

Why Business Analytics in the Cloud?

Today's businesses want an infrastructure that champions speed and flexibility. As a result, we've seen massive adoption of cloud services, from Salesforce to Workday, to Google Analytics. But is the cloud right for business analytics? And is it right for your business? What are the factors you should consider before sending your analytics skyward?

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—Kirill Andriychuk, Aeria Games



► Watch more of Kirill’s story

Deployment

Why are organizations going cloud? In a survey conducted by IDC, 76 percent of users cited speed to deployment as the top reason. If you want to get started right away without buying any hardware or configuring anything, hosted solutions are unbeatable. You can add users and share dashboards within minutes.

Germany-based Aeria Games turned to the cloud to leverage terabytes of data.

“In a matter of a day, Tableau Online enabled us to create the reports and then push them out across the organization, and have different individuals in the organization connect to those reports online from any point in the world,” says Kiril Andriychuk, business intelligence manager at Aeria Games. “It’s extremely flexible, and from my perspective, it’s very cost-efficient.”



Aeria Games mapped performance by market to identify new opportunities.



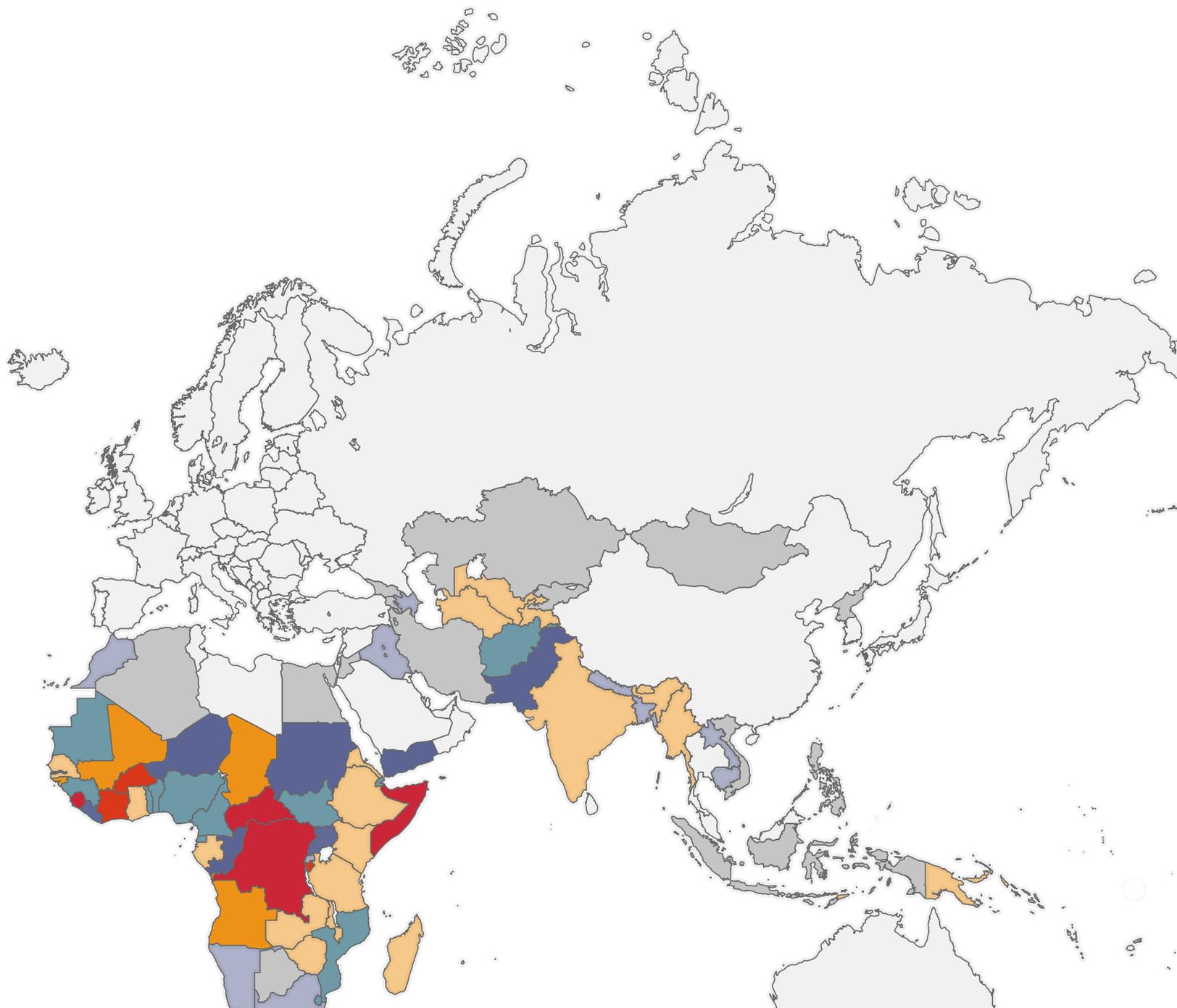
World-Class Security

In the early days, concerns about security made some organizations hesitant to go cloud. But these days, security is one of the biggest benefits of transitioning to the cloud. With around-the-clock monitoring, reputable cloud vendors can dedicate more time and resources to managing security than any single enterprise. If an emergency arises, a cloud vendor can assign an entire team to deal with the issue.



