

**DRAFT - Evaluation of  
Cloud Computing Services  
Based on NIST 800-145**

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**National Institute of Standards and  
Technology (NIST)**

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Based on work done by the NIST Cloud Computing Services Public Working Group

*This document provides clarification for qualifying a given computing capability as a cloud service by determining if it aligns with the NIST definition of cloud computing; and for categorizing a cloud service according to the most appropriate service model (SaaS, PaaS, or IaaS).*

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## 1 Introduction

The Federal Cloud Computing Strategy<sup>1</sup> characterizes cloud computing as a “profound economic and technical shift (with) great potential to reduce the cost of federal Information Technology (IT) systems while ... improving IT capabilities and stimulating innovation in IT solutions.” To promote the mission and economic benefits of cloud services, the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) issued a “Cloud First” policy to encourage the adoption of cloud computing services to gain new efficiencies and save money. The policy requires agency Chief Information Officers (CIOs) to implement a cloud-based service whenever there is a secure, reliable, and cost-effective option. The policy takes advantage of cost savings efficiencies that were described in several complementary and parallel United States Government (USG) initiatives, such as the 25 Point Implementation Plan to Reform Federal Information Technology Management.

The National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST), consistent with its mission,<sup>2</sup> has a technology leadership role in support of the USG secure and effective adoption of the Cloud Computing model<sup>3</sup> to reduce costs and improve services. NIST was charged with the mission of developing a cloud computing technology roadmap and to lead efforts in developing and prioritizing cloud computing standards. The NIST Cloud Computing Program (NCCP) created a series of public working groups on cloud computing to generate input for the SP 500-291 NIST Cloud Computing Standards and Roadmap, and SP 500-293 NIST Cloud Computing Technology Roadmap, Volume I and II. This document, hereafter referred to as “the Roadmap,” contains ten high-level priority requirements in security, interoperability, and portability for the USG’s adoption of cloud computing.

Requirement 4 of the Roadmap is for “*Clearly and consistently categorized cloud services.*” This requirement is important to ensure that customers understand the characteristics of different types of cloud services and are able to objectively evaluate, compare, and select cloud services suitable to meet their business objectives.

In the absence of clarification, organizations are at risk of adopting “services” that do not provide characteristics of cloud computing. For example, some vendors reportedly decide to label their computing offerings as “cloud services,” even if the offerings do not support the essential characteristics of a cloud service in the NIST definition.

Furthermore, the frequent and common usage of the informal “aaS” suffix in marketing, as in “EaaS”, “DaaS”, and “STaaS” (often referred to as “XaaS” or “Everything as a Service”) is confusing, and (unintentionally) obfuscating the architecturally well-founded distinction of IaaS, PaaS, and SaaS. These “cloud service types” are generally coined by appending the suffix “aaS” after a type of computing capability. This makes it difficult to determine whether something is a cloud service and has unintended consequence for organizations trying to satisfy their cloud-first objectives.

To demystify the ambiguity surrounding cloud services, the NIST Cloud Computing Services Public Working Group analyzed the NIST cloud computing definition and developed guidance on how to use it to evaluate cloud services.

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<sup>1</sup> Office of Management and Budget, U.S. Chief Information Officer, Federal Cloud Computing Strategy, Feb. 8, 2011. Online: [www.cio.gov/documents/Federal-Cloud-Computing-Strategy.pdf](http://www.cio.gov/documents/Federal-Cloud-Computing-Strategy.pdf).

<sup>2</sup> This effort is consistent with the NIST role per the National Technology Transfer and Advancement Act (NTTAA) of 1995, which became law in March 1996.

<sup>3</sup> NIST Definition of Cloud Computing, Special Publication 800-145, September 2011.

## Evaluation of Cloud Computing Services Based on NIST 800-145

This document clarifies the cloud computing service models as published in NIST Special Publication (SP) 800-145, *The NIST Definition of Cloud Computing* (NIST Definition, September 2011). The NIST Definition was intended for the stated purpose of “broad comparisons of cloud services and deployment strategies, and to provide a baseline for discussion from what is cloud computing to how to best use cloud computing.”<sup>4</sup>

The clarification supports the proper planning for cloud migration, deployment, and retirement of relevant legacy systems. The GAO recommended in July 2012 that seven audited federal agencies should establish estimated costs, performance goals, and plans to retire associated legacy systems for each type of cloud-based service as well as the same for retiring legacy systems, as applicable, for planned additional cloud-based services<sup>5</sup>.

As this document is meant to provide guidance in understanding the categorization, evaluation, comparison, and selection of cloud services, it does not provide a prescriptive set of guidelines for the selection process. Instead, it uses the principles set forth in the NIST cloud computing definition as a framework for understanding a customer’s requirements in a cloud computing context and the capabilities offered by cloud service providers (CSP)s to enable easier decision making. The NIST cloud computing definition allows for flexibility in its interpretation and in many cases, the final decision relies on a mixture of objective and subjective perspectives.

This document is intended for use by any stakeholder, including, but not limited to, buyers of IT and cloud services, IT managers, program managers, FedRAMP stakeholders, systems integrators, resellers of cloud services, etc.

## 2 The NIST Definition of Cloud Computing

NIST SP 800-145 was published in the fall of 2010. Since that time, the cloud computing environment has experienced a growth in technical maturity, yet the NIST Definition has retained a worldwide acceptance. This document provides an analysis of the NIST Definition of Cloud Computing based on today’s perspective and provides a methodology for evaluating services, complementing the NIST definition.

