

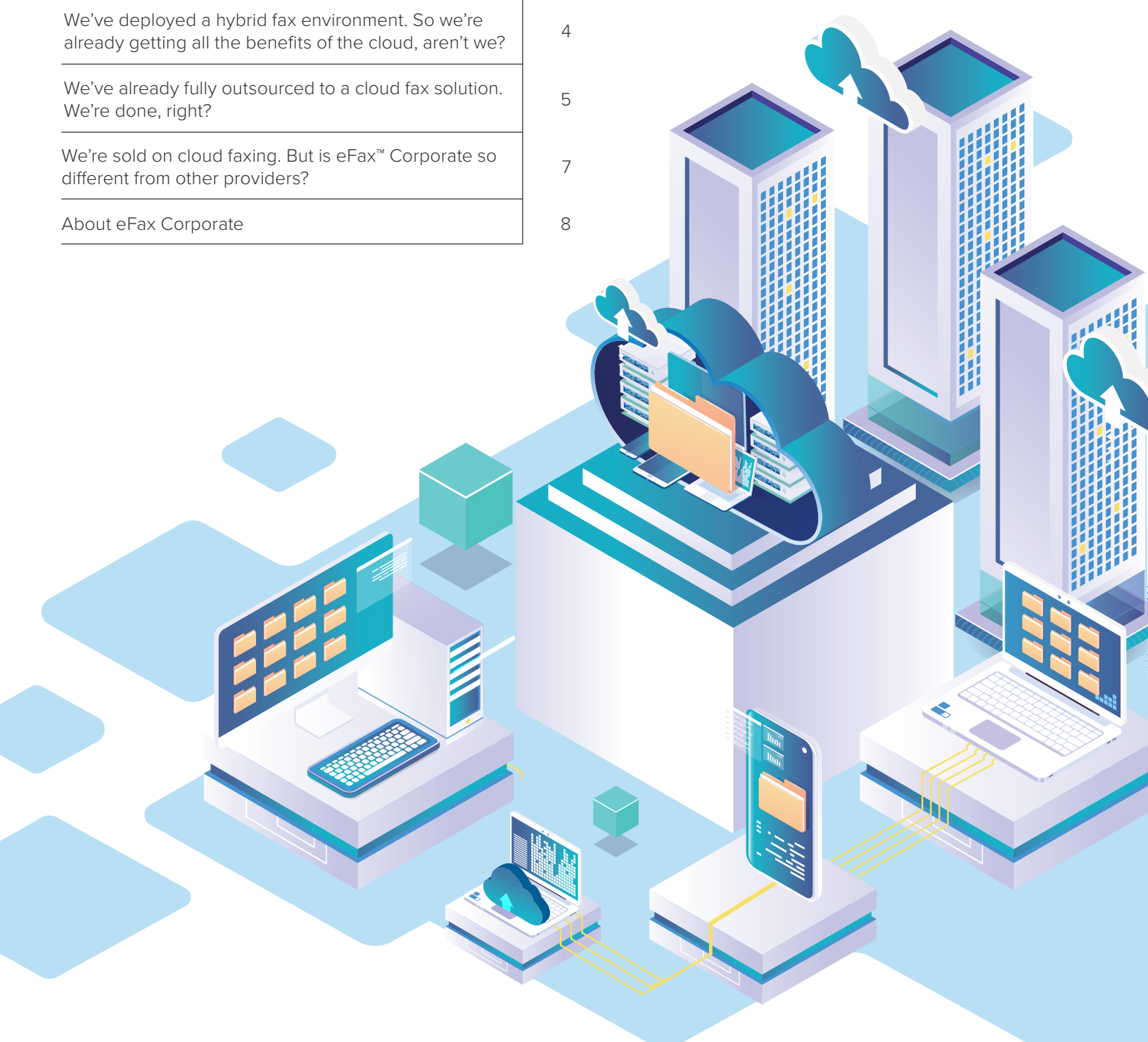
Transitioning Your Digital Fax Processes to the Cloud

(and why on-prem & hybrid processes
won't cut it in the future)



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Is your fax infrastructure a dying breed in a high tech world?

