

# Why Amazon's Data Centers Are Hidden in Spy Country



By Eli McGehee



“Of all the places where Amazon operates data centers, northern Virginia is one of the most significant, in part because it’s where AWS first set up shop in 2006”

“AWS doesn’t aggressively brand or call attention to their data centers. They absolutely don’t give tours, and their website offers only rough approximations of the locations of their data centers...”

Eli McGehee

# Up to 70 percent of Internet traffic *worldwide* travels through Virginia! But Why?



**Tysons Corner is just far away enough from Washington to be safe from nuclear attack but close enough to remain accessible.**

**“In 2012, a now-lost blog post by network-intelligence startup DeepField estimated that on average, one-third of all daily Internet usage accesses a site running on AWS”**



# Key Quotes:

“Amazon didn’t invent the principles behind cloud computing, but they made the infrastructure of cloud computing into a dirt-cheap commodity”

Thanks to AWS, the initial overhead for starting a service like Airbnb or Slack (both AWS customers) is so low that those companies can afford to expand quickly.

The Cloud is as fragile as the strands of fiber-optic cable upon which its physical infrastructure rests.

## Questions:

- What are the pros and cons of companies like Amazon monopolizing cloud data?
- Why do big tech companies obscure information regarding their data centers (i.e. location, traffic stats, etc.)
- Are there any other methods of data storage that you all think could work better? Why?