

THE BUSINESS LEADER'S GUIDE TO CHOOSING A CLOUD PARTNER



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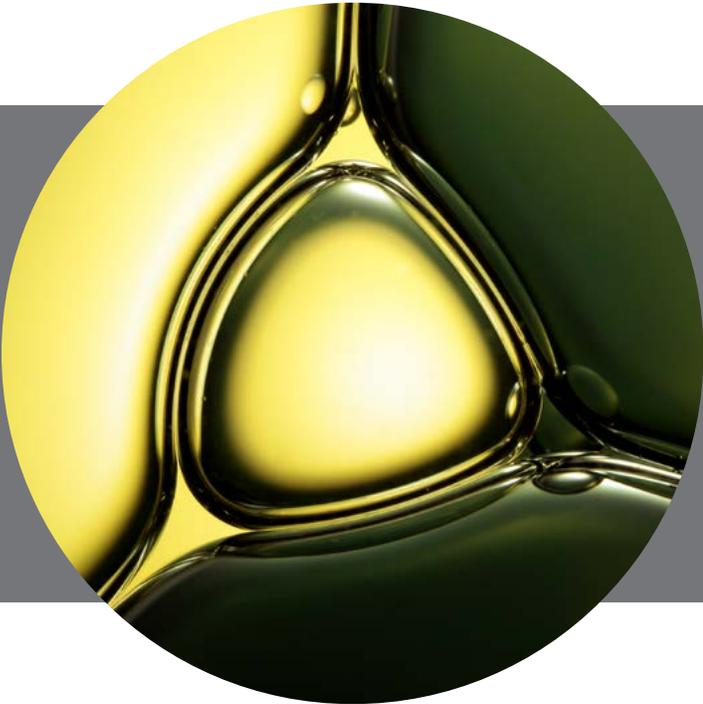
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INTRODUCTION

WHY APTUM?

FIT FOR HIGH-GROWTH BUSINESS: WHY APTUM?

IN THIS EBOOK

We'll take you through the ins and outs of a successful cloud partnership, provide you with important questions to ask of any cloud solutions provider, and show you why Aptum would make a great partner for your cloud migration initiatives.

Choosing a new technology partner can be one of the biggest decisions of your business year – and it can have a lasting impact. The trick is finding a partner that truly understands you, your business, the challenges you face and the structure of your organization. Likewise, that partner needs to have deep expertise in your industry and must bring something new to the equation – particularly when you don't have the time, people or expertise to handle everything in-house.

At Aptum, we recognize the value of partnership and we work diligently to support technology leaders — whether they are up against roadblocks, facing shifting priorities or when they just need to walk through new ideas for their digital transformation. We work hard to build trust, deliver the right solutions, and help enable their business growth.

When it comes to cloud, we adopt a consultative approach to guide high-pressure and high-growth businesses through each stage of their unique cloud journey. The goal is always to design, build, migrate, and manage a well-ideated custom solution that can meet your overarching business objectives.

No doubt, your cloud journey can be complex – but you are not on that journey alone. By partnering early in the cloud migration process, we make it our business to understand your cloud adoption drivers and technology pain points.

In the end, whether you choose Aptum or another provider, you must find the right partner that will ensure your business needs are met.

THE APTUM DIFFERENCE

Aptum is trusted by customers worldwide to access, move, manage, store, and secure mission-critical data. Our solutions are backed by an extensive portfolio of services spanning cloud, hosting, colocation, connectivity and security that allow customers across Canada, the United States, and Western Europe to focus on their core business.