A modern organization like yours should be able to devote its attention to initiatives like digital transformation, fortifying your cybersecurity, and building digital processes that speed employee workflows and unlock business intelligence. You should not be worried about holding together a data-transmission infrastructure that relies on the analog phone network (invented in the 1880s), paper (105 AD)... and ink (2500 BC).

Yet here we are. For reasons you already know—regulatory compliance, inertia, and because the sunk-cost fallacy still pervades in the business world—your company is stuck with some kind of faxing for the foreseeable future.

That's the bad news. The good news: **You don't need to be stuck with any of the frustrations of obsolete traditional faxing from a bygone era.** Enterprises today have a wide range of options for their digital fax environments—from a legacy, in-house fax infrastructure to a fully hosted cloud fax environment that looks and operates much more like the 2020s.

This paper will discuss all of your fax environment options. We'll also explain:

- Why a 100% Cloud-based fax model is superior to a hybrid environment.
- Why there are significant differences among the various cloud-fax offerings themselves.

And...

- Why just about anything is better for your fax infrastructure than managing it all on-prem.

Then we'll introduce you to the one solution that will solve more of your fax challenges—and deliver your company more business value, at lower costs—than any other cloud-fax platform on the market.

It's Time to Bring Your Fax Environment Out of the Past & Up to the Cloud

But we don't want to waste your time. If you've deployed a cloud fax solution, there's no point in reading our explanation of why a cloud model is superior to the legacy fax infrastructure you've already replaced. So let's identify where you are today—and start our conversation there.

Each of the following sections is framed as our answers to the most common questions we hear from businesses interested in upgrading their fax environments. Find the section that most closely matches your situation to learn what our 30 years of experience in cloud faxing have taught us about the topic.

We're running an on-prem fax environment, and it's not broken. Does it make sense to switch now?

First of all, yes.

Second, well done! There's no IT industry award for this, but someone should acknowledge your team's hard work and ingenuity at managing to keep your legacy fax infrastructure up and running many years—maybe even decades—after your company first rolled it out.

But there are significant and growing risks to relying on those analog lines, aging servers, and ancient fax machines to maintain your company's faxing capability.

In fact, if you're still running an in-house fax environment, your company stands to reap enormous gains from the right type of upgrade—in terms of cost savings, workflow efficiency, network availability, scalability, security, regulatory compliance, and other business benefits.

Here are a few of the biggest drawbacks of an on-prem fax infrastructure.

1. Your IT department is the telephony administrator, and that role will only get more difficult.

Traditional fax infrastructure, including fax servers or desktop fax machines you're managing, depend on the Plain-Old-Telephony Service (POTS). If IT owns responsibility for overseeing your company's faxing environment, then you're responsible for managing the telephony service that transmits those faxes as well. Is administering an onsite PBX and monitoring the health of your analog fax lines the best use of your IT team's resources?

Actually, this question won't even be relevant much longer. Even if your company insists on maintaining fax lines connected to the POTS network, your options for doing so are already becoming extremely limited. A recent FCC ruling requires telecom carriers to phase out their POTS service—which will include analog fax service—in 2022.



But even if this phase-out takes longer than that, and these carriers continue offering analog lines to businesses for a few more years, you should expect both the costs to increase and the service to degrade in that time. These carriers do not want to continue supporting this dinosaur technology any more than you do, and they're shifting resources away from it to more modern and lucrative lines of business. So even if you can extend the useful life of your analog fax lines, they will eat your valuable resources (time and money) and only **become less reliable and more challenging to manage.**

2. You're the fax infrastructure manager.

Administering an in-house fax environment means managing hardware—for example, making sure your fax servers are operational, have the most up-to-date cards and software licenses, are adequately secure, and are regularly purged of fax data to prevent their hard drives from filling.

