Team Update

Software, Services & Infrastructure News from Team Computing

September 2011

Privacy Act set to stop Aussie data floating away in the Cloud

THIS ISSUE:

A recent Rust Report stated that Australia leads the way in the adoption of Cloud Computing in the Asia Pacific region with 43% of enterprises using cloud computing in some form and 41% indicating that cloud computing will be a top priority for them in the current fiscal year.

But did you also know that later this year the Government will debate revisions to the Privacy Act which takes responsibility for a data breach in the cloud further than ever before?

> **"Australian entities that disclose personal information to third parties overseas will generally be liable for privacy breaches committed by those third parties."**

IF the new principles go ahead, they make you, the data owner, responsible for any breach of your clients' identifying data. Even if that breach occurs offshore at the cloud solution provider's data centre. Even if a foreign law enforcement agency accesses the server your data is on.

We're not saying don't adopt cloud computing, but as one commentator says, "Swim with extreme caution and even then, only swim between the flags – the Australian flags." In other words, stick with Australian owned and operated cloud solution providers who keep Aussie data onshore in Aussie data centres.

THE DETAILS:

On 30 September the Senate Finance and Public Administration Committee will give their report on the Government's Exposure Draft of the new Australian Privacy Principles (APPs).

The draft was released in June 2010 for community comment and review by the FPA Committee, and is a major step in the re-writing of the 1988 Privacy Act in accordance with recommendations made by the Australian Law Reform Commission.

If the revisions are passed, then they'll have significant impact on cloud computing in Australia as the new APPs will replace the "National Privacy Principles" (for the private sector) and cover key areas such as privacy policies and notices, offshore activities and outsourcing, direct marketing, and biometrics.

Notably, "The new cross-border disclosure regime outlined in the APPs will mean that Australian entities that disclose personal information to third parties overseas will generally be liable for privacy breaches committed by those third parties."

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Pete's Random Rants

Recently I had the privilege of attending a CPA function entitled “an Audience with Neil Armstrong”. Neil Armstrong is the embodiment of leadership and vision, and was the perfect choice to help us understand the importance of long-term vision and persistence. It was certainly impressive to be addressed by a man who had achieved such a milestone in human history, and his messages were startlingly simple.

Mr. Armstrong stressed that during the space race with the Russians in the 50s and 60s, the underlying goal at NASA was not to match what Russia had achieved (and remember the Russians were first to many space milestones – eg. Sputnik, the first satellite). NASA, and everyone who worked there, had the very specific goal of not only being first, but to be ***better than*** the Russians. This concept of being ***better than*** the competition influenced everything they did, and drove them to accomplish in a decade what many thought was impossible, culminating in “putting a man on the moon and returning him safely to earth”.

Mr. Armstrong’s other message came not from his words, but from the manner in which he delivered some of his points, specifically relating to the current state of the American space program. It’s obvious that Neil Armstrong the man is passionate about the value of space exploration and wants the US Congress to support better budgets and goals for NASA, but at no point did he seek to criticise the people who’d made decisions already taken, despite some active questioning from the audience. He approached his topic with dignity and respect for those with differing opinions.

This impressed me, especially in light of recent political rhetoric in this country, with personal attacks and vitriol the order of the day.

The real takeaway for me, a somewhat jaded veteran of the IT industry, was that we need to compete, and be better than our competitors, but that we can do it while still treating them with dignity and respect. We’ve recently been on the receiving end of an attack by one of our competitors. No names or details, but suffice to say we won the day, primarily because, in the eyes of this particular customer, we maintained our professional approach and didn’t resort to denigrating the offering or staff of the other side. It made me proud, and reminded me that winning (and we’ve been doing a lot of that recently) feels even better when you do it the “right” way.

In a similar vein, I thought you may like an example of how we are doing it “better than” some of our competitors. We’ve recently been working hard on getting PHP and application modernisation projects off the ground with our clients and we’ve now been approached by Zend, “the PHP Company” to be their partner here for the IBM Power range. It’s a nice vote of confidence in what we’re doing and demonstrates they appreciate that instead of simply trying to milk the IBM i platform, we are actively trying to make it better for our clients – “better than” the competitive platforms.

