice if you want control. Through an easy-to-use, self-service portal, you have dedicated access to the top cloud service providers using your AT&T virtual private network (VPN) or Ethernet services. You configure the connection to get the speeds, bandwidth, and services you need.

AT&T Managed Cloud Connect

A managed option frees you to focus on other priorities while your provider handles your cloud connections. Choose AT&T Business, and we'll configure and maintain your connections to meet your custom requirements.

No matter how you connect to the cloud, we've got you covered

With AT&T Business, you have the flexibility to adjust as your business needs change.

Virtual, on-demand
Connect in minutes with just a few clicks from the Business Center.

VPN: Get 24/7 assistance and an easy-to-use portal for support, usage reports, and more.

Ethernet: Fast, on-demand, private cloud connections with a pay-as-you-go pricing model and no contract required.

Fully managed or co-managed
Get the right amount of assistance for your organization.

Assemble and do-it-yourself (DIY)
Purchase circuits and related services to build a custom cloud solution.

Learn more: Cloud solutions from AT&T Business

Bring it all together

Connect confidently with AT&T Business

✓ You've outlined your cloud workloads and their needs.

✓ You have a general understanding of your options for connecting.

Now it's time to choose a connectivity provider.

A technology provider with more resources and experience will be able to meet a range of needs and help simplify. Consider:

- Proven networking skills and experience
- Rich cloud skills and expertise
- Comprehensive connectivity capabilities
- Deep security expertise and resources

At AT&T Business, we've got you covered. We have a proven record of success supporting thousands of customers who have critical cloud connectivity needs. We'll put your business on the right path to cloud connectivity with reliable, secure cloud connections.

AT&T Consulting and Professional Services

Comprehensive advisory and integration services

With deep expertise in networking and cloud connectivity, AT&T Consulting and Professional Services provides full-service advisory and integration support for migrating to the cloud. Our resources are skilled in determining the optimal cloud connectivity approach, then designing, engineering, and deploying your solution.

Bring us your toughest cloud connectivity challenges

We're solution specialists

Challenge: Network transformations

We'll help you accelerate the performance of your cloud workloads and ensure you get a cost-effective, flexible network.

Challenge: Multi-cloud connectivity

We work with the premier cloud service providers. We can make sure your interconnections are the right fit and your CSPs meet their service level agreements.

Challenge: Business-to-business connectivity

We understand how disparate systems grow into complex and unwieldy networks that can drain valuable IT resources. We can help you untangle years of layering to deliver a simpler, more manageable network.

Financial services

Healthcare

Transportation

Manufacturing and transportation

Corporate

New Ventures

Professional services

Public sector

Retail

Sports and entertainment

Oil, gas, and utilities
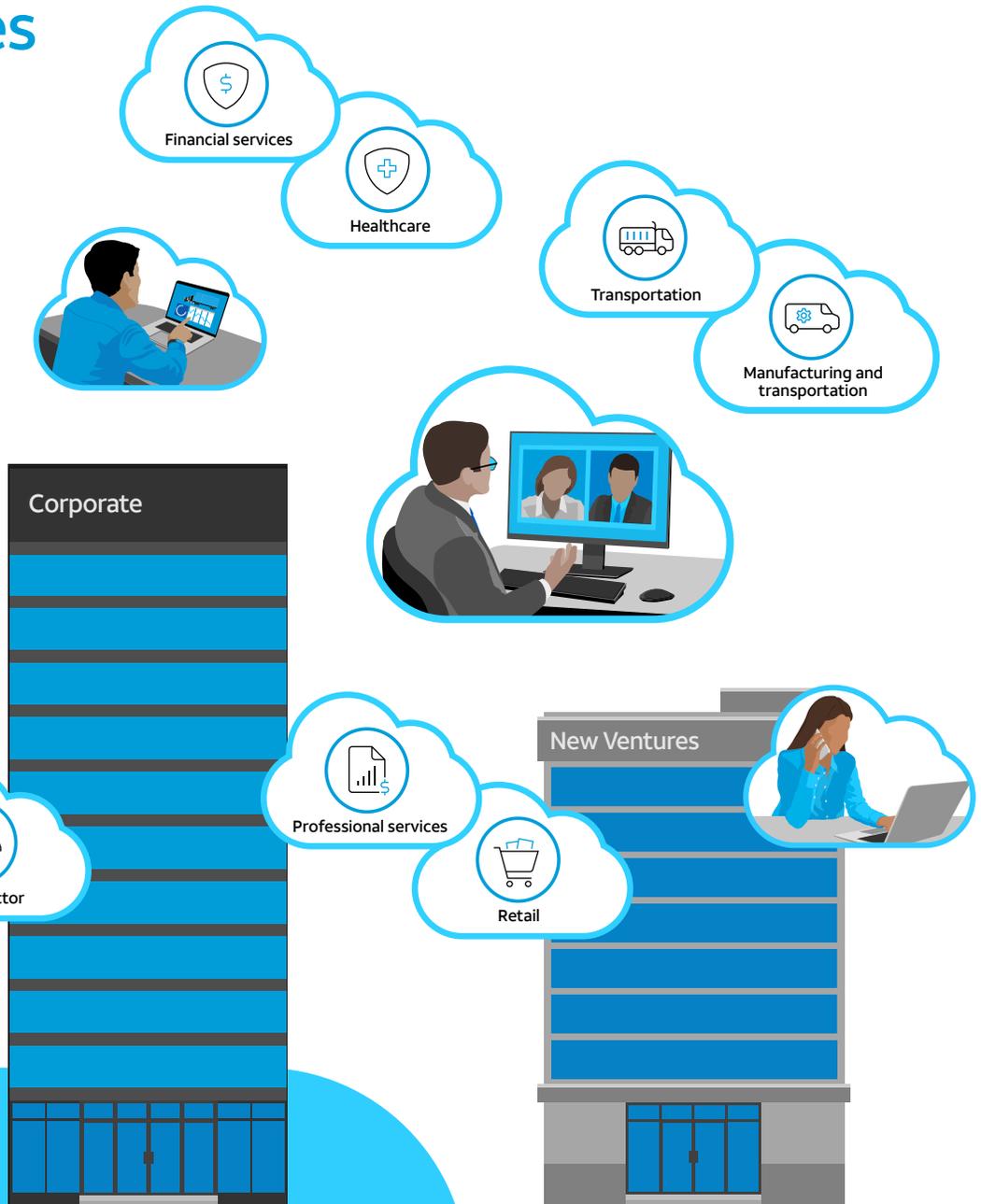
The best choice to simplify your multi-cloud journey

For over a century, AT&T has connected people to help them live, learn, work, and succeed. From telegraphs to "telephones" to smart phones and connected cars, our north star has always been to deliver products that improve how customers can connect to whatever matters most to them.

We're always working to provide the next generation of cloud connectivity and networking options. They're the foundation for the products and services that help you work more efficiently, find new competitive edges, and be ready for what's next.

Why AT&T Business?

The key to realizing seamless cloud transformation is having the right connectivity. Whether you're migrating to the cloud or evolving to multi-cloud, connect with confidence. Let our experts work with you to solve your cloud connectivity challenges and accelerate outcomes. Your business deserves the AT&T Business difference—a new standard for networking.

To learn more, contact your AT&T Business account team.