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I'm still surprised when I find a software product that does not offer cloud access. Today, with remote working options more common than ever, it's imperative that employees have access to their desktop applications, no matter where they are.

The same goes for employers. Imagine being in a meeting, only to discover that you

computer, the applications are installed on the remote desktop. You are then provided with access to that desktop, which functions as if it were your own. This process eliminates the need to have costly hardware and equipment, while also ensuring that you'll be able to use the software applications you desire. It's important to note that not every application can be hosted on the cloud, but the majority can.

Using a hosting provider offers a lot of benefits, including the following:

- Reduction in necessary IT staff and costly hardware applications. The product is installed on the remote desktop, so any support issues would be handled either by the software vendor or by the hosting provider.
- Anytime/anywhere access means you can access data, run reports, and look up information at all hours of the day or night.
- Reliability. While many people are happy with SaaS software delivery, hosting services go one step further, typically guaranteeing uptime percentages. In the case where the servers are down, users are typically given a credit.
- Product updates are automatic, so you'll always have access to the latest version.
- Security is top-notch, with multiple data centers typically running applications, with bank-level encryption employed for protecting data at all times.

In this issue, we reviewed five application hosting providers. The products vary in size and scope, with some products simply offering QuickBooks Desktop hosting, while others can host multiple applications and even create a custom server for users if desired. The products reviewed include:

- Cetrom CPA Cloud
- Cloudnine Realtime
- Cloudvara
- Right Networks
- Xcentric

We have included a chart that offers a quick summary of common features found in