

Cloud computing accessible from anywhere

BY KIM KOMANDO

Gannett

Lately, we've been hearing a lot about cloud computing. Amazon's and Apple's recently announced cloud computing services have generated a lot of buzz.

But if you don't understand why cloud computing is the future of computers, you're not alone.

The "cloud" simply refers to the Internet. "Cloud computing" refers to software and services that run over the Internet. Webmail like Gmail and Hotmail are considered cloud computing. So are online backup services like my national radio show's advertiser Carbonite.com.

You can access cloud computing services and data from virtually any Web connection. Let's take a look at Amazon's and Apple's cloud services and the advantages they offer. Find links to apps and programs mentioned at Komando.com/news.

Amazon

Amazon Cloud Drive provides 5

gigabytes of free storage. That holds about 1,000 songs, 2,000 photos or 20 minutes of high-definition video. There is a 2 GB size limit per file. You can upload documents, videos, music, photos and more.

You get unlimited access to your files from up to eight devices. Amazon will upgrade your account to 20 GB for a year at no charge. You just have to buy an MP3 album. If you need more storage, Amazon offers paid plans. They start at 20 GB and top out at 1,000 GB (1 terabyte). You'll pay \$1 per gigabyte per year. Plans renew automatically.

There are different ways to upload and download files. You can store MP3s purchased from Amazon on Cloud Drive automatically. Purchased music won't count against your storage limit. You can upload or download single files via your Web browser. To download multiple MP3s, you'll need the Amazon MP3 downloader. It runs on Windows XP, Vista and 7 and OS X.

Clicking a music file from your ac-



kim komando

count will open the Amazon Cloud Player. You can listen to your music directly from the Web. You can only play MP3 files or AAC (M4A) files that are DRM-free. There's also a Cloud Player app for Android phones and tablets.

Apple

iCloud is a free service that replaces MobileMe. It is integrated into apps and iTunes. Some iCloud features appear in iTunes 10.3 beta, but the full roll-out is this fall. iCloud provides 5 GB of free storage. You can also store up to 20,000 songs purchased from iTunes. Other purchased content and

photos don't count against your limit.

When you purchase a song from iTunes, you can download it to any of your devices. Past purchases are available, and you can have music downloaded automatically. You can't play music directly from iCloud. You must download it.

You probably have music purchased from another store or ripped from CD. In that case, there's iTunes Match (\$25 yearly). It scans your music collection. You can listen to music already in iTunes. If music isn't available, you can upload it from your collection.

iCloud isn't just about music, though. Photo Stream syncs photos taken on your iOS device with other devices. You can view and download photos to other iOS devices, PCs, Macs and Apple TVs. A Photo Stream album containing your last 1,000 photos is created. New photos are stored for 30 days.

iCloud also backs up a variety of other data, like apps, text messages

and iWork documents. You get a free email address that works across all your devices. And it stores your calendar and contacts and syncs entries across all your devices. If you choose, you can create a calendar to share with your entire family.

To get all the features of iCloud, you'll need iOS 5 on your iPhone, iPad or iPod touch. Mac users need OS X Lion. It is available in July for \$30. Windows users need Vista or Windows 7. Outlook 2007 or 2010 is recommended for accessing contacts and calendars.

As users, we are in the midst of a paradigm shift. No longer is our data, music, media, photos and documents tied to a particular computer at a specific location. When all this moves into the cloud, access to your files is literally at your fingertips.

Kim Komando hosts the nation's largest talk radio show about computers and the Internet. To subscribe to Kim's free email newsletters, sign up at: www.komando.com/newsletters. Contact her at CTech@gannett.com.

Panel extends deadline on cribs

The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — The Consumer Product Safety Commission has voted to give rental companies more time to buy cribs that meet new safety standards.

The commission voted Friday to extend the deadline for

short-term rental companies to buy the new cribs from June 28 of this year to Dec. 28, 2012.

The commission says in a statement that manufacturers and retailers will still be required to shift to the new designs by June 28.