We’d appreciate being able to show you how we can help you make your systems “better than” they were, and to introduce you to a professional, respectful way of doing business.

STOP PRESS!

Team Computing Announces Strategic Partnership with major New Zealand based Hosting and Outsourcing Provider

Just before going to press Team Computing and New Zealand based SAS ^{IT} signed an agreement, joining forces to provide data centre, outsourcing and managed services (Cloud to the rest of us) to the Australian IBM iSeries and Wintel customer base.

SAS ^{IT} outsources about 40% of the New Zealand IBM i market and will be using Team’s local iSeries expertise and market knowledge to provide the same stellar service in Australia.

We’ll be hosting right here in Australia, backed by the excellent technical staff of both organisations. It’s a safer, more personalised cloud offering.

Contact us at Team Computing for more details, especially in light of the possible new Privacy Principles as outlined on page 1.

Why PHP on System i?

Application Modernisation
Use PHP to web-enable green screen applications, utilising existing data & business logic without rewriting application

Access RPG Programs & Data as Web Services
Package programs & data as web services & make available to other web applications

Access & Use Data from Multiple Databases
Have a modern front end capturing data from multiple databases like DB2, MS SQL, & Oracle

Consolidate Data in DB2 for i
Move PHP applications that are running on Windows or Linux that access data in DB2 to run in IBM i to speed up or reduce complexity

Access DB2 for i Data via Browser
Easily access & interact with DB2 for i data using a standard web browser

New and/or packaged Web Applications on IBM i
Create new applications with PHP on IBM i or leverage thousands of existing Open Source applications

We first wrote about how we implemented vTiger, a CRM solution written in PHP, on our IBM System i back in 2009.

Since then the demand for PHP projects from enterprises running System i legacy applications has increased dramatically - especially requests to modernise 5250 applications, and consolidate data from multiple databases into one modern front end.

Some of the requests we've received lately include:

"We need to simplify our processes and consolidate information from multiple databases onto one modern front end with a dashboard for management."

"We want to keep our legacy application but have a modern front end."

"We want an application to extract data from our Movex backend, to report incidents and automatically sms and email managers if an incident happens."

"We're having trouble finding RPG developers, and we don't have the career path for them. We want to modernise our 5250 interfaces, set standards, educate our RPG developers in PHP and provide direction."

At Team we believe that PHP is the best way to meet the needs of clients who have a lot invested in applications and data on the IBM System i, but need to make it available on the web and develop modern interfaces.

- It's easy to use AND learn
- Supports rapid development of applications
- No more green screen hassles
- You can access information on the System i with an intuitive web interface without canning your background systems.
- Most shops have an IBM I powerful enough to run without upgrading.

Introducing:

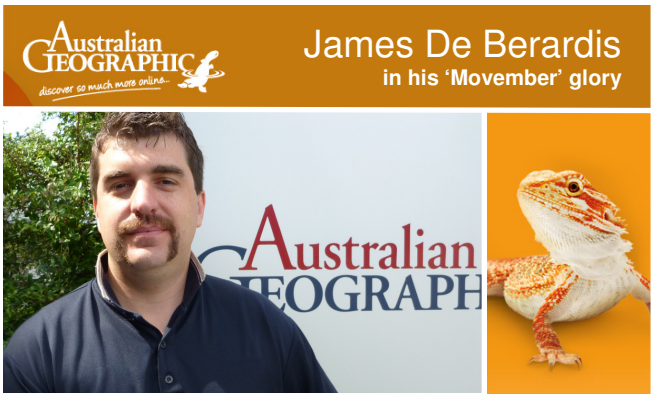
IBM Remote Management Agent

A set of robust, easy-to-use tools that allow retailers to remotely view, control and automate all their store systems including Point of Sale systems, attached peripherals, kiosks, servers, storage and network **devices from a single console at a central location**. And it's provided as part of IBM's full line of Point of Sale hardware, self checkout, kiosks, printers, and devices at no additional charge.

