Is Cloud Computing Reliable and should we worry about security risks?

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ABSTRACT

This poster paper consolidates much of the information that has been used in other papers while also answering the questions to New Zealand businesses if they should move to/stay in the cloud.

Keywords

Cloud Computing, Security, Reliability, Copyright Amendment Act 2011..

1. INTRODUCTION

Cloud computing is an Internet-based computing where large groups of servers are networked together. An external company typically manages these to allow a user to access their files across different platforms so long as they are connected to the internet (Howe, 2009, para. 1). One of the larger problems that the average computer user has with cloud computing is if they can trust their files to not disappear or be deleted without their knowledge and also what are the risks of their files getting hacked into.

2. PURPOSE

The Goal of this research is to find out what risks are involved in cloud computing and what responsibilities a provider holds.

3. METHODOLOGY

To find out the information that was needed to come to a conclusion, articles, published papers and blogs were used to find a variety of opinions from different sources.

4. WHAT A PROVIDER SHOULD DO

Providers must be able to assure users that they can protect their privacy when data is in the cloud (Jaeger, 2008 p. 274). No one in a providers company should ever look into a user's data unless a user has given permission to do so, this might have to be done for troubleshooting problems. Keeping user's data secure and private should be at the top of the list for any professional provider and like any company or organisation, should be able to provide support for any users. It is unethical for a provider to share any information about the client to an outside source (Entrust, 2007).

5. RISKS FOR THE USER

As the law stands, sharing copyrighted material over the internet is illegal in New Zealand under the "Copyright (Infringing File Sharing) Amendment Act 2011" (Copyright, 2011, 122(b)). Using a cloud to share files falls under this law and therefore using a cloud service to share any form of copyrighted material is illegal.

Internet providers cannot be held responsible for copyrighted material (Copyright, 2011, 92(b)(ii)) but the providers of a cloud service can be held reliable at this stage for copyrighted material as noted in the current case against Kim Dot Com.

Since the shutdown of MegaUpload many businesses have stopped using cloud services altogether, one representative of a New Zealand business said "Our IP lawyers have strictly stated that in no way, shape, or form, are we to use cloud services." (Weneedhelp, 2012).

A user needs to know where their cloud provider is located as countries do have different opinions on the definition of privacy and the provider may not even have to guarantee through a contract that the user's information will be kept private (Jaeger, 2008 p. 276). The safest thing a user can do is stick to the more well-known companies such as Dropbox, Google and Apple.

6. CONCLUSION

As long as a user does their research on a cloud provider and can come to the conclusion themselves that the provider does not appear to be hosting any copyrighted material that they are safe to use. Completely relying on cloud computing to run a business or for personal use without having any backups at a secure location is not recommended.

7. REFERENCES

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