

# A holistic approach: Bringing all devices and services together within your business

To help you pull together all that you've learned into a holistic approach, here is a scenario for a small business running Microsoft Public Cloud services.

First, look at a classic example of client-server computing for a small business startup environment. In this scenario, you have a couple of people that have partnered to start a company named Contoso Ltd. They are both doing this full time, living off their savings and side jobs until the new business gets off the ground. They have no infrastructure and want to focus their time on building the business. They have little or no interest in purchasing or building an infrastructure. However, they do need to collaborate. They need a way to share documents, create invoices, track billing, and so on. They need to do it fast and they need to do it inexpensively. Their first step is to build a server on Azure leveraging Infrastructure as a Service (IaaS).

Contoso needs access to Microsoft Office, a place to put documents that both partners can get to, plus a central database for invoicing and financials. The company will use Intuit QuickBooks installed on a single server and available online for either partner to connect to for billing, running reports, writing checks, and other tasks. Anticipating the need to hire people in the future, the partners install QuickBooks on a server in Azure so that they can grant other employees this type of access as it is needed. Because their data is also very important, they want to have a backup of the data that can be downloaded locally (they will need to give it to their accountant in the near future on a regular basis) or stored in Azure in a different location (in case of disaster).

Because of the way QuickBooks client software connects to the database, installing the QuickBooks client on each of the partners' laptops and then pointing to the cloud for the database might not be the easiest or most efficient way to go. This plan would also require adding QuickBooks to the client (such as a laptop or tablet) for each new hire when they need access to the data. By installing QuickBooks once in a virtual machine (VM) in Azure and giving the appropriate people permissions to connect to this VM, the data and the application can be centrally managed while also safeguarding the data. Each person in the company will be able to launch the session and begin working. In addition, they can keep a backup of the QuickBooks data in the cloud as well as in the on-premises computers. Another important aspect about using this approach is security. If someone misplaces a laptop, the QuickBooks application and data is still available on the cloud server.

As Contoso grows, they have the infrastructure ready to build their business. Add some software and security tweaks, and the business can grow more quickly than ever.