Securing Critical Finance and Accounting Information in the Cloud

Cloud computing services are transformative for all companies, promising extraordinary economies of scale, vastly reduced technology infrastructure and other capital expenses, much less user training, superior flexibility, and improved accessibility of financial and other business data. The benefits are clear and conclusive.

Whenever cloud computing is marketed to an organization that is new to the concept, a familiar question recurs—Will my data be safe and secure? Their concern derives from highly publicized reports of data breaches, although the majority of such attacks have been mounted against companies’ proprietary IT systems and networks, and not the data stored with cloud service providers.

Nevertheless, information security risks are an important financial issue for all organizations, especially providers of cloud computing services, whose business survival may depend on their ability to safeguard customer data.
Public vs. Private Cloud - What’s the Difference?

In a cloud environment, there are three choices before service providers. The first is a public cloud infrastructure, which is deemed by many IT security experts to be more vulnerable to data breaches than the other two models—a private cloud and a hybrid cloud essentially combining elements of both public and private clouds.

The perceived key security drawback in the public cloud is that the core infrastructure is shared among many organizations.

Although the customer’s data and applications are segregated—accessible only to authorized users—the provider maintains “generalized” security controls to address the needs of all clients, instead of targeted controls that protect each client on a client-by-client basis. The service is provided over the wide Internet, even though the provider hosts the customer’s data and applications at its premises.

While the security of a public cloud infrastructure is perceived to be robust generally, the private cloud is inherently more secure. The actual infrastructure is not shared and the service is hosted on a private platform in the provider’s data center. Although the data travels over the Internet, with a private cloud the client knows exactly where its data physically resides and who manages it, which is not always the case with the public cloud.
Secure Critical Information in a Private Cloud

For certain types of businesses with extremely sensitive information, such as financial services, government institutions and health care concerns, trusting this information to a third party provider of services in the public cloud is considered a significant risk. In some countries, these industries and others that deal in proprietary data are not permitted to access services from a provider using a public cloud model.

Since a private cloud is dedicated internally to each organization through the physical or logical segregation of their data, there is a high level of assurance that other clients in the same data center will not access sensitive information. Companies have control over their data, the people who have access to it, and how the information changes hands.

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<th>Public Cloud</th>
<th>Private Cloud</th>
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<td>• Publically Shared Platform &amp; Infrastructure</td>
<td>• Private Platform &amp; Infrastructure</td>
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<td>• Flexible, Generalized Security Controls</td>
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<td>• Reduce Startup Costs for SaaS Platforms</td>
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<td>• Unclear Data Location &amp; Access Management</td>
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The BlackLine Cloud – Private & Unified

BlackLine’s platform and products are available to customers using a unique private cloud model that was created to provide and maintain world-class security for our customers’ data. This infrastructure does not involve the use of the public cloud; rather, BlackLine uses its own private cloud infrastructure and professional data center to run our virtual servers and your applications, devices and other systems at all our production centers.

Tailored for Finance and Accounting

Designed, built and operated by BlackLine, this private cloud infrastructure is secure for other reasons. We make effective use of modern risk assessment techniques and security management tools. We are constantly evaluating emerging information security trends and the threat landscape. And we employ certified engineering and security teams that are thoroughly experienced in managing and monitoring enterprise grade technologies.

Infrastructure Investments in Performance, Security & Redundancy

Our production equipment is located in data center facilities provided 24-hour physical security, keycard and biometric authentication, in addition to continuous interior and exterior surveillance and advanced fire suppression systems, among other world class security measures. The infrastructure is protected by firewalls, network and host-based intrusion detection systems, behavioral analytics tools, and other technologies, either sourced from leading information security vendors or developed internally by BlackLine.

BlackLine’s private cloud infrastructure has achieved all internationally recognized auditing standards, such as ISO/IEC 27001:2013 certification and other important measures of world-class security. BlackLine also specifically performs audits to independently validate the effectiveness of our information security controls.

Our customers can't afford data loss or downtime. Operating within a private cloud infrastructure is just one of many ways we help prevent this from ever happening.
BlackLine is the World’s Most Trusted Platform for Finance and Controls

BlackLine’s vision is to modernize the finance and accounting function to empower greater productivity and detect accounting errors before they blow up into a devastating financial restatement. BlackLine enables clients to move beyond outdated accounting processes and point solutions that help accountants and finance professionals work smarter and more efficiently. The finance and accounting departments of more than 1,200 worldwide clients currently leverage the unified BlackLine platform to perform mission-critical processes in near real-time — including financial close, reconciliation management, journal entry management, intercompany clearinghouse, and controls assurance.