The biggest benefit is to be able to access a large amounts of information from anywhere you have web access, specifically on an iPad. This is beneficial to our field sales team when information is needed on the fly.

Greg Sheldon, Chief Information Officer at Elite Brands





“Tableau Online allows us to easily show our analysis to our clients with very little investment or pain on their part.”

—Ira Skop, Shelter Island Risk Services



► *Hear more from Ira about easy sharing with Tableau Online.*

Mobile Access

With cloud’s mobile access, your team members can log in from anywhere with Internet access without first having to clear your firewall.

Elite Brands wanted its sales reps to have access to reports without having to VPN into its private network.

“The biggest benefit is to be able to access a large amounts of information from anywhere you have web access, specifically on an iPad. This is beneficial to our field sales team when information is needed on the fly,” says Greg Sheldon, chief information officer at Elite Brands.

Easy Sharing

With cloud, you can easily share data with people outside your organization. No longer do you have to get permission for partners or customers to come inside your firewall. Simply give them an account to your cloud provider and let them access your dashboards there. It’s a fast and painless process, says Shelter Island Risk Services.

“Adding a new client to Tableau Online from our side is as simple as creating a new user ID and giving them the login credentials. Tableau Online allows us to easily show our analysis to our clients with very little investment or pain on their part,” says Ira Skop, a partner consultant at Shelter Island Risk Services.

This can be an excellent solution for agencies that create dashboards for their customers. Look for a solution that supports security rules for data sources as well as for specific users and groups. That way, you can be sure each user sees only what you intended to share.

