



UNITED NATIONS  
DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME

BUSINESS ADAPTATION PROGRAMME

# **Fundamentals Digital Technologies E-Guide for MSMEs**

Future-Tourism in the Eastern Caribbean

#FUTURETOURISM

# Acknowledgements

This guide will enable you to **REFLECT, RESTART or to REVITALISE** your business in relation to markets, particularly in the digital environment, and help you to create and communicate your offerings through marketing campaigns.

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# 1. Our Living, Working and Travel Environment

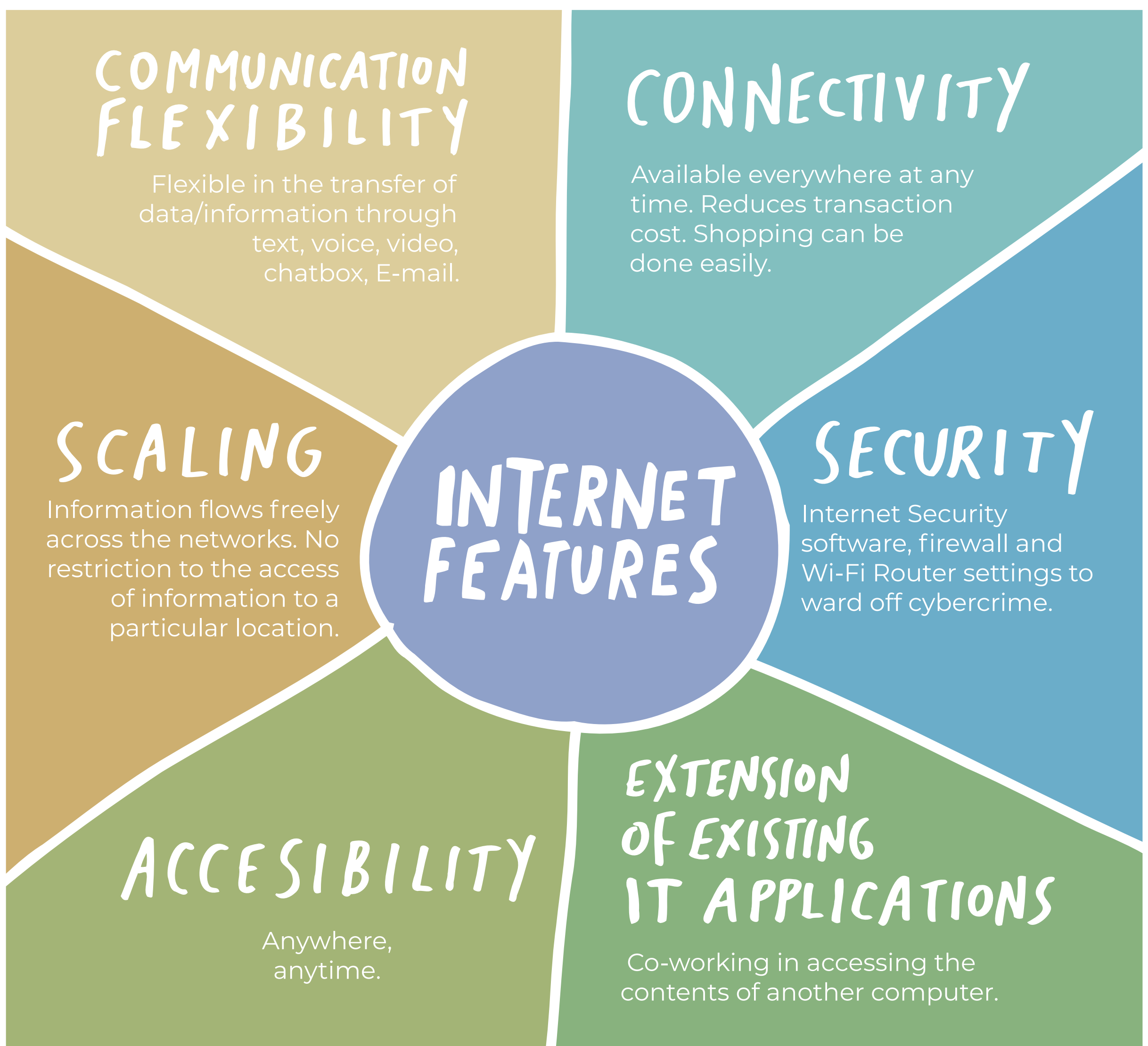
Our rapidly evolving world is made possible by digital innovation and technological innovation. Today, in our living, working and travel environment, the combination of online and offline spaces co-exist and together determine our daily activities. The digital revolution began with the introduction of computers and digital record-keeping. In the mid-1990s, the emergence of the commercial internet led to new market and business models.

