

IP-CITY NETWORK

Demystifying the 'Cloud'

FRANK STONE of University College London reports on a forthcoming event at BT Adastral Park which will highlight the benefits of Cloud computing



IP-City Network, in collaboration with the Digital Communications and Digital Systems Knowledge Transfer Networks, begins its 2010 programme at BT Adastral Park with a major event on May 20: "Cloud computing - what is it and what can it do for my business?" Attendance is free of charge and, to register, please visit www.ip-city.com.

Companies in the eastern counties are watching carefully to understand how the emergence of Cloud computing applies to them. Cloud computing is a method of obtaining more cost-effective and rapidly scalable computing capacity by externalising IT needs and requirements to data centres.

You consume what you need, when you need it, and pay only for what you use as an operational expense. This can be attractive for progressive businesses that need a flexible way to grow capacity quickly without tying up cash.

This event is focused on local and regional organisations and aims to demystify all the hype and explain the business advantage of private and public Cloud, with Microsoft's Windows Azure, IBM's CloudBurst or third party Cloud services with Amazon's Elastic Compute Cloud (EC2), Rackspace, and others.

It is the "pilot" for a series of national events that will give you the opportunity to hear experts describe exactly what is meant by "Cloud computing", to hear from businesses already using Cloud services and gaining benefits, to quiz an expert panel to help you gain a better understanding and to meet with other business people hoping to take advantage of the new services on offer.

You will also hear from two local companies Smart421 and HTK about how they are already exploiting these applications and developing new services, which you can benefit from directly. After this event, you will be able to make progress in your own organisation, understand the advantages and drawbacks of using Cloud computing and who to get more help from locally and take action.

The Cloud model has been made famous by the emergence of software-as-a-service (SaaS) players such as Force.com whose customer relationship management (CRM) called Salesforce has disrupted the software marketplace. But computing in the Cloud is able to offer much more, such as Infrastructure-as-a-Service (IaaS), Platform-as-a-Service (PaaS), Software-as-a-Service (SaaS), and now even Data-as-a-Service (DaaS).

■ Suffolk Chamber, IP-City Network and Innovation Martlesham are joining forces throughout 2010 to highlight the benefits of the digital economy to local and regional business. A focus on the digital economy is critical to continued economic growth.

■ The IP-City Network column is pleased to welcome its new sponsor for 2010, Gotelee & Goldsmith Solicitors.

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