

: Is Amazon Web Services a 'good fit' for decision support and OLTP?

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Amazon Web Services (AWS) hosts many popular Web applications including: Instagram, Vine, IFTTT, Netflix, Heroku and Airbnb. AWS delivers a set of services that together form a "reliable, scalable, and inexpensive computing platform 'in the cloud'". On Sunday, August 25, 2013, AWS Server issues crashed a number of applications including Instagram (instagram.com), a photo and video sharing service. Chris Velazco at <http://techcrunch.com/> reported AWS was having problems at the north Virginia data center. AWS was "reporting issues with its EC2, relational database, and load-balancing services". Can companies rely on Amazon Web Services for relational database transaction processing and online analytical processing?

AWS provides "cloud computing", on-demand delivery of IT resources via the Internet with pay-as-you-go pricing. The claimed benefits are: 1) No upfront investment; 2) Low ongoing cost; 3) Flexible capacity; 4) Develop and deploy applications faster; 5) Focus on projects that differentiate your business, not the infrastructure; 6) global reach, deploy an application in any or all of the nine AWS regions around the world.

According to promotional materials, "You can use the point-and-click AWS Management Console interface to launch Database Instances (including highly available and reliable Multi-AZ deployments), take real-time snapshots of a DB Instance, and view important statistics like read and write throughput, latency, free storage space and more, all from your browser. The AWS Management Console support enhances the simplicity of running a MySQL database with Amazon RDS, making it even easier to get started."

AWS and "cloud computing" may not be a good fit for high demand, ACID transactional processing and decision support (OLAP). Perhaps organizations are creating too much centralized dependency and hence a single point of failure problem. Does the cloud centralize too many applications on the same infrastructure?

References

Amazon Web Services at <http://aws.amazon.com/>

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Velasco, C. "AWS Server Issues Take Down Instagram, Vine, Airbnb And IFTTT," 8/25/2013 at 7pm Eastern, at URL <http://techcrunch.com/2013/08/25/instagram-vine-and-ifttt-went-dark-thanks-to-amazon-web-services-issues/>

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