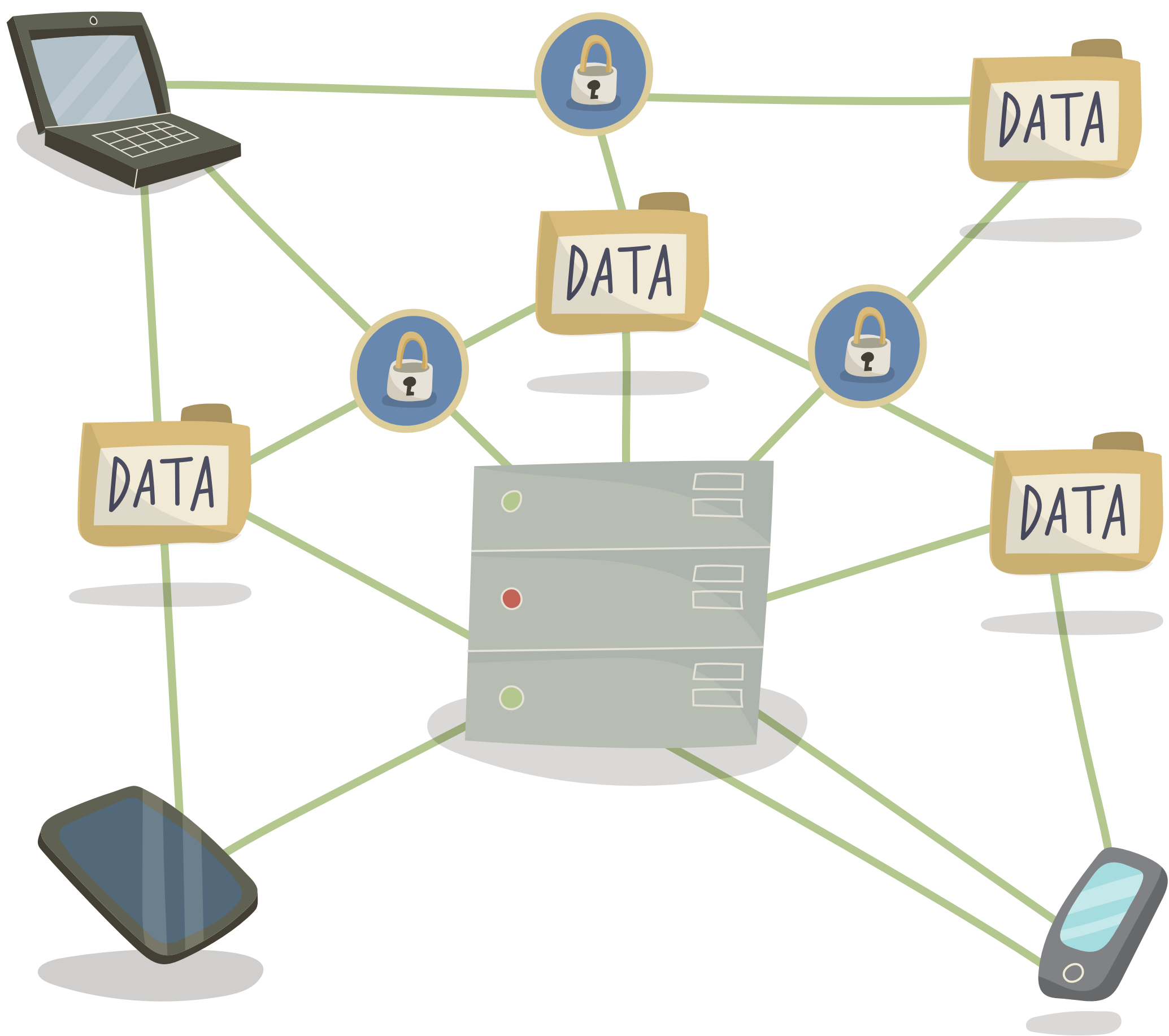




## 2 Internet

The internet is one of the most powerful communications tools.





