What is Cloud Computing?

And how does it relate to Plantronics Manager Pro and Plantronics Hub for Windows/Mac?

You have probably heard that the new Plantronics Manager Pro application leverages a cloud computing architecture. You may be asking yourself, what is cloud computing? To get you started, watch this quick video (**3 minutes total**) from our friends at Salesforce.com which does a good job of explaining what cloud computing is all about:

Click below to view

More Cloud Computing Details

You can think of cloud computing as the newer generation of client/server architecture. (If you're not familiar with client/server, it's a well-established enterprise computing architecture in which the computing tasks are distributed between the server, which is maintained by IT and shared with all users, and the clients, which reside on each individual user's PC and are not shared. Think of Microsoft Exchange [server] and Outlook [client] as a typical example.)

With the client/server architecture, the enterprise generally purchased the application and all necessary infrastructure (such as storage, computing, databases, security, and more) and maintained it themselves inside the enterprise. In the client/server model, it was wise to buy more computing resources than you thought you would need to minimize the risk of running out of resources. However, this was expensive as most of the time you were paying for underutilized assets.

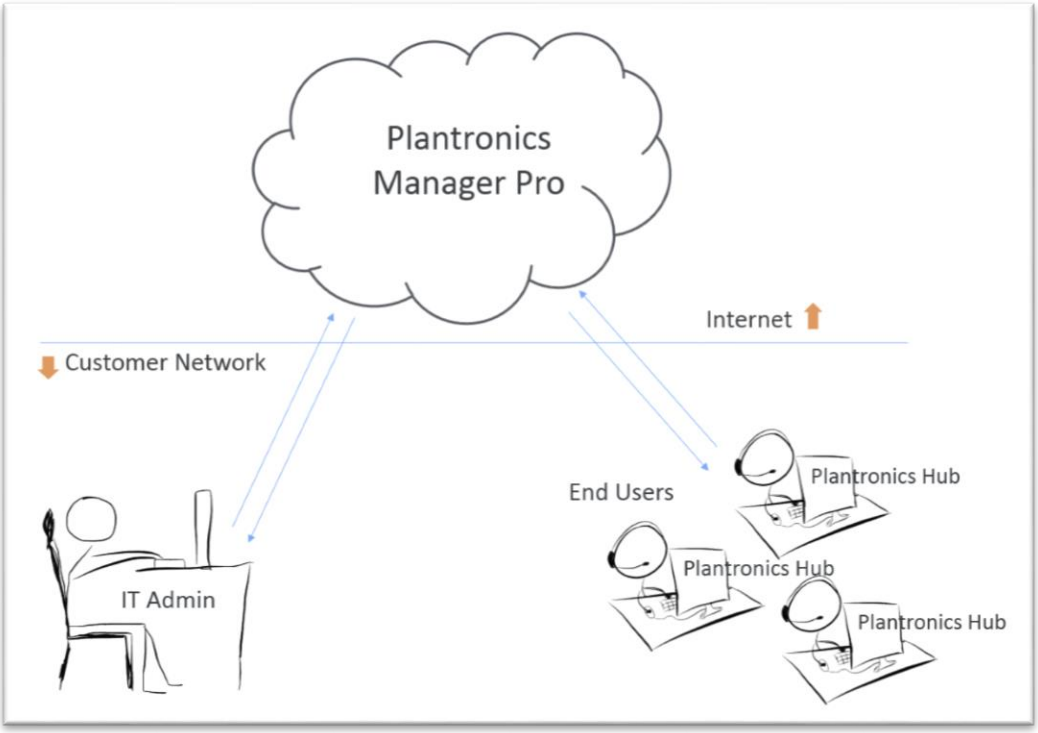
In the cloud computing model, the application resides on a shared resource in a professionally managed data center accessible via the internet. The infrastructure is distributed across multiple applications, but each customer's data is kept separate for privacy. In that way, cloud computing providers can securely support multiple customers, or "tenants", on the same platform. Each customer is allocated their own secure, private space within the application. This is the called "multi-tenancy".

Enterprises of any size can purchase as much application server resource as they need, when they need it, and release it when it is no longer needed. In cloud computing, application server resources and all the infrastructure needed to support it become a utility service just like power and water: switch it on, use as much as you need, pay as you go.

Some common examples of enterprise applications which run on a cloud computing platform include Salesforce, Workday, NetSuite, and more. Cloud computing is also popular for many consumer apps such as Google Apps, Facebook, Netflix, and Dropbox, to name a few.

How does this relate to Plantronics Manager Pro?

With Plantronics Manager Pro we are leveraging a cloud computing architecture to deliver this application which allows IT managers to manage audio device settings for all users in the enterprise. (Recall that Plantronics Manager Pro provides similar functionality to Plantronics Enterprise Manager [PEM], and Plantronics Hub is similar to Spokes 2.8.) We have the relationship with the cloud service provider, in this case, Amazon Web Services, the leader in cloud computing. We are building separate tenants for each of our Plantronics enterprise customers that use Plantronics Manager Pro.



The client application for Plantronics Manager is Plantronics Hub for Windows/Mac. In the Plantronics Manager Pro architecture, the Plantronics Hub clients connect directly to the Plantronics Manager Pro server in the cloud to get the latest updates and to report on status as needed. This enables Plantronics to provide a very feature-rich set of services for IT managers through Plantronics Manager Pro.

However, we know that some enterprises will object to having their end-users connect directly to a server in the cloud. For that reason, we will be introducing Plantronics Manager Lite later in the year. Plantronics Manager Lite will use a different architecture which will not require end-users to connect to the cloud. More on that in a future update, coming soon...

Have questions or comments about this information? Email salesquestions@plantronics.com and we'll provide the answers ASAP.