

aws small and medium
business



SAVE AND SCALE

**How moving to the cloud
helps SMBs reduce costs
while growing their business**

Small and medium-sized businesses (SMBs) are constantly on the lookout for new opportunities to save and scale. For an increasing number of owners and decision-makers, those opportunities exist in the cloud. Moving, or *migrating*, their data and applications to the cloud can help SMBs reduce costs, win back precious hours of the day, and invest in long-term, sustainable growth.

In a fast-moving world of fluctuating markets and evolving customer needs, cloud technologies can give SMBs the speed and confidence to stay competitive, empower their workforce, and overcome pressing business challenges.

Once migrated, SMBs can access the same tools and services relied on by the world's largest organizations, and make more efficient use of their existing resources. Cloud services enable SMBs to unlock more value from their data, helping them to better understand their business and customers, operate more efficiently, and make more informed decisions. Inherited security controls make it easier to safeguard critical assets and remain compliant with the latest regulatory standards. And access to the latest technologies accelerates the creation of new products, while contributing to a culture of continual innovation.

SMBs are used to doing a lot with limited resources, but by embracing digitization they can free up precious hours currently tied up in the immediate priorities of today, and start investing them in building for tomorrow.

This eBook will explore how SMBs are employing cloud technologies to drive greater cost and operational efficiency, while simultaneously growing their businesses.

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Build future value now



Migration is a gateway to growth, savings, and transformative technologies

Cost reduction is one of the main reasons why SMBs migrate to the cloud. Acquiring, maintaining, and upgrading co-located infrastructure can be expensive. Yet how much demand is placed on that infrastructure can vary wildly depending on the time, day of the week, or season. It's not uncommon for SMBs to pay for computing resources that are only needed for one or two weeks of peak demand during annual sales cycles.

It's different in the cloud. Infrastructure is virtualized with all physical hardware located in state-of-the-art facilities maintained and secured by the cloud provider. SMBs don't need to worry about maintaining equipment or buying more when demand increases. They can instantly provision and deprovision capacity as needed, and only ever pay for resources they actually use. This provides unmatched flexibility and the opportunity to significantly reduce operational costs. And that's only the start.

AI, automation, and other tools that help SMBs do more with less

Migration gives SMBs access to advanced tools and services that optimize operations and processes. That includes financial and accounting tools that free staff from

disconnected spreadsheets, and artificial intelligence (AI) tools to boost employee productivity and automate business processes.

For example, AI can automate document processing, summarizing and analyzing information from a vast range of sources, before consolidating them into easily digestible reports. Coding companions accelerate code generation, and voice user interfaces help employees identify important information and summarize content. AI can even propose different scenarios that help SMBs optimize supply chains, improve logistics, and reduce costs.