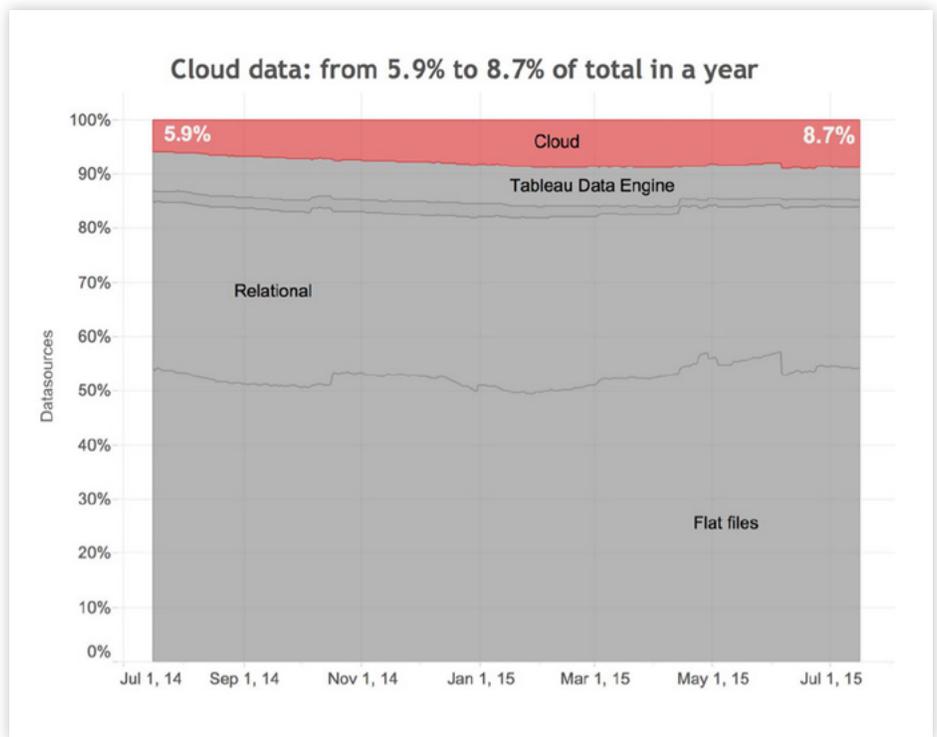


Data Already There

For organizations using cloud applications for CRM, ERP, HRM, and other three-letter enterprise apps, it's a short step to put your analytics in the cloud as well. And since you can use cloud analytics to analyze both cloud and traditional data, you can see all of your relevant data in one place.

These days, more and more organizations are moving their data to the cloud. Gartner, in its Magic Quadrant for Operational Databases, said, "The cloud is being widely adopted as a delivery platform in the operational DBMS (database management system) market. Over the next few years, we expect most vendors to offer cloud versions of their DBMS products."

To quantify data's shift to the cloud, we looked at usage data of Tableau Online, our cloud product. The metadata showed that over a period of one year, cloud data grew from 5.9 percent of all data sources to 8.7 percent—a 50-percent growth. That's no small number when you consider the fact that cloud data, unlike flat files and relational databases, has been around for only a few years.



“We’re not thinking about how we’re going to do things; we’re thinking of what can we show people that helps them be effective. And that’s kind of a quantum leap.”

—Steve Roy, JetSuite



► Watch Steve talk about how hosted data dashboards impacted IT at JetSuite.

Reduces Burden On IT

Cloud customers also cite reduced administrative requirements for ongoing management as a benefit. With a cloud solution, there is never anything to upgrade, any hardware to maintain, or any patches to apply. Hosted solutions can be a great benefit for companies who want to focus their IT resources on strategic initiatives rather than application maintenance, or for business units that want to decrease reliance on IT.

At JetSuite, going cloud has allowed IT to shift its focus from supporting infrastructure to supporting people.

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Scale

Cloud solutions often have more affordable options and more flexible payment plans than traditional software providers. You can add new licenses as you need them and scale your licensing costs with your growth rather than buying in bulk upfront.

This flexibility removes a pricey roadblock, says Interactions Marketing.

“One of the biggest challenges with traditional BI is the initial investment, the cost, every time you bring in a new data source,” says Abhi Beniwal, the company’s senior vice president of global information technology. “There’s a huge capital investment and the time it takes to build the infrastructure. By utilizing the cloud you’re really working on a different kind of timeline and different capital and cost, because you pay as you go.”

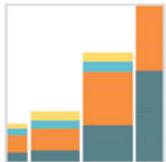
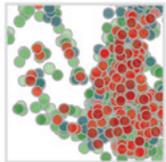
This model is particularly attractive if you are planning a lot of growth in a certain product or business area, or you expect to see massive swings in demand like in many seasonal businesses. Instead of spending your time provisioning new machines to support the growth, you can scale up as needed and leverage the infrastructure of the cloud analytics provider.

Conclusion

So is cloud-based business analytics for you? Well, the last advantage of cloud solutions is that they are typically easy to set up and trial. If you still can’t decide, try it out and see how it works.

About Tableau

Tableau Software helps people see and understand data. Tableau helps anyone quickly analyze, visualize and share information. More than 32,000 customer accounts get rapid results with Tableau in the office and on-the-go. And tens of thousands of people use Tableau Public to share data in their blogs and websites. See how Tableau can help you by downloading the free trial at www.tableausoftware.com/trial.



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