

Computing in the Cloud: Management Strategies for the Cloud Revolution

Douglas Schultz

Management Strategies for the Cloud Revolution: How Cloud Computing Is Transforming Business and Why You Can't Afford to Be Left Behind by Charles Babcock is a valuable resource for individuals needing to learn more about the basics of cloud computing.

While the title may suggest the content is appropriate for the non-technical business leader, this book is intended for individuals with a strong background in IT. Babcock does a great job in breaking down definitions into easy-to-consume pieces, but “non-techies” may struggle through some parts of the book.

Cloud Computing Phenomenon

Cloud computing is the latest IT buzzword *de jour*. It has dominated the headlines of vendor product announcements, industry conferences, and the many analysts covering the IT space for the last couple of years. Cloud computing is being advertised as the biggest game-changing force in business since the dot.com bust of the late 1990s. It quite simply promises to simplify and significantly lower the cost of the computing environments in the public and private realm, while providing incredible flexibility to businesses.

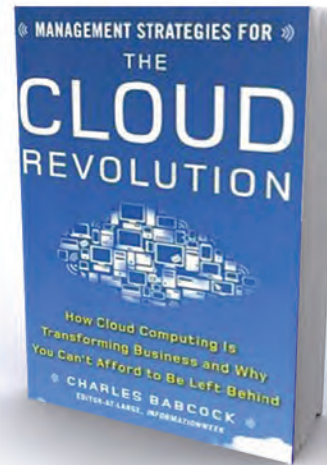
Cloud computing refers to using the Internet rather than the internal computing infrastructure of an organization for storage and access to data or for software and applications. Web-based e-mail services, such as Google's Gmail, is an example of cloud computing. The user's e-mail account is stored in Google's systems and

users gain access to their e-mail via the Internet.

Babcock begins by defining cloud computing, but may lose readers because of the vast number of definitions. The technology is so new that the definition depends on the vendor and the services offered. This lack of a clear, concise definition is one of the reasons that a company needs to understand the business problem it is trying to solve before embracing one vendor or another.

The author discusses the concept of virtualization, or virtual machines, at a very detailed level. Readers without a background in technology may struggle through this part of the book. While virtualization is not required for cloud computing, it is a required component if a vendor wants to be competitive in this market space.

The idea of public, private, and hybrid clouds is also explored in detail. It is a great discussion with good definitions, pros, cons, and examples. Babcock goes to great lengths to demonstrate an unbiased view by giving several vendors equal time in the discussions.



Management Strategies for the Cloud Revolution: How Cloud Computing Is Transforming Business and Why You Can't Afford to Be Left Behind

Author: **Charles Babcock**

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Source: **www.mhprofessional.com**

The Cloud and Records and Information Managers

The book includes a discussion on overcoming resistance to the cloud. This section includes discussion about data and identity security being a concern, but it doesn't include enough details about some of the other issues around data storage. Compliance officers and RIM professionals will certainly want to know about the items included in the book, but will also be concerned when the organization has little control over where their data is located in the cloud.

As cloud vendors move data and pro-

cessing around the globe to less-utilized data centers, information, such as personally identifiable information and data under export controls, may land in data centers in countries where it is against laws and regulations for it to exist. This subject was not explored in great enough detail to assure RIM professionals that these concerns will be addressed by cloud vendors.

The Cloud and Social Media

Another section of the book discussed how social networking vendors, such as Facebook, LinkedIn, and MySpace, may use the cloud as their im-

plementation model to achieve the payoffs of cloud computing.

Using an example of social networking as the first place for a company to dip its toe into cloud computing may lose some chief executive (CEO) and chief information (CIO) officers from looking further. The connotation of “social” in a sentence with computing still leads many business leaders to believe that it is a time waster instead of a collaborative working environment for its employees. A different example would probably ensure that CEOs and CIOs will continue to listen to the argument for cloud computing.

