

Cloud computing

Cloud computing is storing and using services online, rather than storing them locally on a device such as a hard drive. Cloud computing is becoming more popular as web browsers become more powerful and network coverage is more widely available.

It is increasingly easy to use cloud services using native apps or web apps on smartphones, tablets and desktop machines – as long as there is a web connection in range.

Cloud storage is used to store files such as documents and photos. The files are stored on a server owned by the service provider. Google Drive, Flickr and Dropbox are all examples of cloud storage.

Programmer Jackson Gabbard explains how Facebook makes use of cloud based storage .

Advantages

- Backing up - data backed up in the cloud with a reliable provider can be more reliable than storing your information on a hard drive or USB flash memory stick.
- Compatibility - documents and files are designed to be compatible across different machines and browsers.
- Cost – the user doesn't need to buy the latest software as it might be freely accessible through web apps.
- Independence – the user can work with their files on different computers.
- Reliable software - web software and browsers are updated online. The user doesn't have to download the latest updates.

Disadvantages

- Connection – the user can only access their information if they have a network connection.
- Copyright – the user sometimes loses legal rights to their original material if they store it online.
- Security - data stored online is vulnerable to security attacks.
- Software - web apps do not usually have as many detailed functions as a full software package.
- Storage - it is not always possible to store more than a few gigabytes online with one provider, whereas it is possible to purchase a few terabytes of physical storage to save information at home.

Ownership

Cloud computing raises issues about data ownership. Cloud services are useful, but using them means we are sharing our data with service providers.

Organisations such as government departments and banks are likely to create their own cloud servers because they have extra restrictions with regards to the data they hold.

Cloud computing

Cloud computing is storing and using services online, rather than storing them locally on a device such as a hard drive. Cloud computing is becoming more popular as web browsers become more powerful and network coverage is more widely available.

It is increasingly easy to use cloud services using native apps or web apps on smartphones, tablets and desktop machines – as long as there is a web connection in range.

Cloud storage is used to store files such as documents and photos. The files are stored on a server owned by the service provider. Google Drive, Flickr and Dropbox are all examples of cloud storage.

Programmer Jackson Gabbard explains how Facebook makes use of cloud based storage .

Advantages

- Backing up - data backed up in the cloud with a reliable provider can be more reliable than storing your information on a hard drive or USB flash memory stick.
- Compatibility - documents and files are designed to be compatible across different machines and browsers.
- Cost – the user doesn't need to buy the latest software as it might be freely accessible through web apps.
- Independence – the user can work with their files on different computers.
- Reliable software - web software and browsers are updated online. The user doesn't have to download the latest updates.

Disadvantages

- Connection – the user can only access their information if they have a network connection.
- Copyright – the user sometimes loses legal rights to their original material if they store it online.
- Security - data stored online is vulnerable to security attacks.
- Software - web apps do not usually have as many detailed functions as a full software package.
- Storage - it is not always possible to store more than a few gigabytes online with one provider, whereas it is possible to purchase a few terabytes of physical storage to save information at home.

Ownership

Cloud computing raises issues about data ownership. Cloud services are useful, but using them means we are sharing our data with service providers.

Organisations such as government departments and banks are likely to create their own cloud servers because they have extra restrictions with regards to the data they hold.