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Moose Views

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Is Cloud Computing For You?

If you're one of those who are trying to figure out exactly what the "cloud" is, and what it means to your business, you're not alone. The term "cloud computing" today is like the term "portal" was a decade ago: it's been used by so many people to describe so many different things, that the first step toward having an intelligent discussion is to say, "Excuse me, but when **you** say 'cloud computing,' what, exactly, do you mean?"

Network diagrams have, for many years, used a cloud to represent the Internet. So an easy answer is that cloud computing moves some, or all, of your compute instances, storage, etc., out of your own facilities and into the Internet...or, to state it more accurately, to some service provider's data center where you will use the Internet to access it.

There are a range of options available to you. To name just a few:

- You can use the Internet to ship copies of your most critical data to an on-line provider of backup services. How well this works will depend on several things, including how much bandwidth you have to the Internet, how much data you need to move, and how fast that data is changing.
- You can contract for specific services, such as hosted email, hosted Share-Point services, hosted CRM (e.g., Salesforce.com), etc.
- You can purchase a bundle of services such as Microsoft Office 365.
- You can go to an "Infrastructure as a Service" provider, rent a rack of hardware, and build whatever you want on top of it.

- You can go to a "Platform as a Service" provider, such as Amazon Web Services, Microsoft Azure, or many other providers who will rent you (typically virtualized) Windows and/or Linux servers to run your apps on.
- You can go to a "Desktop as a Service" provider and get rid of darned near all of your on-premise servers (and perhaps most of your workstations as well).

The most important thing to remember is that one size **doesn't** fit all. Like any other major IT decision, you need to consider carefully what your business needs are, and let the needs of the business drive the decision of how much, if anything, you're going to move into the cloud.

The one thing you must **not** do is to assume that you can just throw your critical business data up into the cloud and never think about it again. It's still **your** data, and nobody cares about it as much as you do.

There are certainly advantages to be had in making use of cloud computing resources. For one thing, major hosting centers tend to be extremely robust: generator-backed power, state-of-the-art fire suppression, high physical security, multiple, physically diverse paths to the Internet, etc. Building this kind of facility is simply beyond the financial means of most SMBs.

Economies of scale on the purchasing side come into play as well. Unless you are a large corporation, you probably can't buy storage or servers as cheaply as a large hosting provider can.

On the other hand, there have been some high-profile service interruptions

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Traveling With Your Pet

When traveling with your pet, you need to take some extra precautions to make sure you both reach your travel destination safely. These simple steps can help make it an enjoyable journey for you and your animal:

- Make sure to get your pet a check-up by your veterinarian before beginning your trip. Your pet should have all current vaccinations and should have a general good state of health before traveling.
- Be sure to use the proper carrier for your pet, even when traveling by car. Most airlines have specific regulations on the type of carrier needed. When traveling by car, don't assume your dog will be most comfortable in the open passenger compartment of your vehicle. It can be reassuring to a dog to have a sturdy carrier to sleep and rest in, and can provide some protection in the event of an accident or a sudden stop.
- Be sure that during stops and breaks, you have your pet properly restrained. A dog or cat can escape very quickly in an unfamiliar place or can run into traffic. Properly leash your dog before opening the door or releasing him or her from the carrier.
- If your pet is prone to travel sickness, discuss this with your veterinarian. He or she may recommend motion sickness medication.
- Do not leave your pet unattended in a hot car. Windows should be left slightly open to provide for fresh air. If the weather is warm, however, you should not take the chance of harming your pet. The air inside a parked vehicle can quickly rise to dangerous levels, even on only moderately warm days.

7 Ways to Cut Your Food Bill

Looking for ways to cut your budget? One of the easiest places to start is your grocery bill. Use these tips to help cut your monthly food spending down to size.

