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A syndicated newspaper column by Bob and Joy Schwabach

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WORKING IN A CLOUD

Posted on **October 23rd, 2009** by Bob and Joy Schwabach



Working in a cloud is not the same as working in a fog — something we've long been familiar with.

It's a cloud floating out there on the worldwide web. In fact, "cloud computing" just means transferring stuff from your computer to the Internet, something every Facebook and Flickr user already does. Once you've found your way to it, you can use the cloud as if you're at work. In fact, everyone you work with can also use it as if they're at work. People can work singly or all together. Lots of people can work together at the same time. And when it's time to leave they can just walk out the door. They don't have to turn out the lights, because the cloud is always open. It's hip, it's the future.

Clouds have become so popular that there's been a change in the cyberspace weather. Amazon.com recently created a cloud for business users called Amazon Web Services; it's at aws.amazon.com. Google has one, called [Google Apps Premier Edition](#); [SalesForce.com](#) was one of the early movers into cloud space, also called "Software as a Service;" Microsoft has Windows Azure. IBM, Hewlett Packard and Intel are setting up their own clouds.

So much computing power can be stored in a cloud that users with a personal computer can operate as if they had a million-dollar mainframe. We talked to an [InfoStreet.com](#) cloud user who says he made the switch from Microsoft Exchange and has saved around \$300,000. He uses InfoStreet for calendar tools, a sales database, file sharing, email, project management and free conference calling. The cost is \$10 per user per month, or 10 cents a day per user for companies with over 200 users.

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