Designed specifically for retail, it delivers visibility, control and automation of all store systems – from a single, remote view. That means cashiers can focus on serving customers, proactive problem alerts help reduce the need for help desk and service calls,automatic asset management facilitates upgrades and delivery of new services **without on-site visits,** plus store systems can be turned off and on at scheduled times - in one location or across a chain of stores - to lower energy costs and extend asset life.

RMA works with both legacy and new devices and can be configured to follow their time in use.

Science and discovery retailer enhances in-store experience with IBM and Team Computing



Case Study excerpt taken from Business Insight:

You can read the entire article at: http://www.bizinsight.com.au/default.aspx (retail section)

Australian Geographic stores have been inspiring discovery of our unique and wonderful land since 1991.

Having experienced an increase in technical issues with its ageing point-of sale systems, Australian Geographic Retail needed a robust replacement system that could help boost operational efficiency, enhance staff productivity and deliver better customer service.

Solution

With the help of IBM Business Partner Team Computing, Australian Geographic Retail chose to roll out 100 IBM SurePOS 300 point-of-sale systems because the IBM SurePOS was designed to be cost- and energy-efficient, reliable and included integrated remote systems management.

Business Benefits

- Significant mitigation of system failure risk
- More than 90% improvement in system availability
- 15% saving in management time through integrated remote systems management
- Lower costs due to 25% reduction in power use
- Enhanced retail experience.

Due to ageing hardware and incompatible operating platforms, Australian Geographic Retail was experiencing increasing technical difficulties – including regular downtime – with its existing point-of-sale (POS) systems. "Some of the infrastructure was up to a decade old," says James De Berardis, IT Manager, Australian Geographic Retail. "It was causing availability issues for support staff, who spent a lot of time waiting for parts and making frequent store visits to fix problems."

De Berardis said the company was particularly concerned with the impact on customer service. "It posed particular problems approaching the peak trading period, from mid-October to December, because we risked losing sales," he says.

Australian Geographic Retail began assessing different POS systems and weighing up its options. "Retail stores are not necessarily pristine environments and dust can slow down cooling fans, which lowers machine performance," explains De Berardis. "We needed a cost-efficient solution that was robust, easy to maintain and reliable enough to withstand the rigours of our store environment."

With the help of IBM Business Partner Team Computing, Australian Geographic Retail chose the IBM SurePOS 300 system. The new POS system was integrated into the company's existing back end, which ran on an IBM System i® server and AdvanceRetail POS software.

"The IBM solution provided excellent value for money," says De Berardis. "It wasn't only well priced, it also added value through the intelligent connectivity of IBM's Remote Management Agent, and was energy efficient. "On top of this, the SurePOS system fitted perfectly with existing infrastructure. We didn't need to replace our communications or server infrastructure, which meant we could immediately deploy it ahead of the critical Christmas sales period."

For more information on how we can help you with your Point of Sale requirements please call Paul Ferguson in Sydney or Matt O'Brien in Melbourne on 1300 832 628.

Privacy Act set to stop Aussie data floating away in the Cloud

So in plain English, Aussie companies that save personal (identifying) data to the cloud via a foreign-based cloud services provider will be responsible for privacy breaches to that data.

And to make life interesting… Even if your data is stored in a data centre located in Australia, if your service provider is foreign-owned, then it is subject to foreign law. Your data has now come under the jurisdiction of two countries.

Let's make it a little more interesting…If your business is located in Australia, your cloud service provider is located in the USA, and they have data centres located in countries in Europe and Asia, then your data now comes under the jurisdiction of four or more countries!

Problems of Storing Data Overseas or Within a Global Cloud and APPs:

Under the new APPs, before an Aussie company can disclose personal data to an overseas recipient, it must ensure that the recipient does not breach Australian Privacy Principles.

Here's the problem: Foreign regulators can gain access to data if that data comes under their jurisdiction - if a data centre is located in their country, or a cloud vendor is head-quartered in that country. This can constitute a breach of APPs.

