

## IBM to invest \$1.2 billion in cloud services

19th January, 2014



International Business Machines (IBM) plans to invest \$1.2 billion to expand its cloud services. The computing and technology giant wants to bolster its

presence in the next generation of cloud storage and other services. The project includes building 15 state-of-the-art data centres across the world. IBM is having to adapt quickly to move from a predominantly hardware-based company into one providing online services. It has experienced declining revenues for the past six quarters and urgently needs to reverse this trend. An IBM spokesman told reporters: "This is fundamental because this allows us global coverage." He added: "We are continuing to invest in where we think the growth areas are going to be."

Wikipedia says: "Cloud computing is a phrase used to describe a variety of computing concepts that involve a large number of computers connected through a real-time communication network such as the Internet." In reality, "the cloud" is a metaphor for the Internet. Clever marketing has created the concept of the cloud to create more sellable services. Users of cloud services keep their data and software on a server (a huge computer) of the company offering the cloud service. There is no need to download anything or store information on a home or work computer. Wikipedia outlines several deterrents to the widespread adoption of cloud computing, including security, reliability and issues surrounding privacy.

Sources: *BusinessWeek* / *NewsTechWorld* / *Wikipedia*

### Writing

Compare and contrast storing your data on your computer or on "the cloud".

### Chat

Talk about these words from the article.

*invest / technology / next generation / cloud storage / state-of-the-art / trend / growth / concepts / metaphor / marketing / in reality / software / information / privacy*

### True / False

- IBM is investing in new technology to bring rain to dry areas. T / F
- IBM will build 15 new high-tech data centres in the USA. T / F
- The company's revenue has been falling for the past 18 months. T / F
- A spokesman said IBM's plans will give them greater global reach. T / F
- Cloud computing has little to do with real-time communication. T / F
- Companies have exploited the concept of the cloud as something new. T / F
- Users of cloud computing keep their information on their own server. T / F
- Wikipedia said privacy was a problem with cloud computing. T / F

### Synonym Match

- |                     |                     |
|---------------------|---------------------|
| 1. expand           | a. mainly           |
| 2. bolster          | b. disincentives    |
| 3. state-of-the-art | c. strengthen       |
| 4. predominantly    | d. figure of speech |
| 5. fundamental      | e. grow             |
| 6. variety          | f. requirement      |
| 7. metaphor         | g. basic            |
| 8. concept          | h. cutting-edge     |
| 9. need             | i. idea             |
| 10. deterrents      | j. assortment       |

### Discussion – Student A

- Would you prefer to download software and keep it on your computer or use cloud-based software?
- What do you think of the term "the cloud"?
- How important is online, real-time communication to you?
- Would you prefer your music to be on your computer or in the cloud?
- Would you worry about all your data being in the cloud?
- Would you trust cloud services to keep your private information safe?
- What could go wrong with cloud services?
- What do you think the Intercloud is, and what does/will it do?

## Phrase Match

- |                                   |                                |
|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 1. invest \$1.2 billion to expand | a. generation                  |
| 2. bolster its                    | b. time communication          |
| 3. the next                       | c. coverage                    |
| 4. state-of-the-                  | d. presence                    |
| 5. this allows us global          | e. adoption of cloud computing |
| 6. describe a variety             | f. surrounding privacy         |
| 7. real-                          | g. for the Internet            |
| 8. "the cloud" is a metaphor      | h. its cloud services          |
| 9. deterrents to the widespread   | i. art data centres            |
| 10. issues                        | j. of computing concepts       |

## Discussion – Student B

- What do you know about cloud computing?
- Do you use or want to use any cloud services?
- What do you think of IBM?
- Why do you think IBM's revenues have been declining?
- Is it important to you where you keep your data?
- Where do you think growth areas will be in computing in the future?
- What are the differences between the Internet and "the cloud"?
- What will come after cloud computing?

## Spelling

- bsrleot its presence
- the next gnorneieat
- cloud atgreos
- a lrtmdonipnyae hardware-based company
- declining uenrseve
- global eraceogv
- describe a veiryat of computing concepts
- "the cloud" is a eamorphht for the Internet
- Wikipedia outlines several etsdretren
- the peseddwria adoption of cloud computing
- including security, ialitriyeb and...
- issues ruudrigsonn privacy

### Answers – Synonym Match

1. e	2. c	3. h	4. a	5. g
6. j	7. d	8. i	9. f	10. b

## Role Play

### Role A – Privacy

You think privacy is the most important point for a cloud service. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them things that are wrong with their points. Also, tell the others which is the least necessary of these (and why): storage space, protection against hackers or download speed.

### Role B – Storage space

You think storage space is the most important point for a cloud service. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them things that are wrong with their points. Also, tell the others which is the least necessary of these (and why): privacy, protection against hackers or download speed.

### Role C – Hacker-proof

You think protection against hackers is the most important point for a cloud service. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them things that are wrong with their points. Also, tell the others which is the least necessary of these (and why): storage space, privacy or download speed.

### Role D – Download speed

You think download speed is the most important point for a cloud service. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them things that are wrong with their points. Also, tell the others which is the least necessary of these (and why): storage space, protection against hackers or privacy.

## Speaking – Online stuff

Rank these and share your rankings with your partner. Put the most important at the top. Change partners often and share your rankings.

- |                   |                 |
|-------------------|-----------------|
| • privacy         | • reliability   |
| • storage space   | • hacker-proof  |
| • password safety | • no ads        |
| • download speed  | • easy to share |

### Answers – True False

a	F	b	F	c	T	d	T	e	F	f	T	g	F	h	T
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Answers to Phrase Match and Spelling are in the text.