

The case for the cloud

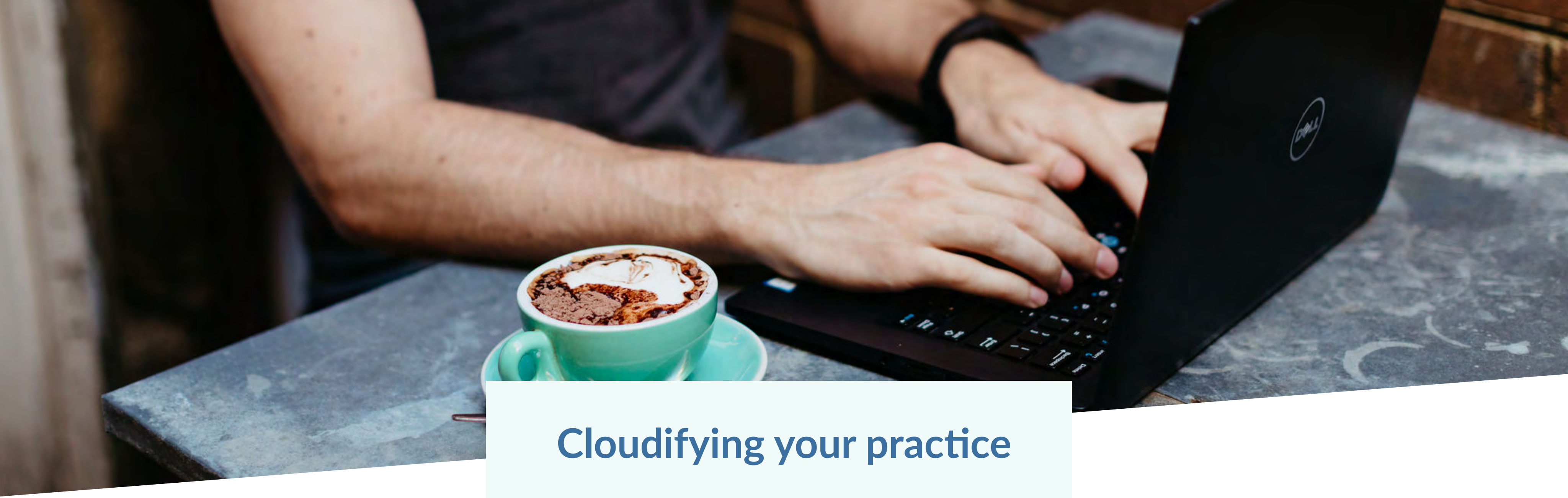
# 5 Reasons your health practice should make the switch

Partner of:



**BetterClinics**

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## Cloudifying your practice

Ah cloudification - yes that really is a word - the mission to embrace cloud technology on a race to the top of the pile.

The cumulus nimbus have gathered overhead and cloud technology is not a trend that will go away politely, it will inevitably get even smarter and morph into newer technologies, but it is rather clear that desktop tech is on its way out whether you like it or not.

Jumping aboard a trend for the sake of it is never advisable, however the cloud is not a trend, fad or craze. It is now clear that the cloud represents the immediate and long-term future of information technologies. In fact, according to the Australian Bureau of Statistics, in the year from 2015 to 2016, the number of Australian businesses using commercial cloud computing services rose from 19 percent to almost one-third. This trend shows no sign of abating.

Health practices, with small scale and lower employee counts benefit the most when it comes to cheap and mobile cloud solutions. If you are running your own yoga studio for example and have been reticent in joining the community in cloud city, you may want to reconsider your motives and investigate the benefits to cloudifying your practice.



## Mobility

This is a big one. If you listen to current media and advertising trends you will know we are apparently always ‘on the go’. So busy, so rushed, so mobile.

Well this phenomenon may have been cynically milked a tad too much by marketers, but the core tenant remains quite true. As a society and as a marketplace we are now more mobile and untethered than ever.

Even if you work in a traditional clinic or fixed address, you are rarely required by technology to stay there. You have access to work systems through cloud apps, social media and email, all of your internet browsing capabilities and even hundreds of gigs of cloud-based document storage etc. right there on your phone or tablet.

I think we have all heard of the untethered, always-on travelling businessman. We all know about digital nomads. We are fully aware that when a lot of people are leaving work they are still potentially ‘in the clinic’ with email on their phone. But this is just the start, true mobility in business is starting to mature and the possibilities look vast.

We could cut this a few ways, but let’s have a look at a realistic example of cloud mobility being expressed in a health practice context.

### **Roaming masseuse**

The traditional fixed-location clinic is being unchained with the advent of the cloud.