1. Plan ahead: Check out the sales that grocery stores offer each week and plan your shopping list around those items. Try to shop only once a week. This helps avoid impulse shopping and it saves time driving to the store and waiting in line.
2. Stick to your list: Stores have great techniques to get you to buy. Necessities like bread and milk are usually at the back of the store, forcing you to walk past the other items in the store. Items placed at eye level are great profit makers for the store. Sticking to your list means not buying items you don't really need. But be flexible enough to pick up a good bargain if you see one.
3. Find the best deal: Be sure to compare unit prices, bringing a calculator if needed. Consider trying a cheaper brand or the store brand of items you buy. Use coupons on items you would normally buy anyway. If you have the room to store a few extra items, stock up on the things you use often when they are on sale.
4. Shop alone: The more shoppers you have with you, the more your grocery bill will be. Also, remember to always eat before you go, so your hunger doesn't lead to unnecessary purchases.
5. Save on convenience foods: Limit your purchase of convenience items and prepacked goods. Make your own "TV" dinners by freezing your leftovers. Package items for your kids' lunches yourself. Make desserts and snacks from scratch.
6. Cheaper dinners: Consider going vegetarian one or two nights a week. It's cheaper and healthier, too. Having breakfast for dinner one night a week can also help keep costs in line.
7. Check your receipt: Pay attention at the checkout counter and check your receipt before you leave the store for any scanner errors. Sometimes by pointing out the error, you will get the item for free.

By planning carefully and watching for bargains, you can make a big dent in your grocery bill—leaving more money for the things you really want.

Happy Independence Day!



Is Cloud Computing For You? (continued)

at some of the biggest names in hosted services in the past year or so, including Microsoft, Amazon, and Salesforce.com.

One question you must ask yourself, then, is what impact a service interruption would have on your business. After the mid-April Amazon EC2 incident, CRN.com wrote, as the first of their “lessons learned,” “Cloud outages are going to happen...and if you can’t stand the outage, get out of the cloud.”

For that matter, once you’re dependent on Internet access to get to your data and applications, what will you do in the event of the classic “backhoe in the parking lot” incident? The good news is that if you lose your connection to the Internet, you should be able to send your employees home, or down the street to the nearest Starbucks, or even to a predefined temporary office location where they can connect to the Internet and work remotely. But you need to plan—and rehearse—exactly what you’re going to do and

how you’re going to do it.

Of course, outages happen if you’re *not* in the cloud, too. Servers fail. Power goes out. Fires happen. Or, even if everything is working perfectly at your facility, access to it can be blocked by other kinds of emergencies.

These are all factors that need to be considered as part of constructing an appropriate Disaster Recovery/Business Continuity plan. You need to think about all of the things that could possibly cause a business disruption, consider how likely they are to occur, and how severely they would affect operations if they did. Then, starting with the things that are both highly likely *and* that would have the greatest disruptive impact, decide what your response will be to each of those things.

Cloud services are becoming both more affordable and more reliable. People are, in general, also becoming more comfortable with having their data hosted somewhere. After all, most of us have personal email

addresses at hotmail or gmail, and many of us store our pictures on flickr or Facebook, back up our personal data with mozy or carbonite, and post family videos on YouTube. This translates into a greater comfort level with the idea of having our business data in the cloud as well.

Most businesses will probably be able to leverage some aspect of cloud computing to reduce costs or improve efficiency and flexibility.

Email is, for most organizations, an easy choice. Unless you have very stringent regulatory requirements that dictate otherwise, it’s getting pretty difficult to justify maintaining your own Exchange server these days.

Other cloud services may or may not be right for your business. At Moose Logic, we’re working to bring you a range of options that can be mixed and matched to meet your specific business needs.

Give us a call if you’d like to explore what cloud computing can do for you.

Per-User Pricing for Office?

For as long as I can remember, Microsoft Office has been licensed per computing device. In other words, if it had a keyboard and monitor, and you could walk up to it and interact with Office applications, you needed an Office license for that device. It didn’t matter whether it was a PC with Office installed on its local hard disk drive, or a thin-client terminal that accessed the Office applications via Remote Desktop Services.