The main function of the internet is to connect a computer to any other computer anywhere in the world. It is a global network of networks. The World Wide Web (WWW, the Web) is one of the services provided by the internet. The Web is a collection of information gathered as web pages connected through hyperlinks and URLs that we access daily through the internet. The internet and the World Wide Web are not the same.

The internet is governed by a set of rules, laws & regulations, collectively known as the Internet Protocol (IP). The Web is governed by the Hyper Text Transfer Protocol (HTTP) that deals with the linking of files, documents and other resources of the Web.

### 3. Why is Internet Security important?

With the use of computers, laptops and smartphones in our daily lives, data is stored electronically on the respective electronic device or in cloud storage.

There are risks associated with the internet and the web that can be limited by internet security solutions. These solutions aim to protect the users and corporate IT assets from attacks that take place over the internet.

Businesses in the tourism and hospitality sectors have extensive databases of sensitive customer data. This could be in contact forms for enquiries or reservations, for loyalty programmes, for orders and online purchases, for fast check-in procedures. Names, addresses and credit card details are processed daily. Hackers often attack the hospitality industry in search of secure data with which they commit further offences by breaking into accounts, transferring money, or committing other fraud. For the hospitality industry, a data breach can cause legal consequences that can result in high reputational risk.



#### REMEMBER:

Therefore, it is of prime importance that businesses in the tourism sector take steps to ensure the safety of the data they handle.



## PRINCIPLES OF INTERNET SECURITY

***Confidentiality:*** Keep sensitive data protected and away from places where it can be easily or quickly accessed by ordinary users.

***Availability :*** Ensure that data and resources are only accessible to those who are authorized to access them.

***Integrity:*** Protect information from intentional or accidental changes so that data remains reliable, accurate and trustworthy.





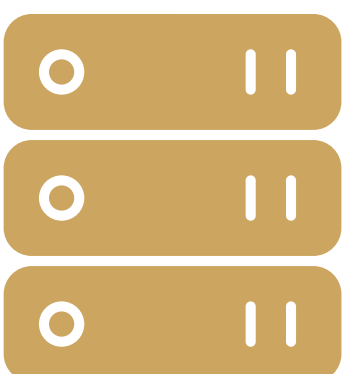
### **Access control:**

This refers to controlling which users have access to the business network. Security policies can be used to restrict network access to approved users and devices or to grant limited access to non-compliant devices or guest users.



### **Antivirus:**

Antivirus software monitors network traffic in real time for malware or “malicious software”, scans activity logs for signs of suspicious behaviour and provides threat remediation capabilities.



### **Data Loss prevention:**

Prevents a business’ employees from leaking valuable business information or sensitive data outside the network.



### **Email security:**

Numerous threats such as fraud, phishing, malware, and suspicious links can be attached to or embedded in emails. It is therefore important that staff are adequately trained to recognise when an email is suspicious. Email security software filters out incoming threats and can be configured to prevent outgoing messages from sharing certain data.