CASE STUDY

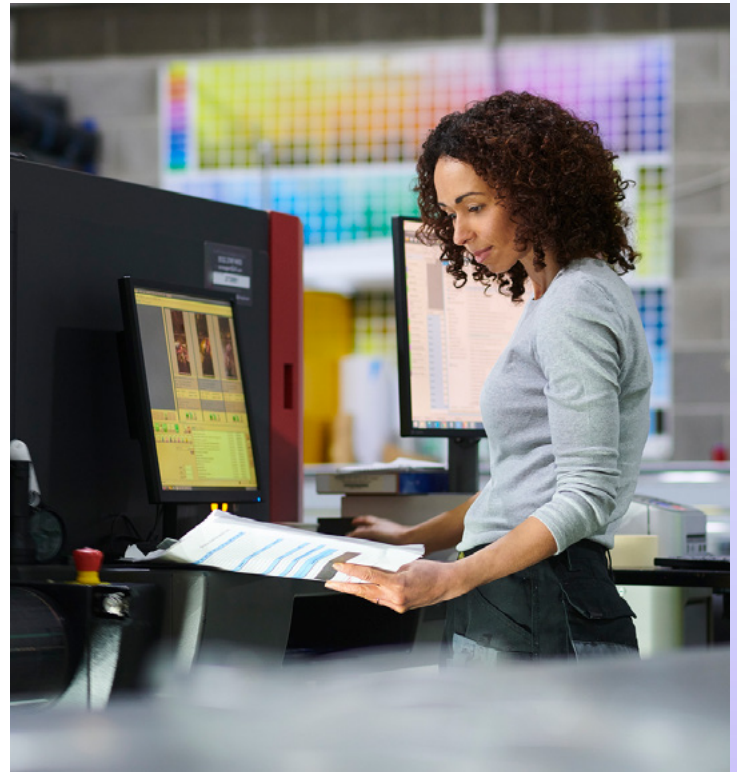
myposter scales with the season

myposter is an ecommerce and photo production business based in Germany. Its customers upload photos to create personalized photobooks, greeting cards, calendars, posters, and other printed items. The company migrated to the cloud to manage seasonal spikes in demand that were placing immense pressure on its existing infrastructure.

Black Friday sales events and holiday periods can see demand on myposter's infrastructure spike by **400 percent**. In the cloud, that's simply not an issue. By combining cloud storage, availability, security, and automation, myposter can provide its customers with a more stable service, allowing IT personnel to spend far less time on maintenance.

In addition to its digital printing operations, myposter rents its web shop infrastructure on AWS to third parties that require high-end visual processing and production services. To achieve the agility needed for this service, the business is using a managed container service to run and scale applications in the cloud.

Optimizing infrastructure has also helped the myposter team increase profitability of every product by **5 percent**. With more time to spend on innovating and product development, they have even launched a second business.



MYPOSTER'S RESULTS

5%

cost reduction per order

400%

spikes in demand handled with ease

Data is an engine for growth and innovation

Data, when stored, organized, and analyzed effectively, can accelerate growth and be a transformative differentiator for SMBs. Developing a cloud data strategy helps to overcome common challenges that prevent businesses from getting the most out of their data, including lack of data governance, skill gaps, siloed systems, and incompatibility between tools. With the right strategy in place, SMBs can extract more value from their data, make more informed real-time decisions, identify new growth opportunities, understand customers on a deeper level, and get a clearer picture of the cost of every sale.

The first step to achieving this is to set clear outcomes. This involves identifying Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) such as revenue, profit margin, customer retention, and conversion rates. Businesses need to take a look at the data they are currently collecting, where it's stored, and how it's classified. Most SMBs face at least one data-related challenge, be it integration, poor data quality, or lack of visibility. Based on defined objectives, they can prioritize which challenges to tackle first.

The cloud provides access to educational resources, expertise, and best practices to help SMBs develop a data strategy. This includes advice on how to cultivate a data-centric business culture, as well as

recommendations for what cloud tools and services will help them achieve their objectives.

Build a modern data architecture that improves decision-making and innovation

Migrating to the cloud enables SMBs to build a modern architecture that delivers the capabilities needed to extract more value from their data. With the right data foundation in place, SMBs can use data lakes and analytics services to effectively collect, store, analyze, and share insights to meet business needs.

Once this is done, SMBs can take advantage of AI-powered business intelligence (BI) tools to start using their data in creative ways. They can target customers more accurately with real-time recommendations, identify which products bring the most revenue, and solve customer problems faster and more accurately with chat bots. Teams with limited bandwidth can win back precious time by automating document workflows, generating more accurate predictions and forecasts for improved decision-making. AI tools can even automatically detect potential fraud.



CASE STUDY

ML helps Gourmeat take a bite out of inventory management

Gourmeat is a Uruguayan specialty meat supplier with US retail operations in Miami, Florida. A perishable product, fluctuating demand, as well as an extended supply and distribution chain make the company's operations quite challenging. The Gourmeat team quickly realized that using disparate spreadsheets to manage isolated inventories wasn't helping the situation either.

By combining selected cloud services, they were able to build a new inventory management system within weeks. They then used BI tools, powered by machine learning (ML), to gain complete visibility over their data via a real-time reporting dashboard.

By freeing itself from disparate spreadsheets and gaining a comprehensive view of its data, Gourmeat is now able to analyze and predict customer behavior, make better logistical decisions, and improve product shelf life.

The results speak for themselves: time spent on inventory management and report creation has fallen from approximately 4 hours a week to **less than 20 minutes**, and productivity has **risen by 40 percent**.



