

# Top 5 Advantages of Moving to ITaaS

It seems everything is available “as a service” these days. Software as a service (SaaS) is a popular one you hear about for distributing software applications, but there is also Entertainment as a service with video streaming on Netflix and Amazon and Travel as a service with Airbnb and others for on-demand hotel room offerings.

IT as a Service (ITaaS) is one of the latest business models to hit the as a service arena for companies. According to Cisco, it is a business model for running IT that delivers value as defined by IT’s clients and customers in a cost effective manner. In other words, the IT department is no longer just a cost center within a business, it has become a strategic business partner to the organization. Moving to this business model has several advantages. Here are five of them.

## SCALABILITY

A key part of moving to ITaaS is virtualizing the infrastructure environment. You’re not downsizing or outsourcing, you’re just making it less relevant where somebody is, or who does something. You’re creating levels of service such that if something is simple, the first level of service can handle it. If they can’t handle it, they pass it off to a second level. This allows you to better define the staffing needs because you’re not relying on the more advanced engineers to handle the simpler problems. As each level gets busier, you scale accordingly. Need a separate set of resources for another business need? Engineers won’t need to be shared.

Parts of the scalability benefits are done with the help of remote management tools. Have a user who needs help removing some malware? Nobody needs to walk down the hall or to the next building. The user can relinquish control to the remote support center. Lose a mobile device? IT can remotely wipe it. Putting the tools in place for IT to scale their support enables users to focus on business needs.

## SELF-SERVICE

Before thinking about self-service IT, it is important to understand what services will be delivered:

- Simple services: order more storage capacity
- Bundled services: order computer with OS, VM, Storage, and Network



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- Tiered services: offering different service assurance levels
- Metered services: order time/resource usage
- Complex services: order a whole multi-tiered application

Keep in mind that services don't have to be purely IT based. Consider a service to on-board an employee. Their new computer setup is just one piece of a bigger pie that includes desk assignment or ordering office furniture.

Once you understand what's in a service catalog, you can figure out how to get there from a self-service perspective. The idea of self-service is to offload repetitive tasks. So, there may be some infrastructure changes that need to be put in place so that current manual tasks can be automated. Now that the foundation is in place, services can be requested to expand operations, provision/deprovision resources, or any of a number of tasks. Typically, much of this is done through the cloud so that anyone, anywhere can request a service (provided they're running through the VPN if remote).

### **COST PREDICTABILITY**

One of the biggest advantages of ITaaS involves the ability to leverage a chargeback model for services. Instead of the IT department getting a budget, each department gets part of what was IT's budget allocation. Then, any time the IT department is called upon to resolve a problem, they then bill back the business unit that needed their services. This allows the tracking of who actually needs and uses the services as well as how effective IT is at delivering them.

A key benefit of this chargeback model is that if a department can find the same service elsewhere for a lesser cost, they're not forced to go through the IT department. This potential for a loss of business for the IT department motivates them but it also frees them up to not have to support everything the different business units need. It generally opens the door to better planning.

### **STANDARDIZATION**

To be efficient and effective, it is important for IT to not be in the business of providing customized one-off solutions for their customers. Instead, your IT operations needs to offer a standardized set of services specific to the needs of the business. It sounds simple enough, but without a set of standardized services and the financial cost predefined, departments will make requests and just assume they'll get done by IT without understanding potential staffing needs or time involved.

Standardization isn't just of the services offered by IT but of the process, too. You'll more than likely need technology tools to help with setup and administration of the change to ITaaS. This goes with the self-service aspect described above. The quicker you can mature a standard process, the more easily it will be for you to deploy additional services. Refactor what you know into standardized parts and you'll be well on your way to a successful transition.



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### INCREASED PRODUCTIVITY

The move to ITaaS creates the need for the IT department to act more like they offer a Service Level Agreement (SLA) to the internal company departments. They're no longer a cost centric group that keeps asking for more budget. Instead, they need to become nimble to the needs of the business users and company. It isn't just infrastructure management that needs to be dealt with but the ever changing real needs of their customers.

With the help of the scalability, self-service, and standardization advantages previously mentioned, the change to ITaaS creates an environment that is more responsive to their users. The tools, mechanisms, and processes that are adopted practically push people to an increased productivity automatically. Instead of focusing on the IT problem du jour, the company can focus more on the latest strategic business needs. It isn't just the IT personnel who will be more productive after moving to ITaaS, but the business as a whole, too.

Don't be left in the dust. Consider moving your IT operations to the ITaaS model sooner rather than later. You'll soon be able to reap all the benefits and rewards of having a highly modernized operation.

### SOURCES

Cisco: IT as a Services Organization – [http://www.cisco.com/c/en/us/solutions/collateral/enterprise/cisco-on-cisco/IT\\_as\\_a\\_Services\\_Org\\_Updat](http://www.cisco.com/c/en/us/solutions/collateral/enterprise/cisco-on-cisco/IT_as_a_Services_Org_Updat)

### TOP 5 ADVANTAGES

1. Scalability
2. Self-Service
3. Cost Predictability
4. Standardization
5. Increased Productivity

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