

Cloudy library, clear skies

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***Abstract:** This poster will present the cloud technologies which libraries use or could use to improve their services and will also show the advantages and drawbacks of such technologies. Cloud technologies have offered some amazing benefits in contrast to standard dedicated hardware models and they provide many opportunities for libraries to better their management and to reach their patrons on the Web. This poster will also compare the use of cloud technologies in libraries in contrast to the available ones, thus also pointing out which technologies are being left out by libraries and which ones could be used to a larger extent.*

In a world where storage space is becoming scarce and expensive, cloud storage has become a trendy alternative to store documents, files and folders easily and cheaply. One of the most prominent problems in libraries has also been lack of storage space, either for book collections or their own documents. As such, libraries have taken interest in implementing cloud storage technologies. Cloud storage can also be a very effective way to store books that libraries have already digitalized, such as the national heritage. It eliminates the need for a library to have its own servers, and with that reduces cost of digitalization itself. However, there are also drawbacks to cloud storage, such as concerns for privacy, security and data ownership.

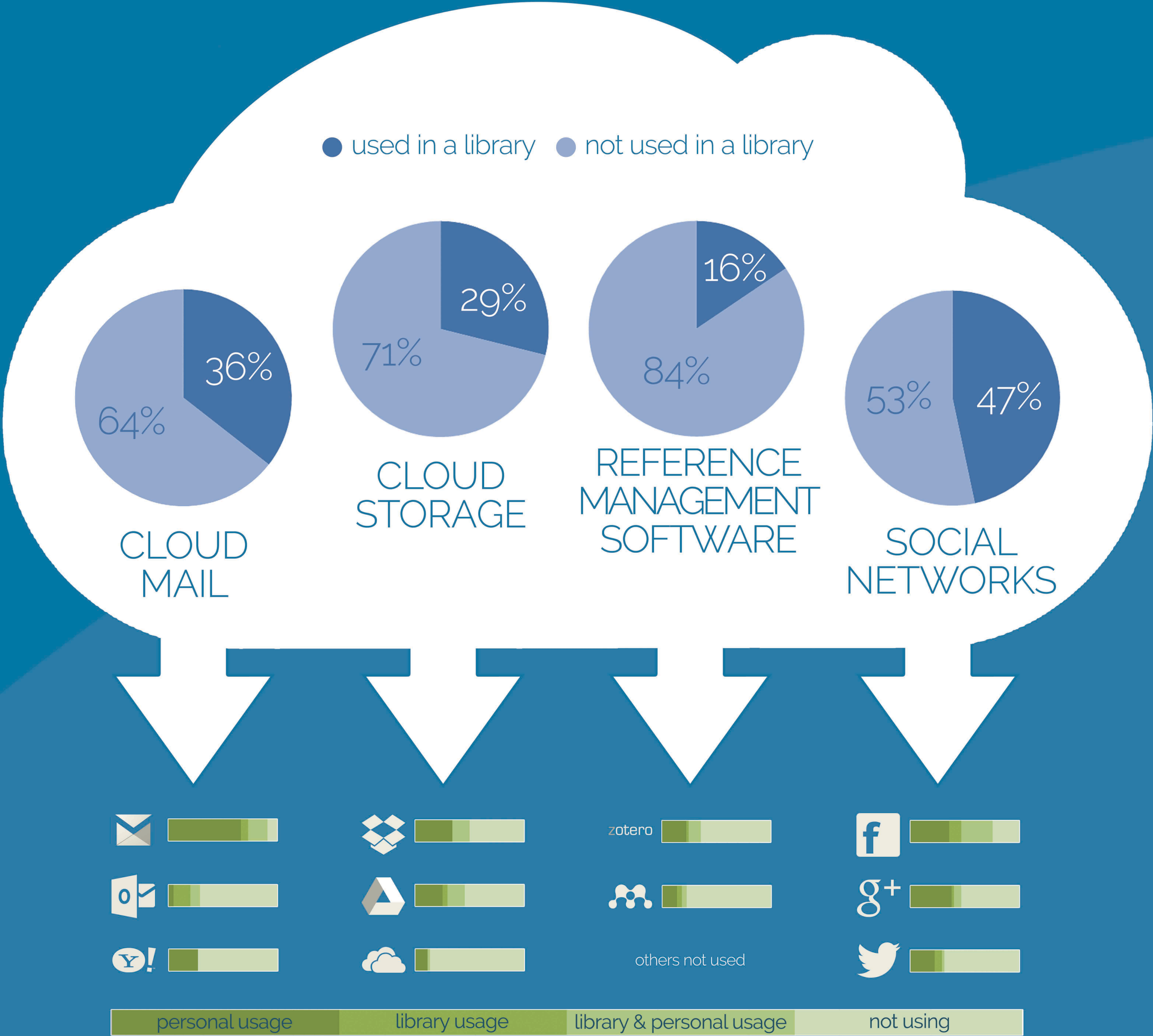
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USAGE OF CLOUD TECHNOLOGIES IN CROATIAN LIBRARIES

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A survey was conducted among 45 libraries in Croatia to see how many librarians use cloud technologies for themselves or for their libraries. Most of the surveyed libraries were academic libraries (63%). The rest comprised of: special libraries (14%), research libraries (14%), national library (5%) and public libraries (4%).



WHAT IS CONSIDERED A CLOUD?

Some may wonder why services such as RMS and/or social networks are considered a cloud. The main reason is the outsourcing of some or all components of these services to a cloud. For example, libraries can utilize comments systems of some social networks on their websites, thus freeing up the space of their own servers. Reference management softwares can sync files and their metadata to a cloud, instead of storing it on a local computer or server.

WHERE IS THE CLOUD LOVE?

Most librarians use cloud services for their personal needs and benefits, while a very low percentage use those same services to promote their libraries and its services. Some interesting information appeared in the survey: some librarians expressed concern over privacy of the uploaded data while others didn't even know what a cloud service is (some librarians wrote they used Outlook Express or Mozilla Thunderbird, which are not cloud services and actually store e-mails on the owner's computer).