

Appendix II: Common Assumptions

Identifying Assumptions

Assumptions are one of the key drivers of institutional inertia. They become ingrained in the culture and routines of an organization and are difficult to change because questioning “the way things have always been done” and suggesting alternatives requires facts and information that are often difficult to collect and communicate. In many ways this is not a negative quality because decisions around innovation and development should be vetted rigorously. High quality data and the tools to analyze it are the means for vetting ideas and decisions around institutional changes to IT management.

Agencies will of course have unique assumptions upon which they operate, and often those assumptions may be backed up by the data. However, even when there is good reason to believe in the validity of certain assumptions, we recommend analyzing the data anyway. Beyond assumptions unique to individual agencies, there are some industry standard ideas that should also be questioned because as the context of the agency differs so do the validity of those assumptions. The assumptions listed below are often valid, but, to know whether they are true in a particular use case, they should be tested.

Cloud computing always saves the government money.

1. Are the costs of switching to cloud services greater than the potential savings that the services would cost?
2. How much do cloud services cost in relation to an on-premise solution?
3. Have our needs for a cloud service changed? In what ways, and do they still match the service we are using?

Bundling services and products from one company saves money.

1. How do companies rates adjust compared to their competitors when services and products are purchased a la carte?
2. Is it more cost effective to use Azure (MS cloud) bundled with end user software licences than to use bidding out end user software licenses separate from the cloud?

The assumptions and questions listed here are broad, and the point is not to argue for or against cloud computing, and bundling. Rather, using the data and communicating clearly among stakeholders validates decisions because they are based on facts with which all can agree.