



Guide #1

Purchasing a Cloud-Hosted Enterprise Imaging Solution

10 Must-Ask Questions
for Making the Right Decision



That's life in **flow**.

The decision to move your Enterprise Imaging (EI) to the cloud is significant, often driven by the need for scalability, simplified IT management, and enhanced resiliency.

But with so many partners claiming to be “cloud-enabled” or even “cloud native”, how do you choose the right solution?

This guide outlines 10 critical questions to help healthcare executives evaluate different cloud solutions and navigate the partner selection process, ensuring the chosen solution aligns with organizational goals while balancing performance and cost optimization.



1 What are your motivations for moving to the cloud?

Cloud is more than a technology shift – it’s a strategic transformation that should align with long-term business goals. Before evaluating partners, it’s essential to define your strategic motivations for moving to the cloud. Common drivers include:

- 1. Reducing IT Complexity:** Managing on-premises or self-managed cloud infrastructure requires specialized hardware, systems, business continuity solutions, and security protocols that require deep technical expertise to implement and maintain.
- 2. Addressing Resource Shortages:** Budget pressures and IT staff shortages – especially in scarce specializations like cybersecurity – make managing on-premises software and IT infrastructure difficult. Many organizations are struggling to sustain operations, let alone drive innovation, due to limited resources.
- 3. Supporting Growth and Scalability:** As imaging volumes expand, so too does the cost and complexity associated with expanding infrastructure, services, and teams.
- 4. Ensuring Reliability and Performance:** Meeting all of the above, while making sure systems are available and speed of image delivery is maintained, is necessary to maintain seamless and efficient workflows.

A well-chosen cloud partner can bridge critical resource gaps, providing reliable, performant, and secure implementations without overburdening internal teams. Critical factors for long-term success include:

- Support long-term growth without adding IT complexity
- Provide specialized expertise to reduce the burden on internal teams
- Provide predictable costs and financial sustainability
- Deliver consistent and reliable performance within and across the enterprise

ENGLEWOOD HEALTH

Englewood Health, a leading healthcare system in New Jersey, processes approximately 400,000 imaging studies annually across its hospital and community-based facilities.

Facing the challenges of managing complex on-premises infrastructure and addressing resource constraints, Englewood sought a solution to streamline operations and reduce IT burdens. By transitioning to AGFA HealthCare's cloud-hosted Enterprise Imaging solution, Englewood Health was able to:



Reduce IT complexity by eliminating the need to manage infrastructure upgrades and system maintenance.

Improve scalability and flexibility to support growing imaging demands across its network.

Enhance system reliability and security while supporting compliance with evolving industry standards.

This strategic move not only simplified their IT landscape but also ensured scalability for future growth, aligning with their long-term strategic objectives.¹

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How cloud-optimized are the partners you're considering?

Not all EI solutions are truly optimized for the cloud. Some partners simply “lift and shift” their legacy systems, missing out on key cloud efficiencies.

To be truly optimized your EI technology should be cloud native – meaning it was purposefully designed to leverage cloud-based architecture and technologies. Here's what that looks like in practice:

- 1. Certified cloud partnerships:** Choose an EI partner that works with a certified cloud hyperscaler (e.g. AWS) and aligns with their best practices to leverage built-in efficiencies for storage, networking, and compute resources.
- 2. Architectural alignment:** EI Cloud partners that are architecturally aligned with their cloud hyperscalers can more efficiently balance image availability demands with network utilization and costs management.
- 3. Impact on growth and performance:** A cloud-native solution should scale dynamically to accommodate fluctuating volumes, whether from organic growth, new imaging specialties, or M&A activity.
- 4. Reduction of IT staff burden:** A fully-managed EI Cloud solution not only reduces the need for in-house system and infrastructure management, it also obfuscates technical complexities associated with cloud hosted environments, significantly reducing the knowledge burden for IT staff and allowing them to focus on higher priority initiatives.

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How can you optimize costs and ensure financial transparency?

Cloud SaaS environments can substantially reduce both capital and operational expenditures. However, ensuring true cost optimization requires an understanding of how cloud-based pricing models work, and their impact on long-term budgeting.

Most EI partners operate on an annual volume-based licensing model. In the cloud, this often translates to a corresponding estimate of storage volumes. The challenge? Growth is rarely linear or predictable.

Compounding this issue, hidden hosting and egress fees are not uncommon among cloud hyperscalers. Such unexpected financial surprises are a major concern for healthcare organizations with fixed budgets and long-term planning cycles.

