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Digital Single Market

2 October 2012

Let's get the Cloud right!

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Published 2 October 2012

Updated 16 March 2016

EU regulators are thinking hard about the effect of the data explosion fuelled by Smartphones, tablets and video apps on radio spectrum requirements and on broadband infrastructures. But at the same time, cloud computing offers the promises of transformed business models, new economic growth and new jobs. But with the new opportunities come new challenges. Europe's policy-makers and regulators need to think about this too!

--- Posted by by [David Hendon](#) [1], Senior Advisor [Ofcom](#) [2].

EU regulators are thinking hard about the effect of the data explosion fuelled by Smartphones, tablets and video apps on radio spectrum requirements and on broadband infrastructures. But at the same time, **cloud computing offers the promises of transformed business models, new economic growth and new jobs**. But with the new opportunities come new challenges. Europe's policy-makers and regulators need to think about this too!

A single market for cloud services is still in the making. Though widely hailed as a means to reduce start-up costs and increase flexibility for new businesses, it is my impression that there is still some hesitation to fully embrace cloud technology. However well-founded that might be, this hesitation should not be allowed to hamper the growth and job creation offered by cloud computing. **Rather we should explore how to provide users and providers with conditions that allow for competition and innovation.**

The framework should give confidence without impeding business innovation. Policy makers, users and providers should therefore come together and strike the right balance in establishing a functioning single market for cloud services.

Enterprises base their decision on applying cloud on many parameters, some strategic, some more practical. Enterprises are, however, challenged by the still rather opaque nature of cloud services. **What do you actually get as a customer when investing in a cloud service? How can you ensure that the service lives up to your expectations and standards?** Enterprises should have all the information required to make the best decision on a solid basis. We, the regulators and policy makers, must find out how best to contribute to this and reassure users of their rights.

There are other questions which I find important:

- **How can enterprises have confidence that their commercial data stored in the Cloud will be safe and accessible whenever they need?**
- Consumers need clarity that they own their own data – they should not need to worry about this. **How can they be reassured?**
- **How can enterprises and consumers be able to exercise choice to change provider, so that European competition policy can work, also in the Cloud?**
- And, I find the questions of **what role the EU can play when data can move from one jurisdiction to another** important.

To summarise, there are plenty obvious advantages connected to cloud computing, yet there is a need to address the challenges. At the [High Level Conference](#) [3] on 27-28 February 2012 in Copenhagen I will be moderating the session **“Doing business from the cloud - Towards a European strategy for cloud computing”**. This session brings together representatives from providers, regulators, consultancy and users to what I hope will be a future-oriented discussion about these important issues.

I hope that you will give input to this debate by posting comments, questions and suggestions for solutions. Let us know what you find is important.

You can follow the discussions on twitter at [#dsm12](#) [4]. For the full programme, please visit the [conference website](#) [5]

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