GOOGLE CLOUD READINESS & COST:

A NO-NONSENSE GUIDE FOR BUSINESS LEADERS

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Google Cloud Readiness & Cost: A No-Nonsense Guide for Business Leaders

Most cloud problems don't start in the cloud. They start with unplanned adoption — moving workloads without a clear reason, a cost model, or a security plan.

Google Cloud can lower costs, improve reliability, and give your business room to grow. It can also do the opposite when it's adopted without a strategy.

Use this guide to decide what belongs in the cloud, plan the move, protect what you migrate, and keep the monthly bill under control.

1. Know Why You're Moving

"Everyone else is in the cloud" is not a strategy. Clear drivers produce good decisions.

The Rule:

Migrate for reasons you can measure:

- Aging hardware approaching end of life
- Capacity that can't keep up with growth
- Remote and multi-site workforce access
- Disaster recovery and continuity gaps
- Application modernization
- Predictable monthly costs over capital purchases

The Goal:

Every workload you move should have a reason attached to it.

2. Ask the Readiness Questions First

If you can't answer these, you're not ready to migrate — yet.

Ask:

- What does one hour of downtime actually cost us?
- Which applications depend on which servers and databases?
- What does our infrastructure cost per month today — all in?
- Who owns security once we're in the cloud?
- Which compliance requirements follow our data?
- Who on our team can operate a cloud environment day to day?

The Red Flag:

If nobody can map your application dependencies, the migration will find them for you — during cutover.

The Goal:

Know your environment before you move it.

3. Not Everything Belongs in the Cloud

A good cloud strategy includes deciding what stays behind.

Evaluate Every Workload:

- **Rehost** — move it as-is (fastest, least benefit)
- **Replatform** — adjust it to use managed services (better long-term economics)
- **Retire** — stop running what nobody uses
- **Retain** — keep latency-sensitive or license-restricted systems on-premises

The Bottom Line:

The goal is the right home for every workload — not an empty server room.

4. Migrate in Waves, Not Leaps

Big-bang migrations create big-bang failures.

Plan the Move:

- Start with a low-risk pilot workload
- Validate performance, access, and backup before the next wave
- Schedule cutovers around business hours
- Keep a tested rollback plan for every wave
- Communicate changes to affected teams in advance
- Decommission old systems only after verification

The Goal:

Each wave should be boring. Boring migrations are successful migrations.

5. Security Moves With You — Or It Doesn't

Google secures the cloud. You are still responsible for what you put in it.

Implement From Day One:

- Identity and access management with least privilege
- Multi-factor authentication for every account
- Network segmentation and firewall rules
- Encryption for data at rest and in transit
- Centralized logging and audit trails
- Protected, tested backups

The Red Flag:

Default settings are not a security posture.

The Goal:

Land in the cloud already secured — not secured "later."

6. Know the Cost Levers

Cloud pricing rewards businesses that understand it and punishes those that don’t.

The Levers That Matter:

- **Right-sizing** — match machine types to actual workload demand
- **Committed-use discounts** — commit to steady workloads for significant savings
- **Autoscaling** — pay for peak capacity only when peaks happen
- **Storage classes** — move cold data to lower-cost tiers automatically
- **Idle resource cleanup** — unattached disks and forgotten instances bill monthly
- **Egress awareness** — know what data leaving the cloud costs before it leaves

The Rule:

Cloud waste is invisible until someone measures it.

7. Govern Spend From Day One

Cost control is a process, not a one-time setup.

Put in Place:

- Budgets with alerts before overruns, not after
- Labels on every resource so costs map to teams and projects
- A monthly cost review with someone accountable for the number
- Regular right-sizing reviews as workloads change

The Red Flag:

If the monthly invoice is a surprise, governance is missing.

The Goal:

A cloud bill you can explain line by line.

8. Plan for Failure — Because Google Does

Cloud regions and zones exist because things fail. Use them.

Prepare for Disruptions:

- Distribute critical workloads across zones
- Automate backups and verify they restore
- Document recovery procedures and test them
- Set recovery time objectives the business agrees with

The Bottom Line:

The cloud makes resilience affordable. It doesn't make it automatic.

9. The Cloud Must Support Business Goals

A migration succeeds when the business runs better — not when the servers move.

Align Cloud Decisions With:

- Operational requirements
- Workforce productivity
- Security and compliance obligations
- Customer expectations
- Growth plans

The Goal:

Measurable business value from every cloud dollar.

The Final Word

Stop treating cloud adoption as an IT project and start treating it as a business decision with an IT component.

Businesses that plan readiness, migrate in waves, secure from day one, and govern spend monthly get the cloud they were promised. The rest get a bill.

Next Step:

List your five most important workloads. For each one, ask: do we know what it costs to run today — and what it would cost, secured and managed, in Google Cloud? If the answer is no, that's where readiness starts.