Here’s an example. Jeremy Bentham is the proud owner of a remedial massage clinic which specialises in house calls. He sets about his day visiting clients in their homes to assist with persistent physical injury.

He is getting popular through word of mouth and suddenly his excel sheet of client meetings and his pen and paper sales record is not cutting it. To remain mobile and untethered from any single location, he needs his practice to reside in the cloud.

As a savvy masseuse, armed with a mere tablet and a few cloud apps, including a cloud accounting app and a practice management booking system like Better Clinics, he will now be able to do all of the following remotely:

- Manage his bookings and contacts
- Do his banking
- Take payments on the go
- Market his business
- Communicate and collaborate remotely

In fact, he probably never has to be under a roof or remain in a fixed location for the rest of his working life!

Being mobile will probably be the standout function for Jeremy as he does not have a traditional storefront. He can take his health business from town to town in his van with no hassles whatsoever. With mobile invoicing, he can take payments anywhere in the country, at any client's house. And if the invoicing software is integrated with good cloud accounting software, his employees can handle credit card payments immediately and email the customer their receipt.



## Cost

The bottom line is exceptionally important when it comes to small businesses and health practices in the early years. In fact, it's important in later years too! Lower it if you can.

The beauty of cloud products is in their service nature. Software as a Service (SaaS) has flipped the idea of ownership on its head, much like car share apps and bike swaps. As you essentially rent your technology, upfront costs are typically low and operate on a basis of use in that you ditch what you no longer use without abandoning something you have invested money in.

### SaaS

In days past for example you would buy an expensive Microsoft Office box set from a retail store, install it on a single PC, and a year later you get told the new version is here, buy that too. Nowadays, you sign up for all Microsoft 365 apps in a single monthly payment, all versions are current, updates are automatic, and you can access or share your account on multiple devices for the same price. You will find that many cloud platforms follow a similar trend, with cost being significantly less than on-premise/desktop installations. This is further emphasised by the constant updates applied to cloud tech such as bug fixes and new features, negating the need to buy the next updated version.

### IT and infrastructure

Clinics that use cloud software benefit from many upfront cost savings. Capital investment is minimal since no servers are at your location as infrastructure is one of the largest costs associated with storing and managing data.

Cloud software also means you need less IT to worry about, as there are no servers or databases to maintain in-house. Less labour costs can of course translate neatly into significant savings. You can also consider the lower overall cost of keeping your health practice running, as without servers on site you should use less energy on top of the freedom and agility gained with off-premise infrastructure.



## Flexibility

One of the true stand out features of cloud tech is their ability to create flexibility on a number of levels in the business environment. Let's have a look at an example here to illustrate what we mean.

### **The modern Pilates studio**

Penelope Lee owns a small Pilates studio with 3 employees, operating from a fixed address they also offer private lessons and several pop-up classes which take place in office buildings through the week. What benefits would she see in using a range of cloud technologies to run her business?

Let's take our Better Clinics cloud solution, which is a cloud-based health practice management solution focused on online bookings and client management. It is designed to make and manage customer bookings, client contacts, marketing and communication.

Not only does the monthly cloud-based subscription to Better Clinics save Penelope money when compared to on premise installations, she is also incredibly flexible.

With cloud based Better Clinics, she can manage multiple locations in one account. So whether she has clients or staff in the studio or out at a pop-up class, it's all accounted for in one panel. Not just this, she can also add multiple teachers to multiple locations while they all manage their own appointments. This can mean her best teacher Sally can be in the studio managing classes and client bookings there, while Penelope jumps out to do a pop-up class and manage the entire account on her phone with everything fully visible and functional.

To be even more flexible, Better Clinics allows Penelope to not only manage multiple students, locations and teachers in one account, she can also display these options as selectable choices to her clients on her website.

As always, this is all managed in real time from one account no matter she is and no matter what device she chooses to use.



## Collaboration

This is a major boon for cloud-based software over desktop or manual processes. Collaboration is hinged on the premise that you are all on the same page. The cloud allows this with razor sharp efficiency.

Let's recruit Penelope again to see what we mean.

Penelope's lead Pilates instructor and business partner Sally is working with Penelope to rejuvenate the studio and website with a rebranding project. To manage the project, they have subscribed to a cloud-based project management tool like Trello and a cloud storage account like Dropbox. Instead of countless meetings, 30 000 emails, dozens of versions of files and long confusing strings of commentary on design changes, Penelope has clarity in the cloud.

### **Single source of truth**

They can discuss projects, tasks and milestones in a single mobile platform, ensuring up to date and clear communication and mutually agreed changes. With a single cloud folder of imagery, they know they all have the same current design in front of them. The savings in time and the gains in efficiency and error reduction are outstanding.

