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## FIRM MANAGEMENT

# AICPA: Accounting Firms Increasing Adoption of Cloud Services

More CPA firms are embracing cloud solutions to transform their business, although with a greater focus on data security than a year ago, according to a recent survey by CPA2Biz, the technology subsidiary of the American Institute of CPAs.

Nov. 20, 2013

**WASHINGTON, D.C. – Nov. 20, 2013** – More CPA firms are embracing cloud solutions to transform their business, although with a greater focus on data security than a year ago, according to a recent survey by [CPA2Biz](#), the technology subsidiary of the American Institute of CPAs.

Nearly half of survey takers said they were using cloud-enabled business services to some degree in their firms, up from 44 percent a year ago. But they expressed concern over cloud vendors' ability to manage data breaches and maintain effective internal controls, with the percentage of those identifying themselves as "somewhat confident" or "not confident at all" – the two lowest categories – rising from 15 percent a year ago to almost 43 percent now.

"These results underscore what we've preached for some time," said [Erik Asgeirsson](#), president and CEO of CPA2Biz. "Web-based services are here to stay. But firms need to do their homework, put in place well-defined service agreements and choose vendors who have a demonstrated commitment to ongoing technology assurance services."

The online survey, conducted from Sept. 30 to Nov. 5, polled 312 CPAs who represent a mix of small to large public accounting firms. It was released at the [2013 Digital CPA Conference](#), a leading event on digital transformation within the profession. The conference, which continues through Friday, is hosted by CPA2Biz and the AICPA.

Other key findings from the survey:

- Information security concerns continue to be the main barrier to entry for firms and clients looking to try cloud services for the first time.
- Client acceptance is the No. 2 barrier, but this may be more a reflection of how firms are positioning their service offerings than a reticence to switch to the cloud.
- Almost a third of survey takers said their firm is pursuing specialization as a business strategy. In research for CPA2Biz, tech strategist [Geoffrey Moore](#) has listed cloud-driven specialization as a major trend transforming the profession.
- The overwhelming majority of CPAs continue to say they have a critical role to play in technology adoption for their clients.

## Top 5 Benefits of Cloud Solutions

1. Ability of firm to work virtually and expand geographic reach (65%)
2. Don't have to worry about software updates/maintenance (62%)
3. Business continuity and quicker disaster recovery (56%)
4. Productivity improvements (36%)
5. Better visibility into firm and client finances (26%)

*(Note: Survey takers were asked to check all benefits that applied, so numbers don't add up to 100%).* More information on the Digital CPA Conference is at [www.digitalcpa.com](http://www.digitalcpa.com).

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