



CLOUD COMPUTING – WHAT CAN IT DO FOR MY BUSINESS?

One of a series of regional events

Organised by the Digital Communications and the Digital Systems Knowledge Transfer Networks in partnership with InfoLab21

Venue - [One Central Park, Manchester, M40 5BP](#)

4 October 2010, 12:30 pm

Attendance is free - please visit [Register](#) to reserve your place.

Cloud computing has become a subject of increasing interest over the last few years but what exactly is 'Cloud' and what does it mean for business both now and in the longer term?

This event really gets under the skin of Cloud Computing, examines the reality and looks at recent developments. There will also be opportunity to hear from businesses already using cloud services & gaining benefits, to quiz an expert panel and to workshop with other business people. This will help you to find out what the advantages and drawbacks are of commitment to the use of Cloud computing.

Whether provider or potential user of these emerging technologies and services, we would very much welcome your involvement and views and we believe that you could contribute greatly to the success of the event. At the same time, this provides you with the opportunity to voice your questions and opinions and to shape the future of Cloud computing to meet the needs of your business.

BACKGROUND

The history of computing has seen a number of large shifts in overall architecture, not the least of which was the general movement from the mainframe installations of the 60s and 70s to client-server systems based around the now ubiquitous PC. This change saw terminals change from dumb 'slaves' to high-powered computing engines running, in the main, licensed versions of complex software packages. This balance has been changing subtly over the last ten years as the Internet and business Intranets have developed to the point where data is increasingly stored in the server rather than the terminal and sharing and collaboration are becoming familiar concepts. This change has perhaps been most marked in the consumer space where 73% of people now feel that broadband is as important a utility as electricity or water and remote storage of photographs and email as well as social networking are now common place.

Businesses are now seeing value in migration back to the use of relatively dumb terminals but there is a difference at the 'back-end'. Increasingly data storage and processing are no longer carried out in computers or computer-centres owned by a business but in centres provided by



managed service providers. In such centres economies of scale are produced by ‘virtualising’ processing power and storage in such a way that an individual’s or a business processing capability may be mounted in infrastructure shared by others and even migrated across hardware boundaries invisibly to the user. It is only a small step, then, to the concept of Cloud Computing, where data storage and processing power are procured flexibly on-demand from a service provider and the user may have no idea exactly where the facilities that he or she is using are situated.

Already a vocabulary is developing to describe Cloud services. Providers distinguish between Infrastructure as a Service (IaaS), Platform as a Service (PaaS) and Software as a Service (SaaS) while network providers emphasize the importance of network connectivity and performance when utilizing remote services. The concept of cheap computing power available on-tap is attractive yet concerns have been expressed about resilience, security, potential lock-in to providers, legal problems concerning location of data and many other aspects of Cloud Computing.

THE FORUM

This forum provides business users with the opportunity to hear about Cloud Computing, its technical and commercial architectures, service offerings, current providers and likely developments. Our presenters will set out their view of Cloud technology and services; participants will then be invited to join the debate to help to formulate a view of the future landscape of services by means of panel Q&A and plenary discussion. The event will also give delegates the opportunity to air their concerns about Cloud and to discuss with one-another and the expert panel how these matters can be mitigated as well as how business can benefit from the economies of scale and new service concepts that Cloud can provide.

The information recorded from this event will be combined with output from other regions and will be used to inform the industry debate on the technologies, architectures and industry structures needed to deliver future services.

CASE STUDIES

Two case studies will form part of the presentation:

IT Farm provides cloud based services for finance, law, recruitment or life science businesses.

Smithsons are commercial lawyers with experience in technology transfer and exploitation. They have a number of lawyers working remotely and we use cloud technology to provide a unified service.



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Chaired by Philip Hargrave, Director of the Digital Communications Knowledge Transfer Network

Agenda

- 12:30-12:45 Registration
- 12:45-13:15 Lunch and networking
- 13:15-13:25 Introduction | Opening remarks from the Chair
- 13:25-14:00 **Keynote Address | “Towards the Cloud!”** An overview of a Cloud – delivery and deployment, market dynamics, opportunities and challenges | **Ian Osborne, Director of the Digital Systems Knowledge Transfer Network**
- 14:00-14:30 **Who’s Who in ‘Cloud’?** | A review of existing and near-future Cloud service providers and the products that they offer | **Phil Worms, Marketing Director, iomart Group.**
- 14:30-14:55 **Getting Ready for the Cloud** | A quick look at the technical and non-technical stepping stones for cloud computing | **Mahesha Pandit, Programme Manager – Scalable Computing, Digital Systems Knowledge Transfer Network**
- 14:55-15:15 Refreshments
- 15:15-16:00 **What can ‘Cloud’ do for me?** | Case studies of the use of ‘Cloud’ | **Speakers: Dr James Huntingdon (IT Farm); Andrew Smithson (Smithsons)**
- 16:00-16:50 **Panel session with the speakers** | **Moderator: Ian Osborne**
- 16:50-17:00 Closing remarks from the Chair

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