It also means keeping a decentralized network of desktop fax machines up and running—and proactively monitoring and replenishing toner, ink, and paper supplies.

As the fax infrastructure manager, your team also needs to monitor fax usage levels across your organization—so you can anticipate capacity needs and make informed decisions about when to buy servers, software licenses, and additional analog lines (while you still can, at least) to prevent capacity constraints from affecting your employees' workflows.



3. You're the faxing troubleshooter.

"The fax machine isn't working."

"I've tried sending this fax like 5 times, and every time their number is busy. Any ideas?"

"The client said they faxed us the invoice, but I'm standing at the machine and it's not here."

"Can you help us send this fax? We keep getting a 'failed to transmit' message."

"The fax machine isn't working!"

Remember, maintaining a legacy fax infrastructure means trying to extend the useful life of outdated hardware that had its office heyday in the 1980s—and depends on an analog telephony infrastructure launched in the 1880s.

For the troubleshooting issues alone, and the energy and morale they sap from your IT colleagues, upgrading from your fax hardware from the distant past to a more modern fax environment is the right decision for your company.

So, what's a better option than on-prem faxing? Just about anything... even a hybrid model, which we'll discuss next.

We've deployed a hybrid fax environment. So we're already getting all the benefits of the cloud, aren't we?

Not exactly.

The hybrid fax model presents an attractive option because, in theory, it offers both the in-house control many businesses want for their faxing environment and the efficiencies and scalability of the cloud. And to some degree, this works. Because you'll be working with a third party cloud provider for the data-transmission aspect of your fax solution, you can achieve greater system redundancy and failover capability than if you were managing everything in-house.

But consider what's really happening when you deploy a hybrid cloud infrastructure. Basically, **you're handing off the telephony management component**—which is a significant burden off your team's back, no doubt—but **you're still responsible for managing on-prem fax servers.**

In other words, the hybrid model is at best a half-measure. It's an improvement over maintaining legacy fax infrastructure (because anything is), but it leaves your IT team with most of the challenges of managing your fax architecture in-house. And in reality, the situation is worse than that.

Here are a few of the biggest drawbacks of a hybrid fax environment.

1. You'll still face the difficult business decisions of managing fax hardware.

Because the hybrid model still depends on in-house fax servers, you'll have a similar challenge as with any legacy fax infrastructure when it comes to decisions about when to add capacity.



For example, as your employees' fax usage begins to reach the limits of your current hardware, you'll need to make an all-or-nothing decision about buying another server. Wait too long, and your business processes could suffer until you add capacity. Buy that new server too soon, though, and you could essentially be overspending by adding a server that will be used only to a small degree for a long time.

These binary business decisions can cost your company money or quality of service, and they're no different from the tough calls your IT team would need to make if you were managing a legacy fax infrastructure entirely on-prem.

2. You'll still have to maintain an on-prem fax environment.

While outsourcing the telephony aspect of your fax infrastructure helps mitigate the burden of excess work for your staff, the hybrid fax model still leaves you spending far more time than you should overseeing fax-related issues.

For example, your team will still need to monitor the health levels of your on-prem servers, check regularly to make sure someone is purging and archiving server data to keep the hard drives functional, regularly update and upgrade software, and troubleshoot problem servers when employees call with complaints.

3. You'll still face the security and regulatory challenges of on-prem faxing.

One reason many organizations want to upgrade their fax environments—particularly businesses in regulated industries like healthcare, legal, and financial services—is to improve the security and legal compliance of the sensitive data they're transmitting over fax.

On-prem fax servers can create numerous security and regulatory gaps. A few examples:

- Employees purge fax servers' hard drives by printing and then deleting the stored faxes, but they don't immediately lock the hardcopies in a secure location.
- Employees purge fax servers' hard drives by moving the stored data to another digital location, but this database is often not encrypted or secured.
- Fax server data is not access-restricted, meaning employees who don't have authorization to view customer data nevertheless can access it.