Student, entrepreneur helps planning

BY DEBRA GRUSZECKI

The Desert Sun

From where Shawn Isaac sits, progress for an economic development agency such as CVEP isn't immediately quantifiable.

"It's so macro," the UC Irvine student from Rancho Mirage said.

"It's not as easy to measure as saying, 'Oh, CVEP gave this man a fish.'"

Isaac, 21, speaks from experience.

He is, as some sage executives might say, a California whiz kid.

With two patents for a computer chip that Isaac and a business partner invented to make servers run eight times faster, this business economics major doesn't only own and run three companies off his personal lap-

top. He has rolled up the sleeves of his pin-striped shirt to intern at places such as the Coachella Valley Economic Partnership.

"I worked there last summer," he said.

He left toting business cards

that gave him a fancy title: "Director of small business and entrepreneurship," the card read.

During his internship, he worked with CVEP staff to write a comprehensive economic development

strategy that allows all valley cities to apply for grants. It earned him a "Get Close to John Legend" MySpace Music award. That scored a mention in several publications, including Forbes.

Besides the technology com-

pany, ALU Enterprises, Isaac also runs an entertainment booking business and a dot-com company offering students the chance to buy and sell textbooks on campuses.

Isaac's been pumped up about CVEP and his future ever since.

Unlike many who leave, and never return, the business major who juggles his virtual business on a four-year-old HP laptop hasn't discounted life here after graduation.

"Who knows, maybe someday I'll have a real company here with a real office."



Isaac

AIRLINES

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range of ticket prices so airlines can get the most money out of each flight. Prices are generally higher for seats sold at the last minute, which are usually bought by business travelers. Refundable tickets tend to be the most expensive, and cheap fares come with lots of restrictions.

Other factors go into the price, too: How fast are tickets selling compared with previous years? Is there a conference or special event in the destination city? Fares are often adjusted to match other airlines' prices.

But there's still a great deal of human intervention. "To a degree, it's trial and error," said Greg Aretakis, vice president of revenue production at Frontier Airlines.

There can be as many as 20 prices on any given flight. Airline executives say that all that helps them boost revenue by 3 percent to 6 percent. If they price tickets too low, the airline can lose money. If prices are too high, seats go unsold.

"If that seat goes out empty, we can't put it on the shelf and sell it the next day," said American Airlines spokesman Tim Smith. "A seat that goes unfilled is like a banana that instantly spoils on takeoff."



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garage. \$1,649,000

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AGENCY: Plans in place to assist growth

Continued from E1

utive with CVEP, said the blueprint is great in that it has given the organization explicit steps to take and a timeline to follow.

"But just because you have direction doesn't mean you set sail in the middle of the storm," he said.

"Quite frankly, the last couple years have probably not been the right moment because of the economic climate. There's been very little capital investment going on. But the fact that the organization was wise enough to get the plan solidified, funded and in place so they can pull the trigger when the development window pops open again is huge."

Criteria established

There is set criteria CVEP plans to meet for the fiscal year beginning July 1, Flavin said.

■ At the current funding level: 505 total jobs and 620 scholarship applications.

■ With \$500,000 in new private investment: 1,515 total jobs and 740 scholarship applications.

The economic impact would be \$82 million to \$246 million, respectively.

"If you multiply the 17 applicants for solar projects, alone, that's a considerable impact on the economy and the tourism dollar," said Wes Ahlgren, operations director of CVEP.

One goal CVEP has set for the regional Innovation Hub it

plans to oversee in the Rabobank Regional Business Center is to help six small, clean-tech companies.

"We hope to incubate and graduate 50 companies," Ahlgren said.

John Stiles, who was at the first meeting when the CVEP organization was hashed out, said the Pathways to Success program has been "phenomenal" and is likely doing more good than anyone can calibrate at this time.

"It has what I see as great potential to prepare employees for jobs."

Preparing an educated workforce is another mission.

Since the inception of the Workforce Excellence program, four investors have donated

more than \$8.6 million for a thriving economy.

Since 2009, \$4.5 million worth of scholarship have been awarded from Desert Hot Springs and Sky Valley to spots as far away as Mecca and Salton City.