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GLOBAL
DATA
CENTERS



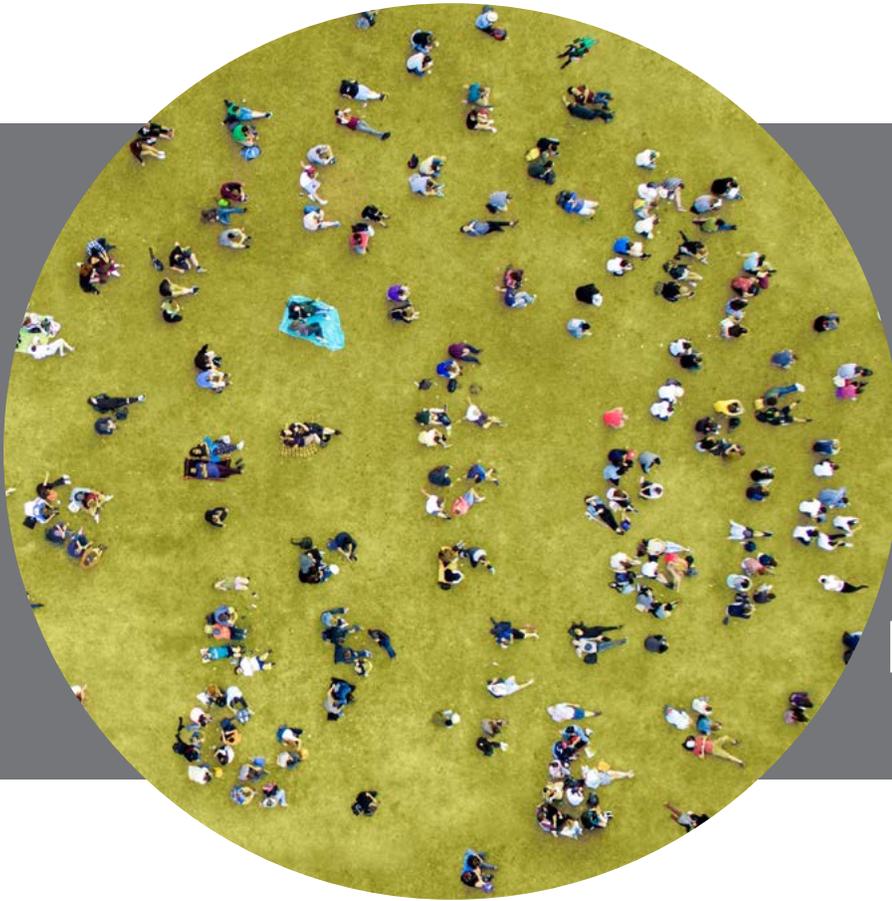
**MULTI-
CLOUD**
MANAGED
SERVICES



**LOW LATENCY
CONNECTIVITY**
FULLY
MANAGED
GLOBAL
NETWORK



20
YEARS
EXPERIENCE
MANAGING,
MOVING, STORING
AND SECURING
CRITICAL DATA



SECTION 2

COMPARING PROVIDERS: HOW TO NARROW DOWN YOUR CHOICES

PARTNERSHIP: CRITICAL TO A SUCCESSFUL CLOUD STRATEGY

Your cloud partner is in it with you for the long haul. That's why picking a cloud partner that can address all your current and future requirements is a critical part of your cloud journey.

You must ensure that they truly understand your company's business drivers, your desired outcomes and that they have the wherewithal to support your hybrid IT operations in a sustainable and cost-efficient manner over the longer term.

THERE ARE IMPORTANT QUESTIONS THAT YOU SHOULD ASK OF ANY CLOUD PARTNER:

- 1 How deep is their **talent pool**, and what is their **process and methodology** for evaluating our needs and supporting implementation?
- 2 Do they have a **multi-dimensional offering** that can address all needs of a well-ideated cloud solution, including **multi-location data connectivity**?
- 3 Are they trying to sell you on a particular approach, or are they genuinely interested in finding **the right solution for you**?
- 4 Do they offer a **holistic approach** with a capability to advise on and architect solutions encompassing **cloud, connectivity, and security** elements?
- 5 What is their **track record**?
Who have they successfully supported, and how?
- 6 Are they specialized in a limited set of platforms or options, or are they **vendor agnostic**?
- 7 Are they able to handle **complicated implementations** and think steps ahead to **pre-emptively mitigate secondary challenges and risks**?
- 8 Will they **work well with your internal team**?
- 9 What does their **network capability and footprint** look like?
- 10 What is their **culture and ethos**?