If your company needs to maintain the security and confidentiality of sensitive data your employees send or receive by fax, the hybrid fax solution won't help you here.

4. You're paying twice for your faxing capability.

With the hybrid model, you also need to keep in mind that you're essentially double-paying to maintain your fax environment.

You'll still have all the internal costs of maintaining your on-prem fax servers—buying fax cards, paying for software licenses, and any maintenance contracts you enter with third-party consultants for repairs and support.



At the same time, though, you'll also be paying another third party—the cloud partner—to manage the cloud component of your fax communications environment.

So, what would be better than implementing a hybrid fax infrastructure? What enterprise-faxing model will help you address all of these challenges above, and turn your faxing environment from a liability to an asset?

Cloud fax.

We've already fully outsourced to a cloud fax solution. We're done, right?

Not so fast.

Of all the options available today for running your business's fax environment, a true cloud fax model is definitely the most economical, reliable, secure, and scalable—and the easiest to manage. In this section, we'll discuss the massive advantages of fully outsourcing your fax environment to the cloud.

But keep in mind that not all cloud fax solutions offer all of the benefits we'll describe below—or offer them to the same degree. You need to decide for yourself which provider will offer you the lowest cost, greatest business benefits, and the least amount of risk. In the final section, we'll introduce you to that solution.



7 reasons why cloud fax is the right model for your business.

1. Cost savings.

Given that any of the business fax models we've discussed to this point require managing and supporting on-prem hardware, you can see how moving to a fully hosted cloud fax model represents a significant cost savings. A cloud fax environment has a far lower total cost of ownership. In fact, at eFax Corporate, we regularly help our customers **lower their overall faxing costs by 50% or more.**

2. Reduced IT burden.

With the right cloud fax solution, the time your IT team has to spend managing and troubleshooting fax problems will essentially fall to zero. The solution won't require any onsite hardware to manage. The cloud fax interface itself is extremely intuitive—similar to emailing—meaning training and onboarding takes only minutes. And your team will never take another employee call about a paper jam.

3. Greater faxing reliability.

When you manage faxing on-prem (or in a hybrid environment), a malfunctioning server or phone system outage can take down your company's faxing capability completely—for hours or even days. With the right cloud solution, by contrast, you'll have a highly reliable, geographically redundant network that can immediately shift your faxing capabilities between locations if one data center ever has trouble. With cloud faxing, your fax downtime (like the dinosaur) becomes a thing of the past.

4. Enhanced security and compliance.

Remember all those security and regulatory vulnerabilities we discussed above? They're unfortunately built into any faxing infrastructure that includes an on-prem component. But with the right cloud fax solution, **you'll improve your data security and regulatory compliance significantly.** That's because an experienced cloud provider knows how to encrypt your fax data—both while it's in transit and later, in storage—and knows how to bring your faxing processes in line with your industry's regulators.

5. Seamless scalability.

When you transition to the right cloud fax provider, your company will gain tremendous flexibility in scaling your faxing capacity up or down as needed. Unlike those difficult buy-or-wait decisions—where you're forced to buy an entire server or add fax machines to increase capacity—the cloud fax model instantly aligns with your required usage and throughput. You no longer have to think about or manage capacity at all... and you **pay only for what you use.**

6. Increased productivity.

One of the biggest challenges of legacy fax infrastructure (and most hybrid models) is the limited options available to your employees in terms of where and how they can fax. With the right cloud solution, you'll empower your staff with **full-featured faxing capability from anywhere—desktop, laptop, tablet, smartphone.** That means employees will be able to respond more quickly to important customer faxes, even if they're away from the office—which can strengthen your business relationships and even your bottom line.

7. Happier employees

Although we don't know your company specifically, our 30 years of helping businesses transition their fax infrastructures does give us the confidence to make one assumption with certainty: Your employees hate paper faxing.

