Presentation of: Cloud Computing’s Software-as-a-Service (SaaS) Delivery Model Benefits Technical Courses in Higher Education

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Abstract

Software-as-a-Service (SaaS) is a form of cloud computing that relieves the user of the burden of hardware and software installation and management. SaaS can be used at the course level to enhance curricula and student experience. When cloud computing and SaaS are included in educational literature, the focus is typically on implementing administrative functions. Yet, SaaS can make more immediate and substantial contributions to the technical course content in educational offerings. This paper explores cloud computing and SaaS, provides examples, reports on experiences using SaaS to offer specialized software in courses, and analyzes the advantages and disadvantages of using SaaS at the course level. The paper contributes to the literature in higher education by analyzing the major technical concepts, potential, and constraints for using SaaS to deliver specialized software at the course level. The paper is offered as a discussion session during the Informing Science & IT Education 2012 conference to increase the exchange of information and enable more students and educators to benefit from this emerging technology.

Keywords: Cloud computing, software-as-a-service (SaaS), e-service, higher education.

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