THE APTUM DIFFERENCE

Aptum has been helping customers store, move, manage, and secure data since 1999. Ever since the Internet has been a true force in business, we've been at the table helping customers grow and adopt new platforms – from the explosion of web hosting in the early 2000s through the emergence of cloud, and now into the current expansion of cloud adoption and hyperscale platforms. We have the experience, are continually evolving, and will lead the way for our customers.

DID YOU KNOW?

Aptum is much more than colocation, hosting, and connectivity. We can truly support hybrid infrastructures with our ability to deliver managed and professional services across data centers (hosting, colo), cloud (private, public, hyperscale), connectivity and security. Over the years we have helped prominent brands scale to new heights, such as YouTube and Skype prior to their acquisitions, as well as Shazam.

Looking forward we are continuing to partner with innovative leaders in their industries such as **The Trade Desk** (the fastest growing demand-side platform in advertising technology), **Element AI** (deep learning and artificial intelligence to power better business decisions), and **ResearchGate** (global professional network connecting the world of science and making research open to all).



From the planning and business case approval stage to the migration and management phase, we support your internal IT teams to build and manage true hybrid solutions. We ensure that your investment choices align with defined business outcomes.

This is not about an off-the-shelf quick-win cloud strategy. Indeed, no real strategy could ever be off the shelf. This is about looking at your business goals from every possible angle to ensure that you have the right mix of solutions for today, and to be able to innovate, adapt and react with confidence as you move into the future.

At the end of the day, you need to have complete faith that your investment is going to pay off. By engaging Aptum early in the process, you can ensure that you are making the right choices as you move forward.

Aptum has a global reach with a local presence to provide our customers with exceptional human support and customer experience. Our goal is for you to feel we have your back — so you can focus on the other priorities that matter most for your business.



“The sooner a customer engages a cloud partner to help navigate their choices, the better. By engaging early, the partner can understand the customer’s business drivers and advise on the best-fit solutions for the customer’s applications. There are many different flavours of cloud and different ways to achieve an outcome with each.”

– Robert Harley, Aptum Product Manager, Cloud Services



PARTNERSHIP BUILT FOR YOU.

Most of our customers choose to work with us because we are able to offer a fully-integrated, centralized support and implementation model. Providing a comprehensive set of services can help you optimize your technology investments and reduce costs and complexity of your operations.

The benefits associated with one main trusted partner usually outweigh the advantages of picking a multi-vendor solution. However, some organizations choose to adopt a multi-vendor strategy to implement cloud solutions, and we are able to work with your additional partners to get the right solution in place. While having to manage multiple vendors, processes, and systems can add operational and management complexity to your IT environment, that may still be what is right for your organization.

At Aptum, some customers also ask us to manage other partners and vendors on their behalf, and we are able to make that part of the solution. **At the end of the day, it's about what works best for your business.**

This holistic approach puts us in a strong position to help customers with their digital transformation initiatives.

THE APTUM SUITE OF CLOUD AND HOSTING SERVICES INCLUDE:

 <p>MULTI-CLOUD MANAGED SERVICES</p>	 <p>MANAGED HOSTING</p>	 <p>COLOCATION</p>
 <p>CONNECTIVITY</p>	 <p>IT SECURITY & COMPLIANCE</p>	 <p>PROFESSIONAL IT SERVICES</p>

THE APTUM DIFFERENCE

Aptum can deliver TRUE hybrid solutions because our capabilities span cloud, data center and connectivity. These capabilities are founded on 20 years' experience helping customers manage, move, store and secure their critical data. Aptum teams operate across North America and Europe, and are ready to assist at all stage of your IT transformation journey, from consultation and architecture, to migration, security, management and optimization.