THE RESULT

40%

greater productivity

Governance, access, and compliance tools to keep people and data safe

Many businesses struggle to keep up with security needs, whether it's managing a proliferation of tools, or the time spent responding to ongoing security alerts, both real and false. **40 percent** of SMBs believe skill gaps are a barrier preventing them from investing in security, while **30 percent** are aware of their security and compliance needs, but unsure how to manage them¹. Cloud technologies can help small businesses remain secure with the resources available to them today.

Migration provides cost-effective access to the same security capabilities relied on by the world's largest enterprises. SMBs that migrate will also inherit robust security controls and certifications from their cloud provider, giving them continuous protection and compliance.

Time-consuming manual security tasks like threat detection and remediation can be automated in the cloud, giving staff time to focus on more profit-oriented work. SMBs can implement robust layers of protection around their data with multifactor authentication and role-based access controls, and gain greater visibility over their security footprint. This enables them to take a proactive, rather than reactive, approach to keep their business secure—and growing.

Shared Responsibility Model

Different cloud providers have different approaches to security. For example, Amazon Web Services (AWS) uses a shared responsibility model to help customers relieve some of the operational burden of securing their business. In this model, AWS is responsible for the security of the cloud by protecting the infrastructure—hardware, software, networking, and facilities—that run the cloud services used by customers. Customers are responsible for security *in* the cloud, which includes managing access controls, securing their data, and securing the networks.

A win for security is a win for growth

SMB owners' time is precious and there's always something to think about—cash flow, talent acquisition, productivity—the list goes on. When faced with so many competing priorities, it's natural to focus time on areas that directly impact profit. For many, that doesn't include security, but it should.

Beyond protection, cloud security can help SMBs maintain business continuity, sustain revenue, support remote workers, and earn customer trust. This all contributes to a stable foundation on which organizations can grow. Put simply, every step SMBs take to secure their business is a step taken to grow their business.

CASE STUDY

weetrust reinforces security posture with automation

Mexico-based legal tech platform weetrust aims to eliminate paper-based clerical work for its users. Its unique, unrepeatable, and unalterable blockchain-based records enable users to virtually sign documents, verify identities, and more.

The company recognized a need to build out its security infrastructure to remain safe and compliant amidst a continually evolving threat landscape. With only a limited number of IT personnel in its 50-strong remote workforce, the weetrust team turned to the cloud to help with its security workload.

WEETRUST'S RESULTS

20+

hours saved each month

79%

increase in customer retention

By using a Cloud Security Posture Management (CSPM), the team is able to perform security best practice checks, aggregate alerts, and automate remediation, to help streamline operations. This has enabled weetrust to strengthen its security without increasing the burden on IT personnel, who can now automatically navigate security events and make more data-driven decisions.

Using a CSPM has helped weetrust save **20 hours** in security management each month, with a **79 percent increase** in customer retention due to its improved cloud security architecture. The business is now perfectly positioned to stay ahead of evolving security risks and compliance requirements, ensuring peace of mind for its developers, employees and end users throughout Mexico and Latin America.

From experimentation to breakthrough—adventures in generative AI

Innovation pushes businesses and industries forward, and it's an SMB specialty. While they may lack the resources of larger enterprises, or the agility of startups, limitations force them to look at problems creatively, and be open to trying new things. Given the right opportunity, and technology, SMBs are capable of incredible accomplishments. Today, many of those opportunities are centered around one technology—generative AI.

Generative AI can create new content and ideas based on inputs—*prompts*—provided to it. It is capable of having conversations, writing stories, creating images, videos, and audio. Generative AI applications are trained on vast amounts of data commonly referred to as foundation models (FMs). Different FMs are capable of different things. Large language FMs can generate text to assist writers, answer questions, even act as a coding companion for developers. Diffuse FMs generate and edit images, videos, as well as 2D and 3D models.



Work backwards from a meaningful business challenge

Like any technology investment, the decision on whether to implement generative AI must be carefully considered based on its potential returns—be that time or money saved. While it can be tempting to jump in head-first, businesses must start by identifying a meaningful problem that they or their customers are facing, before looking at how generative AI can help. Cloud providers—or their qualified partners—with experience implementing AI can help SMBs do this. For example, AWS hold regular workshops that help SMBs work backwards to determine how generative AI can deliver value.

Once a business case for generative AI has been determined, SMBs can make use of pre-trained generative AI applications like chatbots and coding companions, or build their own. The cloud provides access to high-performance FMs that can be used to build generative AI applications, but it's important to choose the right FM for the intended use case. If only a certain amount of data is needed to achieve their objectives, businesses can risk overspending if they choose a model that far exceeds their requirements.