The right EI Cloud partner should provide not only cost efficiency but also financial transparency. Look for a partner that offers:

- 1. Consistent monthly billing:** Instead of fluctuating monthly costs, a structured true-up model ensures stable, predictable payments that align with annual growth trends.
- 2. A single billing mechanism:** Consolidating EI and cloud hosting into one streamlined invoice simplifies budgeting and eliminates fragmented payments.
- 3. Cycle-based growth analysis:** By tracking actual volume trends organizations can float growth variability within the contract, making it easier to scale imaging services without immediate financial impact.

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How do EI Cloud partners support growth?

Growth isn't just about increasing study volumes or storage needs, it's about enabling clinical workflows, expanding service lines, and advancing your organization's imaging capabilities over time.

An EI Cloud partner that truly supports growth should offer a scalable solution, not just in storage and processing but also in functionality. Look for flexible licensing models that provide full access to capabilities without additional costs or third-party add-ons.

By selecting a future-ready EI Cloud partner, you ensure the solution evolves with your organization, maintaining efficiency, cost predictability, and clinical excellence as imaging services expand.



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How does the solution ensure clinical performance?

As your organization grows clinical performance becomes critical. Performance isn't just about speed – high-quality images must be delivered efficiently across all study types and reading environments, from routine exams to advanced imaging like digital breast tomosynthesis. A cloud-hosted EI solution should also support distributed reading, including at-home or teleradiology workflows.

When evaluating partners, look for:

1. Performance guarantees:

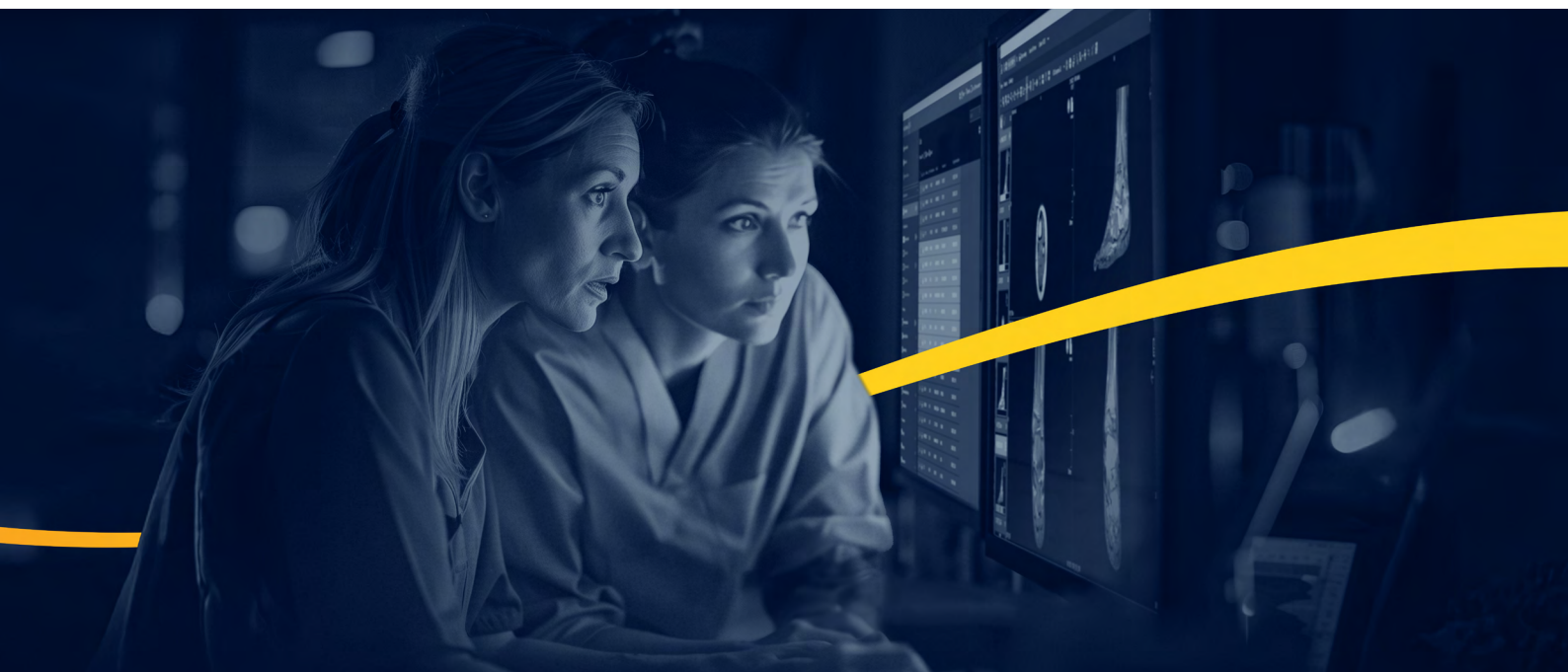
SLAs should extend beyond infrastructure uptime to functional performance. For example, how quickly can clinicians access and review images?

