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What is Cloud Web Hosting?

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The cloud is the hot topic in computing right now. Everything is moving toward the cloud, from our data to our music to our social lives. But what exactly is the cloud, and what is cloud web hosting?

The Cloud

The cloud is simply a good name for all those servers out there hosting our data. In order to be responsive enough to be usable wherever you go, files stored in the cloud are usually scattered across various inter-networked servers around the country or even the globe. Not only does this help make access faster, it also helps make data more bulletproof. After all, it means much of the information has been replicated and on the ground hardware failures will not endanger your data.

The cloud was pioneered by Google for their search engine. Rather than have a centralized cluster of powerful machines to run the site, Google made the decision at an early stage to go with small, distributed clusters of servers, often running on hardware you could buy in the store. This decision made them very fast and flexible in their early days, making it so that no matter where you were, the site loaded as if the server was next door.

Of course, as the internet has grown, Google has opted for more powerful machines. But they've kept the cloud philosophy that was so effective for them.

Cloud Web Hosting

Cloud web hosting hosts your files on a bunch of different machines networked together rather than a single server. This helps ensure the smooth running of your site because traffic can be optimized. For example, if you have a database you happen to be pulling a lot of information from, the cloud will probably pull it from a server that isn't being used for much else at the moment. That leaves the other servers clear to host code.

Another benefit of cloud web hosting is its scalability. Because your virtual private server is running virtualized over many different servers, more servers can easily be brought on board to help with the hosting of your files. As your site grows, a cloud web host can grow your hosting with little fuss.

Cloud web hosting generally also offers cost savings over more traditional hosts. Because of the flexibility of the cloud, they can better utilize the available bandwidth and servers. Traditional servers need to have quite a bit of overhead, in case of volatility, but cloud web hosting servers already have the space somewhere else.

But just like in statistics, the larger the sample the tighter the bounds on demand can be. By combining all the servers into one machine that can share the load, cloud hosts are better able to move around traffic between the servers. The servers are less likely to get overloaded, which means smaller servers, which means that the service is cheaper. The rapidly increasing popularity of cloud web hosting is proving that this is the web hosting option of the future.

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