

# IV. Backing Services

## What is a backing service?

- A **backing service** is any service the app consumes over the **network** as part of its normal operation.
- Examples include:
  - **Datastores** (such as MySQL or CouchDB).
  - **Messaging/queueing systems** (such as RabbitMQ or Beanstalkd).
  - **Binary asset services** (such as Amazon S3 or GCS).
  - **API-accessible consumer services** (such as Twitter, Google Maps, or Last.fm).
  - **Caching systems** (such as Memcached).

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- The code for a twelve-factor app makes **no distinction between local and third-party** services.
- Each distinct backing service is a **resource** accessed via a **URL or other locator/credentials** stored in the config.