Babcock lays a good foundation for IT professionals to gain a better understanding of cloud computing so a solid business case can be articulated for the leaders of the organization. It will also help IT professionals be better equipped to demonstrate clear strategies for taking advantage of cloud computing. A RIM professional with a good technical knowledge base can also benefit from reading the book, but needs to supplement the security discussion with other material. **ENR**

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Preserving Archives and Manuscripts for Long-Term, Uninterrupted Access

Elizabeth J. Newhof

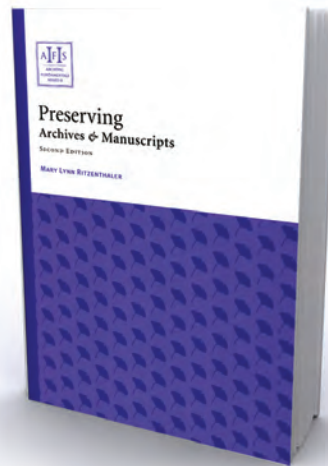
Preserving Archives & Manuscripts, 2nd Edition is a helpful companion for anyone with cherished or valuable records. Author Mary Lynn Ritzenthaler lays forth a comprehensive guide for archivists and administrators that is sure to become a classic text, unseating its prior edition that served a generation as an industry standard.

This book is also the last in the Archival Fundamental Series II initiated and published by the Society of American Archivists to serve as the collective resource for modern archival practice and theory.

As one would expect, given the title of this work, its primary purpose is to explain how to preserve archives and manuscripts within archival institutions, while responding to the mandate for access to and use of these records. Ritzenthaler’s years of experience in the field are most-evident as she de-

scribes the variety of archival materials and their complexities, causes of their deterioration and damage, and the proper methods for preserving and handling them.

The introduction to the text is comprehensive in explaining the book’s focus. Ritzenthaler identifies the principles required for a successful preservation and archival program, as well as the challenges these programs are likely to face.



Preserving Archives & Manuscripts, 2nd Edition

Author: **Mary Lynn Ritzenthaler**

Publisher: **Society of American Archivists**

Publication Date: **2010**

Length: **521 pages**

Price: **\$63**

ISBN-13: **978-1-9316-6632-9**

Source: **www.archivists.org/catalog**

While archivists and their administrators are the intended audience of this text, even the family historian can benefit from the tips and techniques Ritzenthaler provides for proper preservation and, when necessary, conservation of damaged or deteriorating records. Archivists employed by government agencies, research and educational institutions, and corporations will certainly profit from Ritzenthaler's detailed instructions for implementing a preservation program as the foundation for successful preservation.

There are two areas where this body of work shows some weakness. First, although interesting, the images, at times, are of poor quality. Their placement throughout the text also lacks aesthetic appeal. They could be used as more of a complement to the text; it appears they are more of a visual accessory than an integral part of the instruction.

Secondly, there is little description of proper electronic preservation and archival. To be fair, Ritzenthaler does mention the existence of such archival material, but she does little more than offer advice to use care when working with electronic media and to seek "specialized technical assistance ... in evaluating materials, developing preservation strategies, and creating master and use copies of machine-dependent records." While this is good advice, it falls short of providing instruction necessary for addressing the mounting challenge that a present-day archivist – with a limited budget and an unfathomable number of electronic documents to maintain – will face.

Interestingly, a key asset of this work is the array of resources included at the end of the book. It would be worth it to purchase the book for only the appendices. There is a nice glossary of basic preservation terms, and a 30-page bibliography of selected readings that Ritzenthaler organized by broad subject categories covered in the book.


Also included is a practical descrip-

tion of how to set up a work space, including considerations relating to layout, environment, light, house-keeping, equipment, tools, and supplies.

The appendix describing basic preservation procedures is extremely helpful, as it provides step-by-step instructions and illustrations for: removing paper fasteners, surface dusting, humidification and flattening, polyester film encapsulation, examining and removing framed materials under glass, fabricating corrugated folders, and testing the pH of paper supplies. Ritzenthaler also compiled a list of 70 preservation supplies and equipment vendors and manufacturers, including their contact information, to assist in the research and purchase of products.

With the wealth of knowledge contained in this book, it is hard to imagine needing any additional resource, but, just in case, Ritzenthaler has provided a list of about 40 sources of assistance and information, including a brief description of each along with their contact information. There are also a few e-mail list serves to which the reader can subscribe.

If an organization determines that outsourcing is the best avenue for the next archival or preservation project, there are six non-profit regional conservation centers identified that provide archival and preservation services. Ritzenthaler rounds off the appendices with a list of federal agencies and private foundations that provide grant funds to support preservation activities, including contact information for each potential funding source.

With this second edition of *Preserving Archives & Manuscripts*, Ritzenthaler has created a detailed, yet remarkably enjoyable and valuable resource. It can be read in whole or perused as a reference guide. 

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