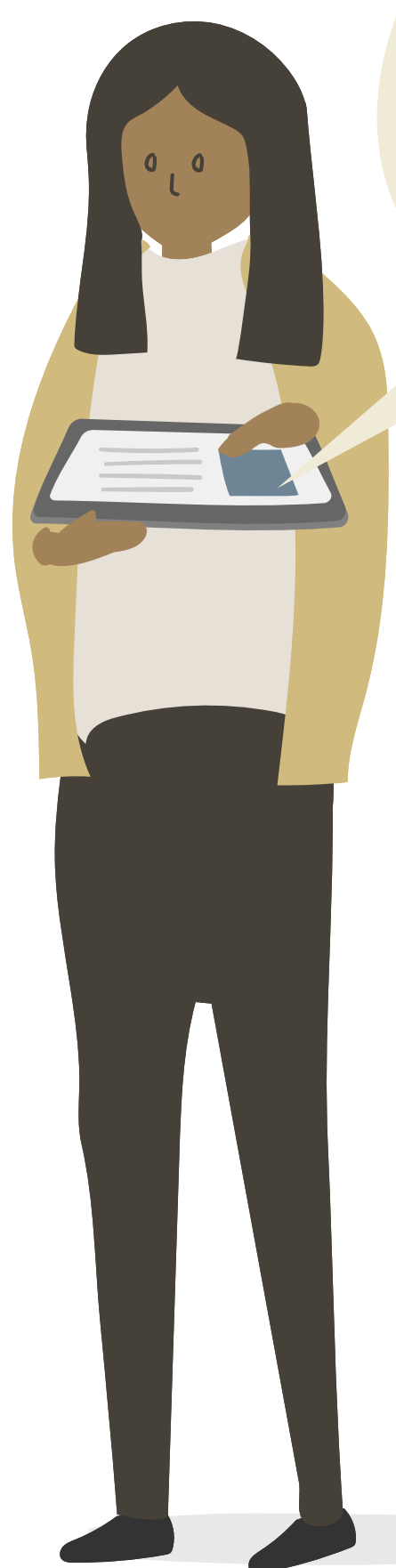
### **Firewalls:**

Firewalls act as a gatekeeper between a network and the Web. They filter incoming and outgoing traffic by comparing data packets against predefined rules and policies.