Busy signals. Waiting for a turn at the office fax machine. Failing fax servers. Having to print and physically sign a document before faxing. Having to run to the office to receive or send an important fax.

When you transition to the right cloud fax solution, you'll be eliminating all these hassles from your employees' faxing experiences. Instead, they'll have the ability to receive, review, edit, sign, and send faxes—and even generate cover pages—right from an email, a user-friendly website, or a mobile app on their phone. You'll be removing one of the most dreaded workflows in your employees' day—and replacing it with a process they actually enjoy. We've seen it happen thousands of times.

And who are we? Well, that brings us to our final question and answer...





We're sold on cloud faxing. But is eFax™ Corporate so different from other providers?

Yes. And here's why.

We're the world's most experienced global cloud fax provider.

You can do a Google search and find dozens of cloud fax companies. But none of them—not one—has been serving businesses continuously for as long as our 30-year history.

Building and maintaining an enterprise-caliber cloud faxing infrastructure—one that's reliable and secure enough to meet the daily demands of Fortune 500 firms—takes enormous effort, tens of millions of dollars, and years of learning. eFax Corporate has made those investments—and no one else even comes close.

That's why many of the top law firms, healthcare companies, and insurance plans—to name just a few industries we serve—have trusted eFax Corporate for years to transmit, track and store their most sensitive data.



We're the only global fax platform that's truly cloud-native.

Many providers offer cloud-based faxing services, but in most cases these are faxing platforms built and operated using the vendors' own private data centers—or a combination of their own private clouds and the public cloud. These solutions are extremely difficult and time-consuming to manage, which makes them expensive for both the providers and their customers.

There is one exception to this rule: eFax Corporate. Ours is the only platform that is truly "Cloud-Native" and built upon cloud-native components. This means that we can leverage elasticity and instant scalability, robust redundancy, and cloud-native approaches

to managing our platform. It's easier for us to be both more reliable and higher-performing than all other "cloud-fax" vendors. Our global fax infrastructure has been purpose-built for the cloud since its inception, and that's one reason it remains the most reliable and high-performing fax solution in the world.

We offer the lowest-cost solution on the market.

Because eFax Corporate has built the world's largest cloud fax network—with data centers strategically located in 27 geographically distinct regions around the world—we've established economies of scale no other provider can match. Coupled with the efficiencies we gain from being the only truly "Cloud-Native" platform, this means we can offer your business a more cost-effective cloud fax solution than any of our competitors.

We've already invested millions in building out our global infrastructure, which lets us manage your platform at a lower cost. And because our architecture allows us to make changes on the fly, the service is far less expensive for our customers than for the customers of our competitors.

But even with all of these characteristics setting us apart from other cloud fax providers, here's the biggest difference between eFax Corporate and every other vendor offering this type of service...

We're the Only Cloud Fax Solution Fully Integrated into the Amazon Web Services' Cloud

This is another example of how eFax Corporate exceeds the needs of even the largest and most demanding enterprise customers - the company has invested millions of dollars and years of development to ensure it provides the most reliable digital cloud faxing solution available.

Unlike every other provider in this space, we've fully integrated our fax architecture into the AWS environment. This gives eFax Corporate the unique advantage of leveraging Amazon's industry-dominant reliability, scalability, efficiency, and system uptime.

For our customers, this means we can:

- Provide the industry's best disaster-recovery RTOs and RPOs.
- Give our customers the industry's fastest fax delivery times.
- Offer our cloud fax solution at a lower cost than any competitor.



About eFax Corporate

eFax Corporate is a fully hosted cloud fax service used by global businesses — including nearly half of the Fortune 500. It is the first cloud fax platform to earn HITRUST[®] CSF Certification (called the “gold standard” in healthcare data security). eFax Corporate is also the longest continuously thriving digital fax solution in the world—serving our customers’ faxing needs for more than 25 years. eFax Corporate is the solution behind the genesis of Consensus Cloud Solutions, Inc. (NASDAQ: CCSI).



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