

Google

Google is also one of the largest providers of cloud services. Its offerings include the following:

- » **Google Apps:** A replacement for Microsoft Office that provides basic email, word processing, spreadsheet, and database functions via the cloud. Google Apps is free to the general public and can even be used free by small business (up to 50 users). For larger businesses, Google offers an advanced version, Google Apps for Business. For \$5 per month per user, you get extra features, such as 25GB of email data per user, archiving, and advanced options for customizing your account policies.
- » **Google Cloud Connect:** A cloud-based solution that lets you work with Google cloud data directly from within Microsoft Office applications.
- » **Google App Engine:** A PaaS interface that lets you develop your own applications that work with Google's cloud services.
- » **Google Cloud Print:** Allows you to connect your printers to the cloud so that they can be accessed from anywhere.
- » **Google Maps:** A Global Information System (GIS).

Microsoft

Microsoft has its own cloud strategy, designed in part to protect its core business of operating systems and Office applications against competition from other cloud providers, such as Google Apps.

The following paragraphs summarize several of Microsoft's cloud offerings:

- » **Microsoft Office 365:** A cloud-based version of Microsoft Office. According to Microsoft's website, Office 365 provides "anywhere access to cloud-based email, web conferencing, file sharing, and Office Web Apps at a low predictable monthly cost." For more information, check out www.office365.com.
- » **Windows Azure:** A PaaS offering that lets you build websites, deploy virtual machines that run Windows Server or Linux, or access cloud versions of server applications such as SQL Server.
- » **Microsoft Business Productivity Suite:** A SaaS product that provides cloud-based access to two of Microsoft's most popular productivity servers: Microsoft Exchange and Microsoft SharePoint. The suite lets you deploy these servers without having to create and maintain your own local servers.