The Resource-as-a-Service (RaaS) Cloud

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What will be the New Thing After IaaS?

Recent IaaS Trends:
- The shrinking duration of rental periods
- The increasingly fine-grained resources offered for sale
- The provisioning of useful service level agreements (SLAs)

These trends and the economy will drive IaaS to turning into RaaS.
Trend: Granularity of Duration of Rent

- 3 years on average: buying hardware
- Months: web hosting
- Hours: EC2 on-demand (pay-as-you-go)
- 5 minutes: CloudSigma, EC2 Spot Instances (pay-as-you-go)
Clients want to pay for resources only when they need them.

Clients need extra resources to be allocated within seconds (e.g., when slashdotted).

Phone charges are advancing from minutes to single seconds.

Phone companies were driven by consumer pressure and court orders.

We extrapolate that cloud resources will be rented by the second.
Trend: Resource Granularity

- Most cloud providers sell fixed bundles, called “instance types” or “server sizes”.

- Amazon allows adding and removing of “network instances” and “block instances”, thus dynamically changing I/O resources.

- CloudSigma offers clients to compose a flexible bundle.
Extrapolation: Resource Granularity

- As physical servers increase, an entire server may be too much for a single client.
- Renting a fixed bundle may waste client resources, even if its requirements stay the same over time. For example, if the client can only use 7 cores, why should it rent 8?
- We extrapolate that clients will rent a basic bundle, and dynamically supplement it with resources in fine granularity.
A job half done

If only the first two trends culminate as described, then clients can finally optimize their resource use. However, this is not enough to guarantee a green, efficient cloud. Would they really optimize? Will they optimize the right target function for a green cloud?
Most cloud providers account for rigid availability only ("the machine is accessible").

GoGrid and CloudSigma provide guarantees in terms of minimal actual delivered capacity (latency, packet loss and jitter).
Economy of Service Level Agreements

- Benchmarks show great variance in the performance of supposedly similar cloud instances.
- Different clients need different guarantees: a bank will pay for 100% availability. A small business may settle for a 95% guarantee.
- Client valuations of performance and resources differ and are private information.
- Some researchers (Padala’09, Heo’09, Nathuji’10) argue for selling client performance and measuring it. This concept is impossible for a real commercial IaaS black box client.

- IaaS Providers cannot sell performance. They must keep selling resources.
We extrapolate that:

- Client pressure for efficiency will drive providers to supply levels of quality service: “For 90% of the time” or just “for 80% of the time”.
- Low-QoS clients will be willing to pay less than high-QoS clients.
Economic Forces Acting on the Provider

- Economic mechanisms will be required inside a machine.
- The provider must keep spare resources for high-QoS clients.
- The provider can let low-QoS clients use the spare resources, subject to availability.
- The provider must mix low QoS clients with high QoS clients.
Economic Forces Acting on the Client

- Clients aim to buy exactly what they need, to save on expenses.
- And since providers aim to sell clients what they want to buy, to gain and retain clients...
- CPU is rented by cycles, memory is rented by the page, I/O is rented by bandwidth.
Both clients and providers must continuously decide what to buy and when to buy it.
The fine rent time granularity and bundle flexibility makes decision making a core function.
Both providers and clients will use economic agent software to handle decision making and economic interaction.
The RaaS Cloud

Host

- Host Agent
  - Decision Maker
  - Communicator
  - Resource Controller

Guest

- Strategic Agent
  - Perf(resource)
  - Value(perf)
  - Strategy Adviser
  - Communicator
  - Resource

Application
The Guest Agent

- Changes the desired amount of resources on a second-by-second basis.
- Negotiates
- Trades in the futures market.
- Sublets.
- Is not mandatory: dumb clients are still supported, with the same inefficiency of today’s IaaS clouds.
The Host Agent: Market Driven Resource Allocation

- Has a view of the global picture (total system resources, change predictions)
- Dictates economic mechanisms and protocols.
- Allocates resources according to agreements.
- Uses the resources to verify that high-QoS clients are satisfied, possibly at the expense of low-QoS clients on the same machine, and given the specific current needs of each client.
A client software stack (applications, libraries, OS) that utilizes resources for short durations and trades them off.
Economic (game theoretic) mechanisms for multi-resource allocation with different QoS levels.

- Realistic
- Incentive compatible
- Collusion-resistant
- Computationally efficient at large scale
- Optimizes the provider’s revenue or a social welfare function
- Minimizes the price of anarchy
Implications, Challenges, Opportunities

- Technical mechanisms for handling resource (re)allocation, metering and charging:
  - efficient,
  - reliable,
  - and resistant to side channel attacks.
Balancing guests across a data-center to create heterogeneous mixes of QoS levels on each machine.
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Thank You!