For example, in the USA the Patriot Act covers all US owned entities, and allows US law officials, for the purpose of an anti-terrorism investigation, access to the personal records of anyone without that person's knowledge. In June, Microsoft acknowledged that cloud data stored with a US provider is subject to that Act. This was confirmed by the MD of Microsoft UK who also acknowledged that even though data is stored in Microsoft's European data centres, because Microsoft is a US head-quartered company, it has to comply with US law… *and hand over the records if instructed.*

In China cloud computing under Chinese law is a work in progress. A proposed data protection law has been in circulation since 2005. It is still not law. In addition China's State Secrets law is extremely broad and allows for a wide scope of interpretation. This allows for easy access to data and the possibility of websites being summarily shut down in addition to criminal proceedings.

If we look at Singapore - another popular location for data centres – it doesn't recognise a right to privacy and as such other entities and law enforcement officials can easily gain access to data.

More importantly, under their Computer Misuse Act, any police officer with reasonable cause to suspect that a computer has been used in connection with an offence can have access to that computer, and with the consent of the Public Prosecutor, have the information released for investigation. Another breach.

As a company director, would you be willing to take on director liability?

Possible outcomes from September 30 include:

- Demand for Australian cloud solution providers that are owned and operated in Australia (including having an onshore data centre/s) will increase and as such we'll see a possible increase in the number of Australian data centres.
- A huge amount of effort will be put into gaining consent from clients when collecting private data to make sure they are sufficiently covered under the APPs before even considering a cloud computing offering.
- There will be a significant increase in due diligence on where data is stored and how it is managed.
- Only non-sensitive, 'open' data will be stored and used in off shore Clouds.
- Company directors will require steep contractual penalties against cloud vendors for any breach.
- In the short term, Australian businesses will be unable to reap the economic benefits of using massive Asian data centres.
- There will be greater effort to establish international treaties around privacy and data sovereignty between countries.

Conclusion:
What is apparent with the upcoming September 30 report and new APPs is that data sovereignty will become the hot topic in relation to the cloud as company directors are left carrying the burden and the risk. For the risk averse, who wish to take advantage of cost savings, flexibility and other advantages of cloud computing, the best strategy is to use caution and keep your data in Australia.

Talk to us now to discuss a safe outsourcing alternative.

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Diana Palm

Managed Services Consultant

Meet Diana who supervises the day-to-day running of our managed services area.

One of Diana's primary tasks is the daily monitoring and management of our clients' Servers, infrastructure and solutions including ERP and High Availability / Disaster Recovery.

She has 14 years experience in the IT industry, plus System i (AS/400) and ERP operational and troubleshooting experience.

In her previous life as system administrator for Australia's oldest, largest and most progressive provider of lifting, rigging, and safety services, she was also responsible for ensuring ''round the clock'' availability of IT services, disaster recovery planning, and managed the implementation of iTera – a world leading High Availability solution for 24 x 7 availability of systems. This makes her a perfect choice to head up our managed services area.

As managing technology can be a daunting and expensive experience - you have to assess an immense range of products and services from various vendors, understand how they all work, and solve problems if and when they arise - Diana is also part of our pre-sales team and available for technical help and phone support.

We are pleased to announce that Team Computing can now support your Toshiba mobile computing needs including sales of Toshiba Notebooks, sourcing of spare parts, escalation of servicing and technical support.

TOSHIBA
Leading Innovation >>>

We believe that our technical knowledge and after-sales support for Toshiba Notebooks is now one of the best.

Having completed Toshiba's Procare Training (hands on, technical training for Notebook technicians), Maia D'Souza at Team can help you source the right Notebook for your needs, recommend and source the correct spare parts, and escalate servicing of your machine.

Our after sales support - including out of warranty repairs - is further supported through Team's strong ties to Laptop Centre where Maia was previously Operations Manager. Laptop Centre is a leading Toshiba Procare Service Provider and able to perform warranty and non warranty repairs on Toshiba Notebooks.

Laptop Centre has been servicing, upgrading and repairing laptops since 2002, and boasts a team of highly experienced technicians that are able to provide fast, reliable and professional service to our customers.

From large servers to the smallest mouse or printer toner, call Maia for competitive pricing and excellent customer services

Recent Projects

.NET Health Checker

Software from Team Matches Pick Slips with Advance Ship Notices

In the retail industry an order can be picked and trucked but if the retailer at the other end has not received and entered an Ádvance Ship Notice (or pick slip confirmation), advising their warehouse of what to expect, the truck can get turned away. This results in angry truck drivers and a blowout in costs – for example this can add another day to the shipping time resulting in perishable goods passing their expiry.