2. Advanced streaming technologies:

Optimized solutions minimize bandwidth requirements and latency challenges, so that full-fidelity images are delivered rapidly. This eliminates the need for costly, high-powered workstations and provides consistent performance across all reading environments.

3. Consistent image quality:

Watch out for how some EI Cloud partners balance speed and image quality. Some use lossy compression to simulate performance – an ideal solution will deliver both speed and uncompromised image quality, ensuring clinicians have the tools they need to make confident diagnoses.



6 How do partners manage storage and archival in the cloud?

Clinical performance depends just as much on how efficiently images are stored as it does on how they are retrieved and delivered. As imaging volumes grow, balancing cost efficiency with fast access to current and prior imaging is a key consideration.

When evaluating EI Cloud partners, consider how they manage short-term and long-term archival. Some use storage tiering to reduce costs, but if poorly managed this approach can delay access to prior images and disrupt clinical workflows.

Ultimately, the goal is to achieve the best value equation: delivering the clinical performance you expect at a sustainable price point. A smart storage strategy dynamically balances speed of access with cost-effective archival, providing seamless workflow for clinicians while keeping costs in-check.

7 Does the solution truly reduce IT complexity?

Moving to the cloud should reduce IT complexity, however not all EI solutions deliver on this promise. Poorly optimized solutions struggle with optimizing storage and image delivery while controlling runaway egress fees or unexpected hosting costs.

To mitigate these challenges, some partners add on-premises caches or routers to reduce network traffic and cloud storage costs – often without fully disclosing their true extent and purpose. However, this approach adds layers of IT complexity and introduces risks related to data concurrency.

When evaluating EI Cloud partners, look for solutions that are truly designed to reduce complexity. A well-optimized EI Cloud solution should:

1. Reduce the need for on-premises infrastructure and eliminate “hidden” components.
2. Streamline data management.
3. Provide seamless synchronization across all systems.



Cloud is not SaaS, but some SaaS is Cloud

Some organizations may consider self-managed cloud as an alternative to SaaS, believing it offers more control through infrastructure harmonization.

However, this approach often negates many cloud benefits by placing the burden of infrastructure management, security, and compliance back on internal IT teams.

A true SaaS solution offloads these responsibilities, reducing complexity and delivering continuous optimization.

Cloud (self hosted)	vs	SaaS (vendor hosted in cloud)
Not simple		Simple
Large staff commitment		Small staff commitment
Big learning curve		Small learning curve
Variable costs		Predictable costs
No performance guarantees		Performance guarantees
No uptime guarantees		Uptime guarantees
High concern for system architecture		Low concern for system architecture
Customer invested in changes to architecture		Customer not invested in changes to architecture
No built-in upgrades		Built-in upgrades
Customer takes the risk of cloud billing		AGFA takes the risk of cloud billing

SaaS is better for most organizations

8 How resilient is the solution?

Cloud environments inherently offer business continuity and disaster recovery, but true resiliency depends on how well your EI Cloud partner has optimized their own cloud architecture. Public clouds may offer replication across distributed data centers – but if your EI Cloud partner hasn't aligned their architecture with the hyperscaler's best practices, you may still face downtime or performance delays during regular maintenance or unexpected outages.

When evaluating partners, look for those that offer comprehensive resiliency backed by uptime guarantees. A partner providing "four 9's" (99.99%) uptime ensures minimal service interruptions, but this must be supported by a clear plan for upgrade management, ongoing maintenance, and proactive monitoring.

Additionally, challenge partners on how they manage peak loads and system failures. A truly resilient solution will handle regular maintenance seamlessly, leverage cloud-native tools to maintain high availability, and provide ready image access and organizational stability.

9 How secure is the solution?

Public cloud hyperscalers offer strong security controls, but your EI Cloud solution's security depends on how well it leverages these capabilities. Poor optimization can still leave vulnerabilities.

When assessing EI Cloud partners, look for:

- 1. Security certifications:** Cloud hyperscaler certifications verify that a thorough security evaluation was conducted.
- 2. Advanced security features:** Private firewalls, VPNs, and encryption should be used to protect data in transit and at rest.
- 3. A comprehensive SaaS model:** The SaaS model provides a clear demarcation of security responsibilities between the EI Cloud partner and the cloud hyperscaler, so that there are no gaps in protection. Non-SaaS environments often lack this clarity, leaving organizations to manage critical security aspects themselves – introducing unnecessary risk and complexity.



