Cloud Computing for Art Galleries

A term often used when referring to computer systems and their operation is '*operating in the cloud'*. You may ask yourself 'what is 'the cloud'? Here are some definitions to help clarify:

"*The cloud is a set of services and technologies that enable the delivery of computing services over the Internet in real-time, allowing end-users instant access to data and applications from any device with Internet access.*" (*www.novell.com*)

"*Cloud computing encompasses any subscription-based or pay-per-use service that, in real time over the Internet, extends IT's existing capabilities.*" (*www.infoworld.com*)

The cloud can be accessed from any location with an Internet connection whether work or home, or from mobile devices. The convenience of running your software through Internet-based applications rather than from your Mac or PC makes it an attractive and flexible option that more and more businesses are using.

Some of the benefits of running your application in the cloud are:

- Anywhere/anytime access to data
- Improved reliability and security of data
- Software that's up-to-date with less malware
- Cloud computing requires less in-house staff
- Easy, fast deployment of users

Here's an example of how this might work for you. If you are an art gallery owner, your business is art. You are not in the business of technology or managing IT infrastructure. An art gallery software and service provider such as GallerySoft has the particular skills required to make very secure infrastructures with backups and archiving. What you get from a cloud provider is a significant amount of hardware and software power without having to purchase and bring it in house and somebody who manages the program for you.

Although many businesses are making use of the cloud, the vast majority are employing some level of both methods. For example, they maintain their accounting program on their local PC while their email and management software are in the cloud and accessible by any computer via the Internet. Cloud computing means you have choices. It's worth evaluating your business structure to see how the cloud might best serve your needs.