Experimenting with different models is key to right-sizing any generative AI investment. Approaches vary, but on AWS SMBs can securely try out different FMs. If they want to customize a model with their own data, they can do so on a private copy that's only accessible to them, ensuring all proprietary data is kept secure and never used to train the underlying model.

Responsible AI

Before using generative AI, every business should consider how to use it responsibly. There are multiple dimensions of responsible AI to think about, including explainability, fairness, governance, privacy, security, robustness, and transparency. An experienced cloud provider can help SMBs develop and scale responsible AI policies from day one, enabling them to:

- Remain up to date and compliant with the latest legal parameters around generative AI usage.
- Avoid copyright infringement and ensure their own company data is not used to train other FMs.
- Automatically detect bias and ensure algorithmic fairness, as well as diverse and inclusive representation.
- Validate the accuracy and trustworthiness of generative AI outputs.

Once an SMB has established robust responsible AI policies, they can start focusing on the benefits generative AI applications can bring to their business.

Empower staff and better serve customers

The possibilities of generative AI are vast, and it has the potential to positively impact all industries. Financial institutions can use it for fraud detection, intelligent document processing, and chatbots that improve customer service. Healthcare and life sciences companies can simulate clinical trials based on patient data, and accelerate potentially life-saving research. Manufacturers can generate new part designs, detect defects, automate inspections, and develop voice user interfaces. In the Media and Entertainment world, artists can rapidly move from narrative and visual concepting to creation, attract a larger audience with personalized ads, and expand into new markets with automated content localization.



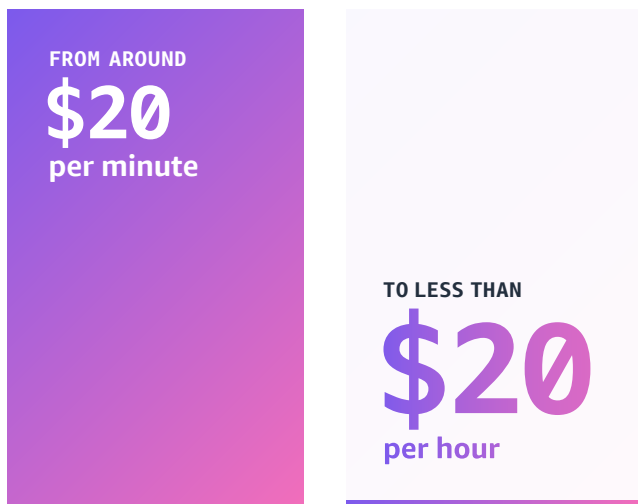
CASE STUDY

MagellanTV turns language barriers into bridges

MagellanTV is a documentary streaming service based in New York, where a team of 20 talented employees manage a library of over 3,000 films. The company has ambitions of expanding into global markets and is using generative AI to make it possible.

Traditional methods of content localization are both time and cost prohibitive for a business of MagellanTV’s size. The team had been using third-party services for translation, but high per-minute charges made this unsustainable. Dubbing a single hour of content would also take up to 60 hours, consuming 70 percent of the in-house video editor’s time.

REDUCTION IN DUBBING COST (USD)



Having previously migrated parts of its infrastructure to the cloud, MagellanTV had access to high-performance generative AI FMs. The team combined one of these FMs with other cloud services including automated transcription, translation, and text-to-voice, to create an automated workflow for content localization—Magellan VoiceWorks.

Documentaries are intricate by nature—layered narration, diverse voices, and distinctive pacing all play an important role in bringing the story to life. Magellan VoiceWorks is designed to protect the original viewing experience at every level. It automatically takes nuances like regional idioms, slang, and culturally sensitive phrases into account during the localization process. The speed at which dubbed lines are delivered is also edited to suit what’s happening on-screen.

MagellanTV is now busy localizing its library in multiple languages for a fraction of the cost. Previously, it would cost **~\$20USD a minute** to dub content, now it costs **<\$20USD an hour**—that’s around a **98 percent reduction**. Generative AI has helped MagellanTV completely transform its approach to distribution, opening up lucrative new opportunities, delighting its customers, and dramatically reducing costs.