Now, with the release of Office 365, Microsoft has introduced the closest thing to user-based pricing I’ve ever seen. For \$24/month, you not only get hosted Exchange, SharePoint, Lync, etc., with all the bells and whistles, you *also* get to install Office Professional Plus *locally* on up to 5 client devices. So you can install Office Professional Plus on your office workstation, your laptop, your home PC, and two other client devices of your choice—all covered by your \$24/month subscription.

The closest thing to this in Microsoft’s traditional licensing is the Open Value Subscription license for Office Professional Plus, which costs roughly \$170/year (\$14 and change per month, effectively). Open Value Subscription is still device-based, although it does allow the primary user of a device to also install the software on a second PC, e.g., both work and personal systems. And, of course, the Open Value Subscription license is strictly a license for Office—it doesn’t include any corresponding hosted services.

There are other pricing plans for Office 365, starting as low as \$4/month for an “Enterprise Kiosk User” who has modest email needs (500 Mb mailbox limit) and read-only access to SharePoint Online. But the sweet spot for many users will be the \$24/month subscription, which includes all the on-line services except Lync VoIP support *and* includes Office Professional Plus for 5 client devices per user.

Would You Like To Submit An Article, Story, or Tip for Moose Views?

Do you have a funny story or a resource you want to share with other subscribers?

Send it to me! We are always looking for new and useful content to add to Moose Views, including partners who want to submit articles!



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- Network Security
- E-mail & Internet Solutions
- Spam Filtering
- Voice over IP Phone Systems



Hot Dog!

July is National Hot Dog Month.

The first words Mickey Mouse ever said in a cartoon were “hot dogs.”

The world’s biggest hot dog was 1996 feet long, created by Sara Lee Corporation in honor of the 1996 Olympics.

Chicago’s O’Hare International Airport sells more than two million hot dogs a year.

The most popular hot dog topping among adults is mustard. Among children, it is ketchup.

Marlene Dietrich said that her favorite meal was hot dogs and champagne.

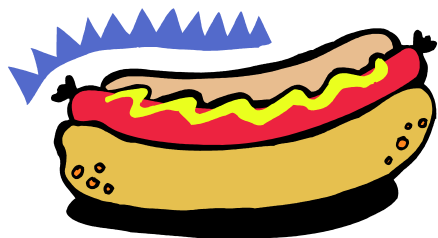
The average hot dog is consumed in 6.1 bites.

Americans consume over 20 billion hot dogs each year, with 26.8 million of those consumed at major league baseball parks.

Miller Park in Milwaukee is the only Major League ballpark in which sausages outsell hot dogs per season.

The average weight of a baseball park vendor’s bin is approximately 40 pounds when fully loaded with hot dogs.

Joey “Jaws” Chestnut currently holds the world record for speed-eating hot dogs with his win of the 2007 Nathan’s Famous Fourth of July International Hot Dog Eating Contest. His total was 66 dogs in 12 minutes. He also won the 2010 contest, but did not beat his previous record.



This Month in History

- July 1, 1863—The Battle of Gettysburg began in Gettysburg, Pennsylvania.
- July 2, 1788—The U.S. Constitution was ratified by nine states, the number required for it to go into effect.
- July 3, 1863—The Battle of Gettysburg ended with the defeat of forces led by Confederate General Robert E. Lee.
- July 4, 1960—The 50-star American flag was officially flown for the first time.
- July 6, 1885—The first rabies inoculation was given by Louis Pasteur to a boy who had been bitten by an infected dog.
- July 8, 1835—The Liberty Bell cracked at the funeral of Supreme Court Chief Justice John Marshall.
- July 11, 1914—The Boston Red Sox debuted Babe Ruth as pitcher in Fenway Park.
- July 15, 1968—A Soviet Aeroflot jet landed at Kennedy Airport in New York, marking the start of direct commercial air flight between the U.S. and the U.S.S.R.
- July 16, 1969—Apollo 11 was launched.
- July 19, 1954—J.R.R. Tolkien’s *The Fellowship of the Ring* was published in London.
- July 20, 1969—Captain Neil Armstrong set foot on the moon.

Coming Events

View all coming events with registration links at:
<http://www.mooselogic.com/events>