Advantages and disadvantages of cloud computing

Introduction

Cloud computing is one of the latest technologies that is already used by a vast amount of companies and organizations worldwide. For an introduction of cloud computing you can read one of our articles "Introduction to cloud computing".

Even though there are many advantages when you are using this technology, doesn't make it the best thing for everyone. When is the best solution for your company or organization? In order to answer this question, we have to examine the advantages and disadvantages of cloud computing. After reading the below pages, you will be able to decide if cloud computing is the right solution for you or not.

Advantages

- **Lower-cost computers for users:** This point is one of the financial advantages of cloud computing. There is no need to purchase powerful and expensive equipment to use cloud computing since all the processing is not at your local computer but in the cloud. Since the application runs in the cloud, not on the desktop PC, that desktop PC does not need the processing power or hard disk space demanded by traditional desktop software.

- **Better performance:** Due to the fact that no programs or files are loaded on the local PC, users will not experience delays when switching on/off their computers and also the internal network will be much faster since no internal traffic will occur.

- **Less IT infrastructure costs:** The IT department of large organizations could experience decreasing on the expenses in regards with infrastructure with the adoption of the cloud computing technology. Instead of investing in larger numbers of more powerful servers, the IT staff can use the computing power of the cloud to supplement or replace internal computing resources.

- **Less maintenance costs:** Maintenance costs also will be reduced using cloud computing since both hardware and software maintenance for organizations of all sizes will be much less. For example, fewer servers are necessary in the organization which means that maintenance costs are immediately lowered. As to software maintenance, there is no software on the organization's computers for the IT staff to maintain.

- **Lower software costs:** Using cloud computing there is no need to purchase software packages for each computer in the organization, only those employees actually using an application need access to that application in the cloud.

- **Automatic software updates:** All the software's need update and the great thing with cloud computing is that you do not have to worry for any updates and also your organization will not have any additional expenses when a new upgrade or update is necessary.

- **Increased computing power:** When using cloud computing, you can use the cloud computing power since you are no longer limited to what a single desktop computer can do.

- **Unlimited storage capacity:** The cloud offers virtually limitless storage capacity but at any time you can expand your storage capacity with a small additional charge on your monthly fee.

- **Increased data safety:** There is no point to worry for disk failures or a disaster at your office. All the data is stored in the cloud.

- **Anywhere access to your documents:** When you are in the cloud, there is no need to take your documents with you. Instead, you can access your actual PC from anywhere that there is Internet access available.

- **Latest version availability:** One more thing in relation with documents is that when you edit one document at the office and then you go somewhere else and open it, the latest version will be displayed since as I already aforementioned all the work is done centrally in the cloud.

- **Use your computer from anywhere:** This is one of the biggest advantages of cloud computing. Basically, when you use this technology, you are not limited to work on a single PC. You just use your "cloud PC" from anywhere and any PC and your existing applications and documents follow you through the cloud. Move to a portable device, and your applications and documents are still available.

Disadvantages

- **Internet connection is required:** It is impossible to work if your Internet connection is down. Since you are using Internet to connect to your "cloud PC", if there is no Internet connection simply you cannot connect.

- **Low-speed connections are not recommended:** This is not a very important disadvantage since everybody today has at least 1 Mbps connection at work and at home. However, it is important to mention that cloud computing cannot work with slow Internet connections such as dial-up since web-based applications often require a lot of bandwidth to download, as do large documents.

- **Sometimes is slow:** Also, with fast connections, sometimes you might experience delays since web-based applications can sometimes be slower than accessing a similar software program on your desktop PC. The reasons for that are because of the demanding upload and download bandwidth that web applications need.

- **Stored data might not be secure:** Data is stored "in the cloud". However, where exactly is the cloud and is it really secure? These are questions arising for users that have confidential data.

- **Your data is 100% in the cloud:** All the data that you had until now on your local PC, it is stored in the cloud. Theoretically, data stored in the cloud is safe since a cloud hosting company uses several ways of backup in order ensure that on any case the data will not be lost. However, if your data is missing (even one in a million), you have no physical or local backup of your data.

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