By prioritizing an EI Cloud partner with a transparent and proactive approach to security, you can trust that your EI system is protected by the highest standards, allowing your team to focus on delivering care without compromising data integrity.

10 How smooth is the transition to the cloud?

The decision to move to the cloud is just the beginning – the transition itself is a critical step that can make or break the success of your EI solution. Key questions often arise: Will all my data be moved? Who manages the migration? How long will it take, and how much control will I have?

Some EI Cloud partners outsource migration or leave it to you to coordinate with third-party providers, creating a disjointed and risky process. A seamless transition requires a partner with proven experience in cloud migrations, not just data transfers. They should cleanse and move data in a cloud-optimized format, delivering efficiency and readiness for new workflows.

Look for a partner that offers flexible migration strategies, whether progressive or “big bang,” tailored to your organization's needs. They should also provide tools to manage legacy data and multi-specialty imaging. An experienced partner will predict and deliver on timelines, using optimized methods to minimize disruption and provide a smooth and efficient launch.

Remember, the quality of the migration directly impacts the end-user experience. By choosing a partner with a clear, hands-on approach you can achieve a successful go-live that sets the stage for long-term success.

Charting your path to success with AGFA HealthCare Enterprise Imaging Cloud



The decision to move your EI solution to the cloud is a transformative step that can improve scalability, reduce IT complexity, and enhance clinical workflows. However, the success of this transition hinges on selecting the right EI Cloud partner and solution that aligns with your organization's strategic goals.

AGFA HealthCare's Enterprise Imaging Cloud solution is purpose-built to address the critical challenges healthcare organizations face when moving to the cloud. As a pioneer in cloud-native imaging, AGFA HealthCare offers a fully managed SaaS solution that reduces the need for on-premises infrastructure, simplifies IT management, and provides predictable costs. Leveraging a certified partnership with AWS – named the Best in KLAS Cloud hyperscaler in 2025 - and advanced streaming technologies, AGFA delivers high-performance imaging workflows, enabling near real-time access to full-fidelity images across all specialties and reading environments. Beyond that, AGFA aligns with your evolving journey – whether you're focusing on storage, VNA, or diagnostic imaging – recognizing that there is no single path for every organization.

The cloud is not just a destination – it's a journey. With AGFA as your partner you can confidently navigate this journey, knowing your organization is equipped with a solution that evolves with your needs. Trust AGFA HealthCare to guide you into the future of Enterprise Imaging Cloud.



Appendix: Checklist of Key Questions & Considerations

Key Question	Main Considerations	Evaluation Criteria
1. What are your motivations?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reduce IT complexity Support growth Enhance resiliency Address resource shortages 	Alignment with strategic goals; ensure the partner supports your long-term objectives.
2. Is the solution cloud-optimized?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Certified cloud partnerships Architectural alignment with cloud provider Dynamic scalability 	Avoid “lift and shift” solutions; prioritize cloud-native architectures.
3. How are costs managed?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Transparent pricing Single billing mechanism Annual true-ups for predictable budgeting 	Ensure no hidden fees; evaluate egress, hosting, and storage costs.
4. How does it support growth?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Flexible licensing models Scalability for new specialties Financial predictability for growth 	Confirm that the solution can scale with imaging volumes and service line expansions.
5. What are the performance guarantees?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Real-time image streaming Full-fidelity image delivery Support for advanced imaging workflows 	Ensure performance meets clinical needs without compromising image quality.
6. How is storage managed?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Intelligent storage tiering Instant access to prior studies Cost-effective archival strategies 	Balance cost and clinical efficiency; avoid delays in accessing historical data.
7. Does it reduce IT complexity?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reduce and simplify on-premises infrastructure Seamless data synchronization No need for local caches 	Avoid solutions that reintroduce IT burdens or data concurrency risks.
8. How resilient is the solution?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 99.99% uptime guarantees Disaster recovery and failover capabilities Proactive monitoring 	Ensure minimal downtime and consistent access to imaging data; verify that the partner stands behind their performance guarantees.
9. How secure is the solution?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cloud provider certifications Advanced security features (firewalls, VPNs, encryption) Clear demarcation of responsibilities 	Verify alignment with cloud provider security standards and best practices; ensure no gaps in security controls or accountability.
10. How smooth is the transition?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Data migration expertise Flexible migration strategies (progressive or “big bang”) Clear timeline and tools for migration 	Ensure minimal disruption; prioritize partners with flexible migration options and proven cloud transition experience.



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Grow Your Health System with AGFA HealthCare's Enterprise Imaging Cloud.

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Don't miss our Guide #2:
"Implementing Enterprise Imaging in the Cloud"

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