THE NATIONAL CYBERSECURITY SOCIETY

# Software as a Service

In all likelihood, as a small business you are probably already using a SaaS or Software as a Service product. If you use subscription services, such as OneDrive, Adobe or Box, you are placing your data in their cloud. But are you safe?

## FACT 1: SaaS Defined

Software-as-a-Service (SaaS) is a software licensing model in which access to the software is provided on a subscription basis, with the software being located on external servers rather than at your business. Software-as-a-Service is accessed through a web browser, with users logging into the system using a username and password. The external servers are located in a data center remote to your location. The service is cloud based and your data is stored with the service provider. The good news is that you are not responsible for keeping the software up-to-date and security is included in the price. In fact the security over your data might be stronger with a SaaS provider than if you just housed your data with a Cloud Service provider.

## FACT 2: Cloud Services Defined

A Cloud Service provider is a third party that hosts your software on remote servers where they store and process your data. These servers are housed in data centers all over the world. Cloud computing can help save your company money if your data needs change dramatically over time. However, a CSP is not responsible for keeping your software up to date (patching) or securing the data. If your company stores data on cloud services, read the fine print. In some cases the CSPs clearly state they are not responsible for data breaches and sensitive data should not be stored in their application. Cloud Service Providers are useful if you want to store your inhouse developed software and data.

## FACT 3: FedRAMP Authorized Public Clouds

Public clouds are multi-tenant cloud environments able to host private sector and government customers. The NCSS recommends that small businesses who want to store data and applications in the cloud, should select a FedRAMP Authorized CSP.

## Did you know?

- √ Software as a Service often is more secure than if you tried to manage the data and application on your own.
- √ Cloud computing and SaaS are different but often are terms used interchangeably
- √ If your business offers Software as a Service, you can design the product over one of many FedRAMP Authorized public clouds offered by the market's leading cloud providers (e.g., AWS, Azure, Google, Rackspace, etc.) and benefit from the security in place at the server, storage, network, and computing layers of the cloud stack.

Still have questions, need help?
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