Team Computing were asked to help a world leader in the do-it-yourself lawn and garden consumer industry to help them avert this problem. By sending an automatic email warning that the advance ship notice has not been received the company has time to rectify the problem prior to the truck leaving the warehouse.

Currently using third party warehouses, this company uses FTP to 'push' pick slips to the warehouses as well as sending advance shipment notices to retailers. Health Checker, written in .NET by Team Computing sends out automatic emails advising of issues and problems.

General System Backup

Operations & Support for Electrical Appliance Manufacturer

Producing award winning electrical home appliances since 1902, the majority of which are designed in Australia, this company comprises of more than 250 gift, kitchen, laundry and therapeutic products distributed via major retail outlets.

Team Computing continue to perform daily checks on the company's production and backup servers, respond to alerts, provide 24x7 coverage for emergencies, perform role swaps – this is a live cutover from the production server to the backup disaster recovery server - and ensure upgrades to the operating system and disaster recovery system are up to date.

Over Christmas the last thing a household name in electrical appliances needed was a system failure. To that end Team Computing were engaged to monitor and manage this company's general system operations and backups. Talk to us about how we can help you this Christmas!

Monitoring & On-call

Support for Packaging Giant

Ranked amongst the largest in the world as a specialty consumer packaging group with expertise in paper, plastic, film and moulded fibre, and with a presence in 37 countries, this organisation is one of the few truly global players.

As a result of their restructuring, this company's new IT support model utilises their own global support plus local specialised outsourced services.

To that end, Team Computing has been engaged to help support their Sterling GIS EDI inter-business message exchange system. In particular, to ensure that all EDI customer orders are accepted and acknowledged within the agreed time period ensuring smooth delivery at the customer sites and thereby avoiding the potential for cancelled orders. As GIS EDI is tightly integrated with BPCS – the company's key ERP system, knowledge of both is a must.

IBM System x & Blade-

Center H for Rising Star in Pharmaceutical Industry

A leading pharmaceutical company has chosen Team to supply IBM System x Server and Blade-Center H with associated HS22 Blades, and EMC CX4-480 SAN.

With annualised sales of over $230 million and growing, this company is committed to superlative customer service and are highly regarded for their policy of employing older Australians. In fact the average age of the sales representatives is 59 years old.

PHP: Open Source

vTiger with DB2 Installation

Team Computing is helping Australia's largest employer in the automotive service and repair industry, and also the largest single employer of apprentice motor mechanics in Australia, implement **vTiger – open source, CRM written in PHP.**

vTiger will extract data from their Movex database to record incidents and automatically send emails and sms messages to specific managers. The next stage of the project will include using vTiger to track equipment – what's under warranty, when it expires, notes and history and send emails to order repairs.

vTiger will use PHP and the DB2 database running natively on the IBM i.

TEAM computing

Service – Support - Value

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Premier Business Partner IBM

Proven solutions, industry leading technologies and support from PCs to mainframe-class systems.

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IBM System x
Bladecenter
Point of Sale (POS)
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HA/DR
Custom Solutions
Lotus and IBM Software
Virtualisation Solutions
Waste Management Software

SERVICES:

System Administration
Support & Service Desk
Systems Audit
Networking
Web Development
Programming:
- IBM Midrange, Web and Windows

Team Computing offer and support only proven, industry-leading technology and software solutions including ERP, EDI, Document Management, High Availability and Disaster Recovery. We are a leader in IT infrastructure services, with expertise in networks, systems, software and security, and can support a variety of technologies from PCs all the way up to mainframe-class systems.

Our specialist staff understand technology and business, and we offer a range of services including development, systems integration, consulting, training and support.

Team Computing works with customers running many different applications. These include recent upgrades:

- Infor's BPCS and PRMS
- IBS' ASW and NetStore
- Golden Key's IMAS
- JD Edward's World & OneWorld
- JDA and more…

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