This is mirrored by their Better Clinics solution which like most cloud products also allows for a single source of truth when it comes to their online bookings, client list, class sizes, sales and invoices. The information they see in their solution will always be up to date and accurate.



## Security & Reassurance

If you are running your health practice on desktop software and storing your files and data on your hard drive or memory card, you have a lot to be concerned about.

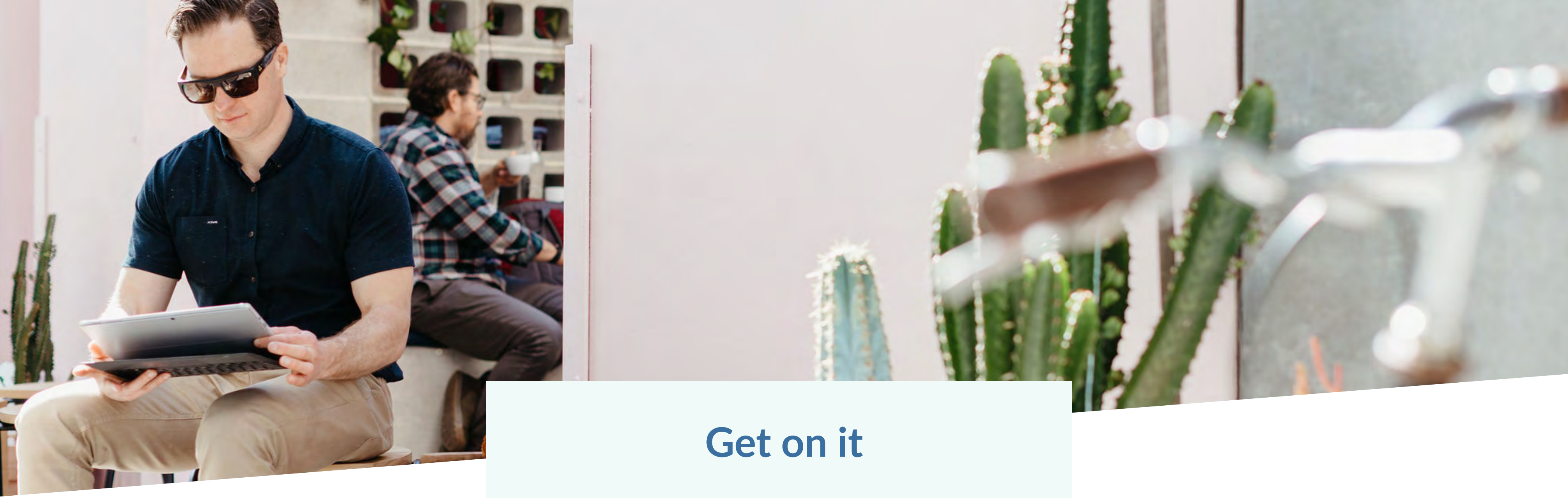
Lost laptops and faulty PC's are a billion-dollar problem. In fact, potentially greater than the loss of an expensive piece of kit is the loss of the sensitive data inside it. Cloud computing gives you far greater security and assurance when this happens as your data is stored in the cloud, behind robust and encrypted security, which remains accessible no matter what happens to your machine.

Furthermore, if lost, you can even remotely wipe data from your laptop or phone so it doesn't get into the wrong hands. This is particularly germane when considering the potentially sensitive client health information you may have stored. So, if some shady thief steals your device they'll have your hardware but they won't be able to swipe your or your client's secrets as you've stored them securely in the cloud.

This essentially creates a scenario where you will never have to truly worry about losing a device again, or ever be too concerned about a system crash. Sure, the laptop or tablet needs replacing but cloud storage has rescued you from the serious despair and massive business dysfunction involved in total data loss. Such a loss, especially of client data, sales, bookings or contact details, could easily spell the end of your business right there and then.

Remember that sinking feeling when you lost your laptop or dropped your phone in a drink (or worse...)? That feeling will be nicely muted when you realise you have everything you really need. You know when your next booking is, you have their details and you have their account. Thanks to the cloud you will still have access to all your data, communications and important files.





## Get on it

So there you go, many more points could be made here but in terms of cloudifying your health practice, we now have a compelling set of reasons to contemplate. Each clinic is different and no one solution will fit all organisations, but as you must be aware by now, the future is in the cloud and it is best to start making those migrations as soon as you are able. As the clouds begin to gather overhead, make sure you aren't caught in the rain, tethered to on premise software.

## About Better Clinics

Online practice management software for health and fitness professionals.  
From scheduling to managing your finances – you can do it all on a single platform.

Visit [betterclinicsapp.com](https://betterclinicsapp.com) to learn more.

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