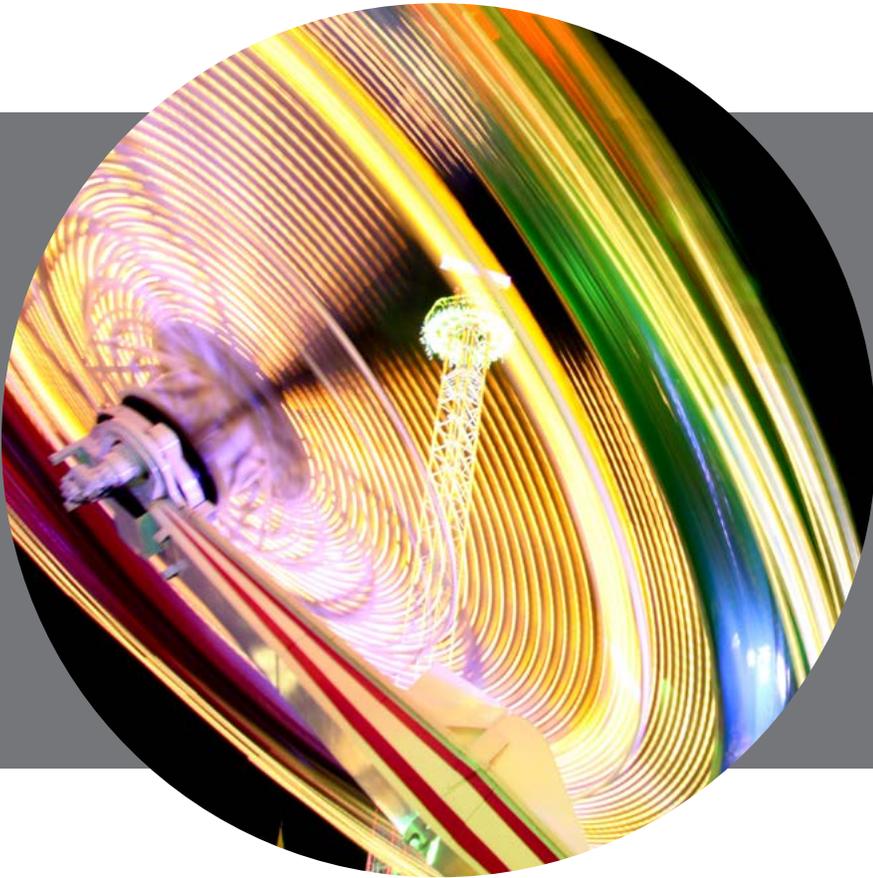
CONNECTIVITY MATTERS

Cloud and hosting solutions rely on resilient, powerful, high-performance connectivity — making it a critical pillar of a cloud strategy. Poor network connectivity can prevent you from realizing the full benefit of a cloud solution. It can also lead to failure of mission-critical functions. Further, poorly planned network options can lead to significant unexpected extra costs.

Since Aptum offers a range of connectivity options such as **network, cloud connect services, MPLS,** and **SD-WAN**, this allows us to help you find the perfect mix for your cloud deployment based on the priority of your applications.

Indeed, the connectivity conversation goes well beyond cloud. It impacts mission-critical functions up and down your entire organization, including fully on-premise components.

Knowing that companies often have an ecosystem of IT service providers, Aptum specializes in connecting these ecosystems together efficiently. This ensures that data can move frictionlessly between applications, geographies, and service providers – giving you an added layer of confidence.



SECTION 3

KEY CONSIDERATIONS IN PICKING A CLOUD SERVICE PARTNER, THE APTUM ADVANTAGE, PLUS CHALLENGES AND ALTERNATIVES

DECIDING ON THE RIGHT CLOUD SOLUTIONS PARTNER.