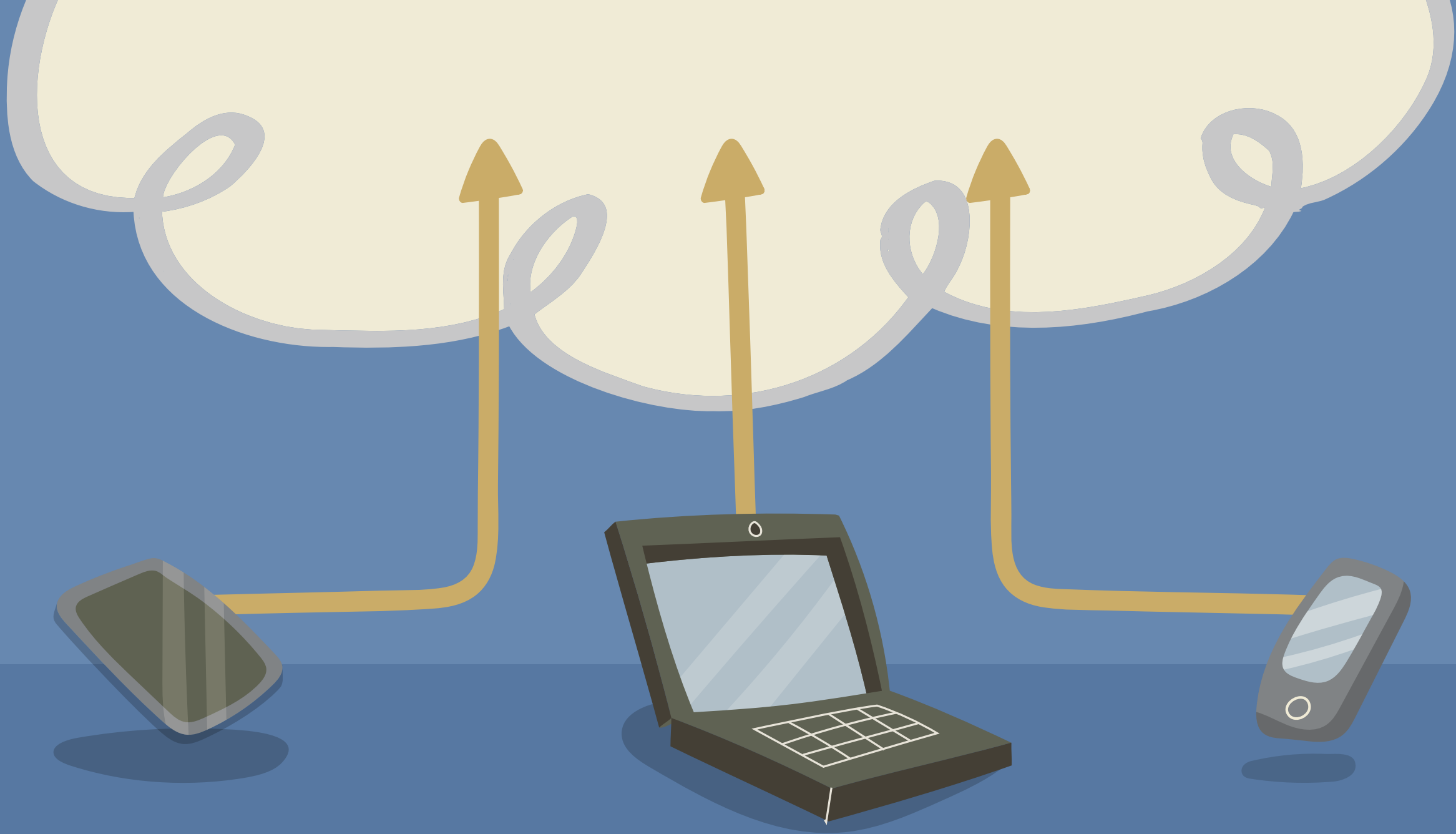
### **Web Security:**

It restricts internet access for staff to prevent them from accessing websites that may contain malware and blocks other web-based threats and protects the customers web gateway.



**You want to learn more?**  
eFUTURE practical guide 4  
**[“ENSURE BUSINESS SAFETY AND SECURITY”](#)** provides you  
with additional support tools





## 4. What is Cloud Computing?

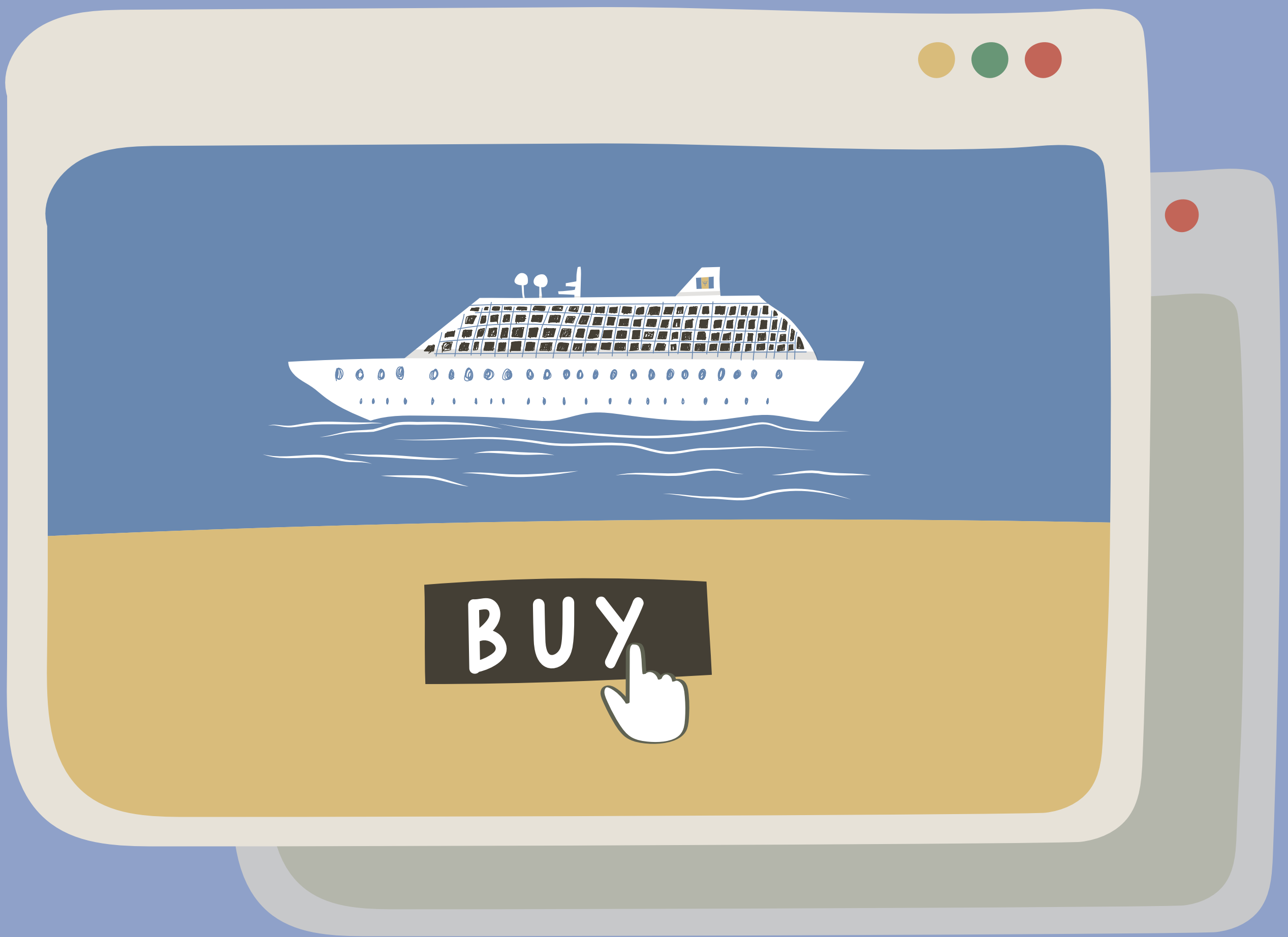
Cloud computing is a general term for anything that involves delivering hosted services over the internet, such as servers, storage, databases, networking, software, analytics, and intelligence.

