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## Infocomm Snapshots

### Positioning Singapore to take the lead in Cloud Computing

The Next Generation Nationwide Broadband Network, which will deliver speeds of up to 1Gbps and beyond of bandwidth to every postal address in Singapore by 2012, will help reduce the cost of communications and position Singapore to take advantage of Cloud Computing - a delivery model in which computer applications and resources can be accessed over the web on a pay-per-use basis.



Mr Khoong: Without interoperability, it would be difficult for users to move from one cloud to another.

"We are entering a paradigm shift in computing, and this spells many opportunities for the IT industry," said Mr Khoong Hock Yun, Assistant Chief Executive, Infrastructure and Services Development Group, Infocomm Development Authority of Singapore (IDA). However, there are several challenges that have to be addressed before the shift from PC-based to web-based computing can take place.

Mr Khoong was speaking at a forum on Cloud Computing organised by the Information Exchange Technical Committee (subcommittee of the IT Standards Committee), Nanyang Polytechnic, the National University of Singapore and XMLOne User Group in conjunction with Open Standards Day 2009. In his keynote address "Paving the way for Cloud Computing", he noted that cloud interoperability is desirable as it drives adoption and allows users to tap with greater ease the services offered by different cloud providers.

Standards, which lay out specifications, reduce the business risk for cloud providers. As the cloud market evolves, hopefully there would eventually be one or two standards by which vendors operate. This would reduce the risk of "lock-in" which enterprises may be wary of when deploying applications on a cloud.

The other key challenges that have to be addressed in order for Cloud Computing to take off are data security and regulatory compliance.

According to Mr Khoong, data security is the number one concern that many enterprises have about Cloud Computing, followed by performance and integration with their existing applications. However, he also pointed out that enterprises should not be expecting a level of security that they do not even have in their data centres today. "In reality, the cloud provider is able to provide better security for small and medium enterprises, compared to what they already have," he said.

On the regulatory front, Mr Khoong noted that certain industries require sector-specific regulations, for example, the United States Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act and the Sarbanes-Oxley Act. Until cloud providers can provide assurance that these regulatory frameworks are adhered to, enterprises will be hesitant to adopt the business model.

IDA, on its part, will work to identify the appropriate verticals such as finance, healthcare, high performance computing, analytics and mobility and will encourage these sectors' flagship adoption of Cloud Computing.

Industry and manpower development efforts also need to be accelerated, said Mr Khoong. IDA is focusing its attention on building up ecosystems - for example, among small and medium enterprises (SMEs) and the high performance computing community - and working on flagship project deployments. It is also working to attract leading cloud providers to hub here, while collaborating with institutes of higher learning to define the syllabus for cloud computing courseware.

"If we can solve these major problems by 2012, we can be the leading Cloud Computing adopter in the world," said Mr Khoong. "Whenever there is a paradigm shift, fortunes will move from one company to another. Opportunity shines on those who are ready."

- » [Home](#)
- » [Infocomm Snapshots](#)
- » [Singapore Showcase](#)
- » [e-Government](#)
- » [Eye 2 Eye](#)
- » [Calendar of Events](#)

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