COMPARING **APTUM** TO OTHER CLOUD SERVICE PROVIDERS

Cloud service providers come in all stripes and sizes and include single-solution vendors, niche players, hyperscale cloud operators, and holistic solution providers. At a high level, your selection process should evaluate prospective providers for compatibility in the following four key areas:

1
STRATEGIC



2
FINANCIAL



3
FUNCTIONAL



4
OPERATIONAL



APTUM CAN HELP YOUR BUSINESS IN EACH OF THESE AREAS:

1

STRATEGIC: FIT FOR YOUR BUSINESS



To ensure that any partner is a good choice for your business, evaluate their track record, service footprint, regulatory alignment, and cultural fit.

TRACK RECORD: Your partner's ability to stay current on their platforms and cloud infrastructure is key to ensuring the long-term efficiency of your operations. Your cloud partner should be able to demonstrate their expertise along with a technology roadmap that meets your current and future requirements.

THE APTUM DIFFERENCE

With a track record that goes back to 1999, Aptum has stayed ahead of the innovation curve by developing and delivering a robust portfolio of cloud services that fit the individual needs of our customers. By partnering with Aptum, you are assured that your technology investments are current, enabling you to maintain your competitive edge.

CULTURE: Often, a provider who is big enough to deliver and small enough to care is a better choice to drive your migration to the cloud. For instance, a large hyperscale public cloud provider may work well for a company with a large and skilled IT team, while an organization with limited technical resources may prefer to bring in a partner like Aptum to help support their hyperscale cloud environment.

GEOGRAPHY: The location of your provider's data centers can have a significant impact on the responsiveness of your applications. For latency-sensitive services such as Voice over IP and high-volume data replication applications, this could be critical.

Delivering content efficiently to your customers should be top of mind when picking a provider.

The partner's service footprint should be within your desired geographical area to comply with any data sovereignty or regulatory requirements that you have.

THE APTUM DIFFERENCE

With 14 data centers globally, Aptum can help customers with their primary and backup data hosting and cloud computing requirements in Canada, the United States, and Western Europe. We are a trusted partner to many customers that span various industries and verticals such as online retail, financial services, technology, healthcare, media, online gaming, manufacturing, and many others.

WHEN IS APTUM NOT THE RIGHT FIT?

As a cloud service provider, we may not necessarily be the best fit for every customer. If your service requirements are outside our service footprint, or you have customized solutions or data sovereignty requirements beyond what we can support, we will advise you upfront to ensure that you can explore alternative solutions.



“Adapt, innovate and continuously improve are core values for us. This shines through for customers and shows our value in terms of thinking creatively around solution architecture, while also providing excellence in support and management of services. Because of our nimble size, our teams can deliver a high degree of focus and attention to our customers.”

– Tom Adams, Marketing Director, Aptum



SUCCESS STORY: COGECO MEDIA

Today's radio broadcasters face important business challenges. They must provide content to listeners through a variety of listening devices, from traditional on-air radio channels to apps to the web. And they must deliver that seamlessly 24/7/365.

Radio listeners expect an always-on, always-available experience

Cogeco Media operates 13 stations reaching over 5 million listeners across the province of Québec, Canada. Today's mixed-media environment has increased the importance of the Cogeco Media website as a source of content for their radio audience. In fact, the website attracts 1.5 million unique visitors generating up to 10 million page views a month by people who want music and news delivered live, with no interruptions.

The Cogeco Media website was an on-premise solution, but as online listening grew it became difficult to manage and maintain, and did not offer 24-hour monitoring. So the company decided to modernize their website with a move to the cloud.

Aptum enables a reliable, secure, high-performing website for listeners

To ensure they gained all the benefits of the cloud migration, Cogeco Media turned to Aptum along with its DevOps Partner, CloudOps to provide the technology infrastructure and management expertise. The resulting Cogeco Media website, recreated in the cloud, provided important improvements in reliability, security and, perhaps most important, performance that is so important for the company's millions of listeners.

