Cloud services

Remember back in the olden days when you were limited to simply backing up everything on your local hard drive, and if that went bad, you were out of luck? Well now there is a new option for storing and backing up your data: backup to the cloud. It is quick, easy, and affordable. But how secure is it really? In this week's article we will look at how secure this storage option is.

To start, lets review the types of cloud storage very briefly: first (and most popular) we have Software as a service or SaaS. SaaS is an application that hosts storage in the cloud, such as drop box or google drive. There is also platform as a service (or PaaS) which is used for developers who need some storage to host their applications. Infrastructure as a service (IaaS), is a service that provides users a software that they can access over the internet, while also giving them the management of the infrastructure.

As for security in the cloud, you can start with the basics: make sure as always, your password is strong. Having an easy password or security question can compromise your account easily. The first line of defense in the cloud is encryption. Cloud management uses more complex encryption than the average user, making it that much more difficult for malicious users to get their grubby mitts on users' information. Some sources recommend if you are very serious on having your data protected and available, try using two cloud storages over one. This enhances security, in the case that one of the companies is compromised.

There are a few things you, as a user can do to enhance your cloud security. Don't upload medical documents or anything that is highly sensitive to the cloud. In the case of a breach, you really don't want anything sensitive floating around on the internet. Using programs like Boxcrypto and Spideroak allow you to encrypt your data before even reaching your cloud storage, enhancing your security. Lastly, do your research! Find a cloud company that has a good security track record and a good reputation for their security.

Cloud services can be a great tool, as they are convenient and make storage simple and easy. Just making sure you do it safely can prevent your data from getting into the wrong hands.

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