

# **Cry for Help**

Computer Tips & Tricks for the novice to the advanced.

## **Cloud Computing**

What is Cloud Computing? I've spoken previously about sharing documents "in the cloud" and computer backups being stored "in the cloud", but what and where is this cloud?

In fact we have been using the cloud for over 16 years in the form of HotMail (free eMail accounts). So this is simply a new name for an old concept. More recently though, many more services are being offered as "cloud" based. Generally it means that the software and storage is running on a server on the internet somewhere else. It is not installed on your computer.

Cloud services are subscription based rather than you having to purchase the software.

It is like owning a car verses renting it. When renting, you don't have to worry about the servicing or the replacement cost, only the on-going charges. However, you need to make sure that the company supplying the service is going to be there when you need them, and that they have appropriate security for your valuable assets.

Other examples of cloud services are; On-line accounting software, Google Docs, DropBox, Hosting of your web sites, Office 365 and On-line booking and reservation systems. In each case the physical location of the software is unimportant, so long as it is always available for your use.

A big advantage of these services, is that software upgrades are easier to do in one place rather than on every user's computer, and once you have a login account – you can use the service from multiple locations on multiple devices.

**Jonathan Harris**  
**JNH Software Pty Ltd**  
**5259 2304**