A key issue for Cogeco Media was to shield the new website from denial of service (DDoS) threats, so Aptum implemented the right protection layers, easy management tools, and instant help on hand from the Aptum support team 24/7. Plus, the new website features a state-of-the-art content management system, which is critical for non-technical content providers to easily upload audio files to the site anytime.

Today, the website delivers content to 1.5 million listeners seamlessly, with virtually no downtime. As Nicolas Perreault, Cogeco Media's Director of Digital Operations says, "We never have to worry about our infrastructure."

2

FINANCIAL: THE BENEFITS CAN OUTWEIGH THE PRICE



While price is an important aspect of your cloud migration decision, the benefits a partner brings can often outweigh minor differences in the cost of the solution.

PRICING MODEL: The partner's pricing structure should be clear, transparent and align with the assumptions in your business case. Significant price variations between vendors should be further vetted to ensure that inclusions, exclusions, and variable costs are well understood.

COMMERCIAL TERMS AND AGREEMENTS: Services with hidden or variable costs can negatively impact the viability of your cloud operation. Make sure that the terms and conditions are acceptable to your company.

By deploying a holistic solution through Aptum, you **benefit from the economies of bundling services** and **minimize administrative challenges** related to billing and other ongoing administrative functions a multi-vendor solution brings.

Customers should factor in the infrastructure, connectivity, and ongoing management costs to get a holistic view of the TCO of their cloud investment. It is in your best interest to look for a partner with a **clear and transparent fee structure** so that there are no surprises once service is up and running.



3

FUNCTIONAL: CAN THE PARTNER PROVIDE THE NEEDED FEATURES AND FUNCTIONALITY?



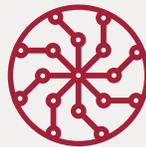
Your cloud service provider's products and services should deliver the features and functionality that your business needs. A provider who offers a holistic portfolio of solutions will be in a better position to help you choose the right-fit solutions for your workloads and reduce the complexities associated with the cloud migration and ongoing operation.

Aptum's cloud services and connectivity products cover various components of a cloud solution and include the following:



CLOUD PLATFORMS

Multi-cloud capability:
Azure, AWS,
Private Cloud (VMWare)



PROFESSIONAL SERVICES

Assessment,
architecture/design,
build, optimization



CONNECTIVITY

Cloud Connect for
ExpressRoute, AWS Direct
Connect, GCP, SD-WAN,
MPLS, international
network footprint



MANAGED SERVICES

Aptum teams handle
day-to-day management
so you can focus on
strategic priorities

HYPERSCALE CLOUD: If your applications require a distributed computing environment and massive scalability-on-demand, you should look for a partner who can collaborate with you to help you reap the full benefits of a hyperscale cloud. The vast array of services and choices offered by hyperscale cloud providers can be intimidating to even the more experienced IT Managers and administrators.

THE APTUM DIFFERENCE

With our Managed Microsoft Azure and AWS, Aptum helps customers manage the complexities of hyperscale cloud computing while enjoying its full benefits. Aptum Managed Cloud provides day-to-day operational management of IaaS and PaaS environments, including best practice advice, configuration assistance, and troubleshooting services.

This service is backed by our 24/7 expert support which ensures quick response by our team of system administrators to resolve your infrastructure issues.

PLATFORMS AND PARTNERSHIPS: The cloud partner's ecosystem of platforms and partnerships will help you explore solutions that go beyond the IT infrastructure. These may include partnering arrangements for hyperscale cloud, eCommerce, content delivery, SaaS applications, SD-WAN, and others.

STANDARDS AND CERTIFICATIONS: Multiple standards and certifications apply to data centers and cloud services. Certifications that cover data sovereignty, organizational controls, and payment card processing are typically of interest to customers who use cloud services.