### ADVANTAGES

- Lowers infrastructure expenses
- Cost efficient
- Reliability
- Accessibility of data anywhere (Mobility)
- Improved collaboration for working in teams
- Immediate data storage expansion options
- Data backup & recovery
- Easy and quick to attain
- Low maintenance cost
- Instant software updates

### DISADVANTAGES

- Storage limits for free storage solutions
- Variations in cost
- Restricted control
- Rigid contracts
- Performance can vary
- Dependent on internet connectivity
- Data security and privacy concerns



## 5. Role of Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) in Tourism

ICTs enable businesses operating directly or indirectly in the tourism sector to improve and expand their presence at the destination, from the moment the potential customer starts planning their trip to the moment they return home. This gives the business wider visibility and participation within their market. ICT can be used in different business activities, such as designing, development, advertisement, marketing, sales, management, coordination and monitoring.



## 6. What is E-Tourism and Smart Tourism?



### FIELD OF E-TOURISM

E-tourism is all about the introduction of digitalisation into the entire value chains of the tourism sector, allowing businesses to maximize their efficiency, reach and offers to customers. E-tourism relies on websites as the fundamental technology.

### KEY CONCEPT OF SMART TOURISM

Smart tourism bridges the gap between the physical and digital world. In many ways, smart tourism can be seen as a logical evolution of traditional tourism and e-tourism, as the foundation for the industry and consumer was laid with the widespread introduction of information and communication technologies (ICTs) in tourism.

Smart tourism encompasses several components and layers supported by ICTs, namely technology-mediated tourism experiences, smart destinations built on infrastructure accessible to residents and tourists, and smart business that relate to an ecosystem that creates and supports the exchange of tourism resources and tourism experiences.



## 7. What is an Online Marketplace

An online marketplace is a virtual market, an e-commerce site that offers many different products from different sellers. Online marketplaces are information technology companies that act as intermediaries by connecting buyers and sellers. Amazon is the biggest marketplace in the US.

Each online marketplace has its own unique requirements, product categories, listing fees and audiences. There are giants but also niche product marketplaces available. Each has their own values.

### **BENEFITS**

- Fast to launch
- Access to digital marketing programs offered by the established online marketplace
- Built-in audience of consumers

### **CHALLENGES**

- Dependency upon technology used by the online marketplace
- Limitation of online presence for the seller
- Information security issues
- Higher transparency of prices increases the competition among sellers



### **MARKETPLACES DEDICATED TO TRAVEL**

- Airbnb
- Expedia
- Peek
- GetYourGuide
- Musement
- TripAdvisor

### **COMMON MARKETPLACE IN THE CARIBBEAN**

Created in 2016, Facebook Marketplace is a feature within the main Facebook app and allows users to arrange to buy, sell and trade items with other people in their area. In the Caribbean, each country has their own marketplace on Facebook Marketplace and is thus a local place to market. For existing Facebook users, it can be set up quickly by using their existing (business) accounts and opens up businesses to a larger local or regional audience.