Experienced consultation and hands-on expertise every step of the way

SMBs excel at getting the most out of limited resources, but sometimes outside expertise is needed. If cloud migration or working with a specific cloud technology is new territory for their business, SMBs can get support from qualified partners of their chosen provider. For example, AWS Partners provide consultation and hands-on expertise to help SMBs quickly break through obstacles and reach their goals.

The AWS Partner Network (APN) is made up of 130,000 qualified AWS Partners that have already helped thousands of SMBs thrive on AWS. There are many types of AWS Partners, including—but not limited to—AWS Managed Service Providers, Authorized Training Partners, and AWS Competency Program partners.

AWS customers can work with AWS Partners with relevant experience and offerings based on their company size, industry, use case, or technology. For example, SMB Competency Partners have extensive experience supporting smaller businesses with offerings designed to meet their unique needs, and Generative AI Competency Partners specialize in developing and implementing the latest generative AI solutions.

AWS matches its customers with AWS Partners in their region, ensuring assistance is always available whenever it's needed. AWS also closely collaborates with customers, and their chosen AWS Partner, at every stage of their journey.



AWS PARTNER NETWORK

130,000

AWS Partners

200+

countries

START

Choosing the right cloud provider

There are many things SMBs should consider when choosing a cloud provider. That includes both their immediate needs and the long-term growth of their business, as well as how they can optimize costs, remain secure, and foster innovation. Breadth and depth of services, the maturity, availability, and security of infrastructure, and access to expert support should all be taken into account. Every provider is different, but SMBs across all industries are choosing to migrate to AWS for a few key reasons:

- Access transformative technologies and expert advice
- Drive growth on the most reliable and secure cloud infrastructure
- Make innovation a repeatable process with proven methodologies
- AWS succeeds when its customers succeed

Access transformative technologies and expert advice

AWS has more services and functionality than any other cloud provider, with **over 200** fully featured services covering storage, compute, analytics, AI, security, and everything in between. Whether SMBs want to start small or get up and running with multiple AWS services at once, it's easy to do so with access to comprehensive educational resources, training, and advice whenever needed.

Drive growth on the most reliable and secure cloud infrastructure

AWS infrastructure is secure, extensive, and reliable with **105 Availability Zones** across **33 Regions** globally. Any and all data flowing across the AWS network is automatically encrypted, and AWS infrastructure is backed by **over 300** security, compliance, and governance features and services.

Make innovation a repeatable process with proven methodologies

SMBs can learn how innovation became fundamental to AWS culture and replicate it in their own business. AWS innovates using proven methodologies—the same methodologies that built Amazon.com—and have helped thousands of SMBs reinvent themselves in the cloud. It all starts by working backwards from customer needs and adopting a 'Day 1' mentality where it's safe to try, fail, and try again. This approach to innovation, combined with AWS technology, can give SMBs the time, resources, and capabilities needed to create that same environment in their business.

AWS succeeds when its customers succeed

90 percent of AWS services have been built in direct response to what its customers have said matters most to them. The other 10 percent is innovation on behalf of customers, based on a deep understanding—and anticipation—of their needs. Customer obsession is why AWS puts time and resources into running free workshops and provides funding mechanisms to support customer success. It's also why AWS prices have been lowered **134 times** since the company was founded in 2006.

It's all about building long-term relationships, and that only works if AWS customers believe their chosen cloud provider constantly delivers value.

AWS CUSTOMERS HAVE EXPERIENCED

31%

average cost savings over five years²

43%

fewer monthly security incidents²

69%

reduction in unplanned downtime²

CONNECT

Build future value now

Cloud technologies enable SMBs to make time and cost savings as they grow. Against a backdrop of evolving markets and customer expectations, AWS provides small businesses with a secure and stable foundation to build on, while only paying for the resources they actually use. Once migrated, SMBs can develop a modern data architecture, access advanced technologies like generative AI, and get expert support whenever they need it. The result is empowered teams and delighted customers, more efficient operations, optimized costs, and a clear path to long-term, sustainable growth.

[Get started](#) ›

Interested in learning more? [Ask an expert.](#)



¹ aws.amazon.com/blogs/smb/three-common-misconceptions-about-cloud-security-that-are-holding-back-small-and-medium-businesses

² aws.amazon.com/smart-business