“With a comprehensive suite of computing and hosting services, Aptum ensures that customers get the extensive depth and breadth of functionality that their IT environment needs, and the management and control they demand. While our services are highly competitive in the market and deliver business value, it’s our people, their expertise, and their commitment to the customer, that truly sets us apart.”

– Craig Tavares, Aptum Head of Cloud

4

OPERATIONAL: HOW ABOUT SERVICE AND SUPPORT?



A partner who works with you from the planning and assessment stage to the implementation phase will help bridge gaps that exist in your organization.

MIGRATION AND ONGOING OPERATIONS: Operational support from your provider will be crucial for your IT environment. The deployment and management process should be well understood and documented. Ensure that your partner offers standard interfaces for you to access and manage your workloads.

EASE OF OPERATION: Processes and policies are vital to the smooth operation of your business. Your service provider should offer clear documentation on the roles and responsibilities regarding upgrades, incident management, change management, and configuration support needed to run your hybrid IT environment.

PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT: Make sure that your cloud partner can track and report on the performance of your IT environment against predefined SLAs.

THE APTUM DIFFERENCE

Aptum extends the power of our customers' technical teams with deep expertise in technologies that can help them achieve strategic business outcomes.

From network, compute and storage to high-touch managed services, Aptum enables you to rapidly respond to business demands, improve operational efficiency, enhance security and compliance, and better control your business's costs. Our experienced team is well versed in managing cloud solutions tailored to different organization's requirements.

SECURITY IS PARAMOUNT

With the increased reliance on cloud-based services, **the right security posture for your IT environment is crucial to ensure application availability and business continuity.** Your partner should be able to demonstrate a system of physical and logical security controls that protect your data and applications.

Aptum offers a range of security services such as **DDoS mitigation, Managed Detection and Response (MDR), and Web Application Firewalls** to beef up the security of our customers' applications. As a business, we maintain standards and certifications such as PCI DSS and SOC 1 Type II, and are audited regularly for our compliance.



SECTION 4

NEXT STEPS: WHAT TO EXPECT



CONCLUSION

IT COMES DOWN TO TRUST

When it comes to migrating workloads to the cloud, needs vary. A rigorous vetting process will ensure that your cloud partner becomes an extension of your digital transformation team and works with you at every step of your cloud journey to ensure its success.

At the end of the day, it's about trust. **You can't afford surprises or unexpected consequences or problems.** Too much is riding on it. Work with a partner who will **go deep to understand your needs**, and who has the **experience and capabilities to protect your investments and ensure business outcomes.**

AT APTUM, THAT'S WHAT WE'RE ALL ABOUT.

NEXT STEPS

Gaining the trust of our customers is the cornerstone of our business. We encourage you to **start a conversation with Aptum today** to discover how we can help you with your digital transformation and cloud computing needs.

Whether you are still in early stages of your strategic cloud planning, looking to assess your IT infrastructure, or moving from an existing cloud environment to another, our experienced team of IT professionals can provide you guidance and support to ensure the success of your project.

FIND OUT HOW APTUM CAN ACCELERATE YOUR CLOUD JOURNEY

Visit www.aptum.com or email info@aptum.com

VISIT THE CLOUD HUB AT INFO.APTUM.COM/CLOUD-HUB FOR MORE RESOURCES RELATED TO YOUR CLOUD JOURNEY.

ABOUT APTUM TECHNOLOGIES

Aptum Technologies enables customers to unlock the potential of their data infrastructure to drive tangible business outcomes and maximize the value of their technology investments. Aptum's Data Center, Cloud, Hosting and Global Network solutions, underpinned with expert Managed and Professional Services, offer genuine choice and adaptability combined with international reach spanning North America, Latin America, Europe and the United Kingdom. Aptum is a portfolio company of Digital Colony, a global investment firm dedicated to strategic opportunities in digital infrastructure. For more information, visit www.aptum.com.