## 8. Digital Transformation

By allowing for flights and hotels to be booked online, the tourism sector was one of the first sectors to digitise business processes on a global scale. As ICT became a global phenomenon, tourism was a consistent pioneer in adopting new technologies and platforms.

Digital technology is the key to tourism. You can no longer rely on meeting the customer. Technology optimises the interaction with the customer and changes the way users or customers buy items and make payments. Digital transformation is the process of changing how organizations interact with their customers through technology.

As digital transformation takes shape, more firms are rethinking traditional business models. They are also innovating new ways to leverage data for growth.



## HOW CAN DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION IMPROVE BUSINESS?

Businesses are constantly evolving and undergoing digital transformations that improve their efficiency and competitiveness in the market, but digital transformation does not end with the implementation of new technologies. Businesses should think beyond technology to achieve true digital transformation. Only with a complete overhaul of an organisation can businesses reap the benefits of digitalisation; they can improve their operations, create opportunities for collaboration, expand their service offering and revolutionise their approach to customer experience.

A successful digital transformation requires not only updating technology or redesigning products, but also translating them into its internal values and behaviours.



## DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION – WHAT DOES IT BRING TO YOUR BUSINESS?



### **Improving customer experience:**

The digital transformation of businesses improves the customer experience by making interactions with a business faster, more convenient, and more personalised. Reachability 24h/7days is possible.

### **Increased Efficiency and Productivity:**

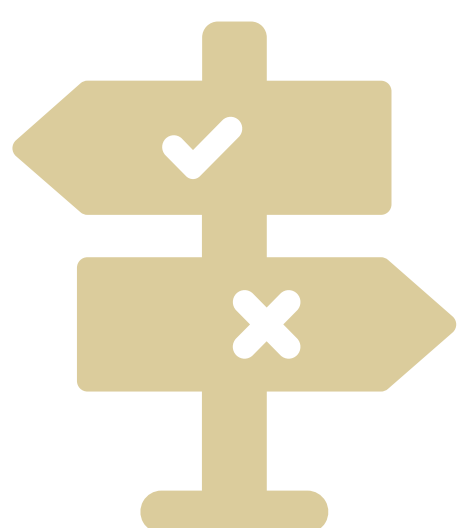
Using technologies such as cloud, mobile devices, Big Data and analytics can help businesses achieve higher levels of efficiency and productivity. In addition, some companies are using AI and machine learning to automate and scale data-intensive tasks and business processes.



### **Reduce business costs:**

Digital processes are typically more efficient than traditional processes, resulting in cost savings. Automated processes can reduce the need for manual input, freeing up resources and allowing you to focus on your core business objectives.





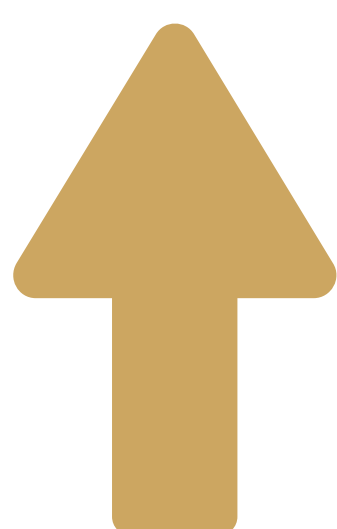
### **Accurate decision making:**

You can collect and analyse data about existing or potential customers or about your competitors in the market. These insights can help you make decisions in various areas such as production, marketing, sales, understanding customer behaviour, purchasing decisions or current market trends.



### **Access to a larger customer base:**

If you are only offline, i.e. physically present, this extremely limits your market reach. Customised technology and an online presence enable a greater market reach.



### **Revenue growth:**

By minimising costs, it is easier to increase turnover. Digital technologies lead to reaching new markets and customers and can increase revenue. Customers who are in arrears with a payment can be informed more quickly in an online payment process, and the accounting department does not have to be actively involved manually.



Although digital transformation becomes for many businesses necessary, the rapid changes and varieties of technologies may become a challenge.

**Without a strategy in place, your transformation could fail.**

Ask yourself: what are your business' goals and priorities? We recommend using these goals to develop a realistic business improvement plan.

To do so, you'll need to clearly understand the digital solutions you are implementing, as well as the culture you are integrating into.





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