

The Cloud

How does Cloud Computing Work?

To work at your computer right now you have to buy expensive software and a powerful enough computer to run it. Then your files are only on your machine for you alone.

With the Cloud, instead of installing a suite of software for each computer, you just need to reach into the cloud and open an app. That application will allow you to log-in into a Web-based service which hosts all the programs and allows others to work on the same documents with you.

In cloud computing local computers don't have to do all the heavy lifting when it comes to running applications. Cloud computing can handle that heavy load easily and automatically. Hardware and software requirements on the user's side decrease. The only thing the user's computer requires is a Web browser and the cloud's network takes care of the rest.

Advantages of Cloud Computing

1) Lower cost computer and software

In cloud, you don't require a high-powered computer and software because applications run on cloud not on desktop PC or laptop.

2) Fewer maintenance cost

The maintenance cost in cloud computing greatly reduces both hardware and software maintenance for organizations and individuals.

3) Instant software updates

Another software-related advantage in cloud computing is that users don't need to face with the choice between obsolete software and high upgrade costs. If the app is web-based, updates happen automatically and are available next time when the user logs in to the cloud.

4) Ability to Share (Collaboration)

Because all files are saved in a "Cloud" environment, many people can work on the same document without worrying where or who has it saved.

5) Unlimited storage capacity

Cloud offers you a huge amount of storage capacity like 2000 GB or more than that if required.

Disadvantages of Cloud Computing

1) Requires a constant Internet Connection

Cloud computing is impossible without Internet connection. To access any applications and documents you need a constant Internet connection.

2) Require High Speed Internet connection

Similarly, a low-speed Internet connection makes cloud computing painful at best and often impossible. Web based apps often require a lot of bandwidth to download, as need to download large documents.

3) *Stored Data Might Not Be Secure*

With cloud computing, all your data is stored in the cloud. That's all well and good, but how secure is the cloud? Can't unauthorized users gain access to your confidential data?

Google's Cloud

Although it's a relatively young industry, many companies offer cloud computing services. One of those companies is Google with their cloud apps called Google Docs. While these applications aren't as complex or comprehensive as the leading desktop counterparts, they have other advantages over traditional software.

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The most obvious of these advantages is that the applications aren't tied to a specific computer. There's no need to download and install software on a particular machine. Any computer connected to the Internet can access Google Docs. Because each user saves information to the cloud system, he or she can access the same file from anywhere. Users don't have to worry about which version of a document is the most current -- it will always be saved in the Google cloud.

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Another advantage is that multiple users can make edits to the same files at the same time. This is called **online collaboration**, and it could streamline teamwork over the Web. Because Google Docs preserves earlier versions of documents, there's no reason to worry about irrevocably changing a file.

Google Docs most popular apps are documents, spreadsheets and presentations. To access Google Docs, you need to create a Google account. Google accounts are free. All you need is a valid e-mail address. If you've signed up for Gmail, or you have a school email account you already have a Google account. (School accounts have been made to be valid accounts.) The account gives you access to many Google applications, besides Google Docs.

Sources:

<http://computer.howstuffworks.com/internet/basics/google-docs.htm>

<http://www.javatpoint.com/what-is-cloud-computing>