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Microsoft Azure outage leaves customers in the dark for more than 12 hours

More than 12 hours after discovering issues within the cloud service, ...

DAN GOODIN - FEB 29, 2012 7:36 PM UTC

Microsoft's Azure cloud platform suffered a serious outage on Tuesday, leaving many customers unable to access core parts of the service for more than 12 hours.

Data Center Knowledge and other publications [cited a Microsoft statement](#) that the meltdown was caused by a "cert issue triggered on 2/29/2012." This prompted speculation that a bug related to today's February 29 leap-year date interfered with Azure systems processing digital certificates. A statement sent Wednesday morning by Microsoft's outside public relations firm said the outage had been resolved for most customers, but made no reference to the cert issue. It read:

“

On February 28th, 2012 at 5:45 PM PST Microsoft became aware of an issue impacting Windows Azure service management in a number of regions. Windows Azure engineering teams developed, validated and deployed a fix that resolved the issue for the majority of our customers. Some customers in 3 sub regions - North Central US, South Central US and North Europe - remain affected. Engineering teams are actively working to resolve the issue as soon as possible We will update the Service Dashboard, at <http://www.windowsazure.com/en-us/support/service-dashboard/>, hourly until this incident is resolved.

At time of writing, the above-mentioned dashboard showed Azure Service Management remained down worldwide, as did Access Control 2.0 in the South Central US and Northern Europe. SQL Azure Management Portals in at least six regions were also unavailable.

The problems caused the UK government to take CloudStore offline for at least three hours, [according to The Guardian](#). The online procurement service opened earlier this month and it allows public-sector users to buy from a catalog of 1,700 cloud services provided by 255 vendors.

The outages have left many other customers unable to manage applications hosted by Microsoft's cloud-based service, a competitor of Amazon Web services. Amazon cloud platforms haven't been immune to headache-causing glitches either. In April, Amazon Web Services [suffered a prolonged blackout](#) that caused customers including Reddit, Foursquare, and Quora to go down.

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**DAN GOODIN**

Dan is the Security Editor at Ars Technica, which he joined in 2012 after working for The Register, the Associated Press, Bloomberg News, and other publications.

EMAIL dan.goodin@arstechnica.com // **TWITTER** [@dangoodin001](https://twitter.com/dangoodin001)

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