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# Abstract

In a society which is becoming increasingly more dependent on technology, and likewise on cloud computing applications, it is essential to have an understanding of the security risks associated with this new-age technological dependency. This study seeks to answer the question: “in what ways and to what extent do public level cloud computing networks possess inherent security risks?” The study examines key attributes in the SaaS (Software-as-a-Service) cloud computing model, both as individual components and holistically, that introduce security risks into the cloud. These components include network security, data locality, data integrity, web application security, data breaches and segregation, vulnerability in virtualization, backup and disaster recovery, and identity management. Statistical analysis of numerous reports, surveys, and additional documentation will uncover evidence suggesting the presence of inherent security hazards in many SaaS cloud attributes as well as hazards that while non-inherent, still pose credible security risks. Security suggestions will be offered to mitigate some of these security risks. The evidence will further suggest that security risks with sufficiently large severity and scope can be generally associated with risks deemed to be inherent of SaaS in the cloud. The study concludes that public-level cloud computing networks do in fact possess a limited selection of inherent security risks.

(205 Words)

Table of Contents

[1. Abstract 2](#_Toc379904958)

[2. Introduction to Cloud Computing 4](#_Toc379904959)

[2.1 Cloud Service Models 4](#_Toc379904960)

[2.2 Cloud Deployment Models 5](#_Toc379904961)

[2.3 Justification for Investigation 6](#_Toc379904962)

[3. Security Issues in the SaaS Model 6](#_Toc379904963)

[3.1 Network Security 6](#_Toc379904964)

[3.2 Data Locality 7](#_Toc379904965)

[3.4 Web Application Security 8](#_Toc379904966)

[4.5 Data Breaches & Segregation 9](#_Toc379904967)

[3.6 Vulnerability in Virtualization 9](#_Toc379904968)

[3.7 Backup & Disaster Recovery 10](#_Toc379904969)

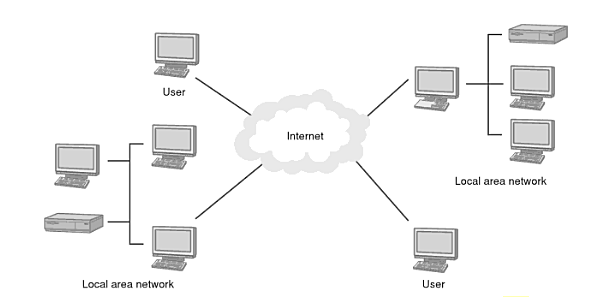
[3.8 Identity Management / Login Process 11](#_Toc379904970)

[4. Conclusion 12](#_Toc379904971)

[5. References 14](#_Toc379904972)

# Introduction to Cloud Computing

For years, network administrators and other technical professionals have illustrated the Internet and its underlying protocols simplistically as a cloud (Figure 1). This image allowed developers to temporarily disregard the complex nature of cloud communication in favor of a visually oriented understanding that information would successfully flow from one Internet-connected network to another [1]. The cloud computing model in its most basic respect is defined by Merriam-Webster as “the practice of storing regularly used computer data on multiple servers that can be accessed through the Internet” [2].



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