In the healthcare sector alone, the Coachella Valley has more than 1,000 students in health-related academies.

A total of 585 have been provided scholarships in 2009-2010 in industry clusters that include healthcare, clean technology and arts, media or entertainment.

Debra Gruszecki covers tourism, CVEP and Indian gaming for The Desert Sun. She can be reached at Debra.Gruszecki@thedesertsun.com or (760) 778-4643.

INTERNET: Name possibilities are endless

Continued from E1

"Most people don't pay a lot of attention to website addresses anyway these days," said Danny Sullivan, editor of Search Engine Land, a website that covers the search industry.

From a technical standpoint, domain names tell computers on the Internet where to find a website or send an email message. Without them, people would have to remember clunky numerals such as "165.1.59.220" for "ap.org."

The monikers have grown to mean much more, however. Amazon.com Inc. has built its brand on its website address, while bloggers take pride in running sites with their own domain names.

ICANN has already allowed two major expansions of the addressing system. In 2000, it approved seven new domains, including ".info" and ".biz." It began accepting new bids again

in 2004. It has approved and added seven from that round, including ".xxx" for pornography sites this past March.

Under the expansion plan now before ICANN, future applications would be streamlined and open to all companies, organizations and individuals.

That has set off a virtual land rush.

Planning .Vegas

A group of entrepreneurs in Las Vegas is vying to operate a ".Vegas" suffix. They have the city's endorsement and consider ".Vegas" a way to unify local merchants, entertainment venues, residents and even businesses beyond Sin City.

Former professional hockey player Ron Andruff is working with international sports federations to bid for ".sport." He expects sports leagues, teams, athletes, equipment makers and fans to want websites with a suffix that defines them better.

Two groups — one backed by the Sierra Club and the other by the World Wildlife Federation — are separately seeking the right to operate a ".eco" suffix.

Big business will stake claims, too. Printer and camera maker Canon Inc. plans to apply for ".Canon". Trade groups for bankers and financial-services companies are working together to explore bids for ".bank", ".insure" and ".invest" for their member companies.

New domains offer fresh branding possibilities for companies to identify themselves online in "a more relevant or a more localized" way, said Pat Kane, a senior vice president at VeriSign Inc., which operates ".com" and ".net."

Although suffixes added over the past decade haven't been as popular as ".com", there has been demand for an expansion because nearly all of the most desirable ".com" addresses have been taken.

The thinking is that new businesses setting up shop online might prefer a simple name that ends in ".bank" rather than "TheBankDownTheStreetFromTheSupermarket.com."

The expansion plan before ICANN had been delayed, however, largely because of concerns that new suffixes could infringe on trademarks and copyrights. There's also worry that new suffixes could deceive consumers, create new platforms for hate groups or lead to website addresses ending in obscenities. ICANN spent years crafting guidelines and creating procedures for objecting to applications.

ICANN already has approved

rules for some countries to claim suffixes that spell their names in languages other than English. The new plan opens that up to Chinese and Arabic versions of ".bank" and ".sport" as well.

It won't be cheap to operate a domain name suffix. The application fee is \$185,000, and winners will have to pay \$25,000 annually after that. Disputes are likely as different groups go after the same domain. ICANN may auction off domains if multiple parties have legitimate claims. Legal fees could also pile up as trademark owners and governments file objections to certain applications.

Trademark worries

Trademark holders, in particular, fear they would have to register a lot of addresses they don't need or want simply to keep others from using them. Microsoft Corp., for instance, would not want websites addresses such as "Microsoft.software" and "Microsoft.computer" used to commit fraud or sell pirated goods.

Copyright owners, too, worry they would have to devote more resources to fighting online piracy with a proliferation of websites ending in ".movies" and ".music" that distribute copyrighted content illegally.

Juan Diego Calle, whose company operates the existing ".co" suffix, said that with more alternatives available, more businesses and groups will see that they can set up shop online with a catchy, easy-to-remember website that doesn't end in ".com."

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