NIST SP 800-145 provides a one sentence definition of cloud computing as “*a model for enabling ubiquitous, convenient, on-demand network access to a shared pool of configurable computing resources (e.g., networks, servers, storage, applications, and services) that can be rapidly provisioned and released with minimal management effort or service provider interaction.*” In addition, the NIST definition introduces the supporting concepts of *three cloud service models, five essential characteristics, and four types of cloud deployments.*

In total, the NIST Cloud Computing Definition is composed of 14 interrelated terms and their associated definitions:

Core definition of the cloud computing model (above)

Five essential characteristics

- On-demand self-service
- Broad network access
- Resource pooling
- Rapid elasticity
- Measured service

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<sup>4</sup> <http://csrc.nist.gov/publications/nistpubs/800-145/SP800-145.pdf>

<sup>5</sup> <http://www.gao.gov/assets/600/592249.pdf>

## Evaluation of Cloud Computing Services Based on NIST 800-145

### Three service models

- Software as a Service (SaaS)
- Platform as a Service (PaaS)
- Infrastructure as a Service (IaaS)

### Four deployment models

- Public
- Private
- Community
- Hybrid

Footnoted definition of “cloud infrastructure.”

SP500-145 also includes multiple clarifying statements that are integrated into the text of the various definitions. The NIST Definition makes use of additional terms that are clarified below:

**Application:** Within the context of cloud computing, the term application may refer to either a cloud-enabled SaaS, web or mobile application (e.g. Facebook), or an application that exists on a virtual machine (e.g., Linux application). It is therefore preferable to clarify that type of application when using the term to avoid confusion.

**as a Service (aaS):** The term “as a [cloud] Service” is a suffix describing a computing capability that supports all five essential characteristics of cloud computing. The term “as a service (aaS)” implies that SaaS, PaaS, and IaaS are delivered by way of software.

**Cloud Infrastructure:** The collection of hardware and software that enables the five essential characteristics of cloud computing. The consumer of a cloud service does not manage or control the underlying cloud infrastructure. Cloud Infrastructure is represented in SP 500-292 NIST Cloud Computing Reference Architecture (CCRA) within the ‘Resource Abstraction and Control’ layer and Hardware layer.

**Cloud Service:** A computing capability that is delivered as a service.

**Essential Characteristics:** The five characteristics that must be available in a computing capability to be qualified as a “cloud service.” They are listed here for clarity, but are discussed in greater details in Section 3.

- on-demand self-service (see clause 3.1)
- broad network access (see clause 3.2)
- resource pooling (see clause 3.3)
- rapid elasticity (see clause 3.4)
- measured service (see clause 3.5)

**Multi-tenant:** An architecture in which a single computing resource is shared but logically isolated to serve multiple consumers.

**Service Model:** The highest-level categorization of cloud services as based on the type of computing capability that is provided. Any given cloud service may be categorized as one of three service models, namely Software as a Service (SaaS), Platform as a Service (PaaS), or Infrastructure as a Service (IaaS).

This document uses an additional term “cloud service type” to describe informal terms often coined and used by industry by adding the suffix “aaS” after a computing capability, e.g., Email as a Service (EaaS). cloud service types are analyzed in Section 7 of this document.

### 3 Analysis of the Essential Characteristics of Cloud Computing

This section provides a detailed analysis of the five Essential Characteristics of Cloud Computing found above. The approach was to decompose each characteristic to determine the primary criteria for determining if a computing capability is offered as a cloud service and the different options for determining whether the criteria is met.

To understand the essential characteristics, it is important to understand the meaning of the term “essential.” In the context of SP 800-145 and this document, “essential” means each cloud service provider (CSP) must have the capability to offer and to provide each essential characteristic to the cloud service customer (CSC) for a given service. The CSC may or may not elect to implement or use each essential characteristic in a specific instance. In addition, the CSC must make a subjective judgement to determine if their requirements are fulfilled and to decide if the CSP’s offering can be considered a cloud service for their purposes.

The process of categorizing a computing capability is not always definitive because the requirements for the service may vary by CSC. Therefore, this document allows flexibility in determining that a computing capability qualifies as a cloud service by providing options for evaluating each capability.

The options are described as “Option A” or “Option B,” where “Option A” is more objective, while “Option B” is more subjective and dependent on the specific requirements of the CSC. If a CSC chooses to use Option B instead of Option A, they must evaluate whether “Option B” meets their requirements, and the results are not comparable between CSCs with different requirements.

Whether an entity can confirm a specific criterion is dependent on the criterion itself. Some criteria are externally visible (such as availability) and can be confirmed by the CSC or other third party entity, while other criteria (such as resource pooling) are internal to the cloud service and must be confirmed by the CSP.

#### 3.1 On-demand self-service

*“A consumer can unilaterally provision computing capabilities, such as server time and network storage, as needed automatically without requiring human interaction with each service provider.” – NIST Definition of Cloud Computing*

<b>Primary Criteria</b>	<p>The computing capability can be provisioned without human interaction with the service provider.</p> <p><b>Option A)</b> Fully automated service provisioning (both the CSC interface and the internal cloud infrastructure).</p> <p><b>Option B)</b> The CSC uses an automated interface to request and track the service, but the provider may use manual labor to provision the service internally.</p>
<b>Entity capable of confirming?</b>	<p>The CSC can confirm it is either Option A or Option B but cannot distinguish one from the other because they can only see the</p>

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	provisioning interface, not the system behind the interface. Therefore, the CSP will confirm whether it is Option A or Option B.
<b>Additional Clarification</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The term consumer and CSC are used synonymously.</li> <li>• Examples of “computing capabilities” include server time and network storage.</li> <li>• The term “Unilaterally” refers to the fact that the CSC initiates the service without human interaction with a human on the CSP side. The CSC organization may have a workflow process involving humans such as those for oversight and approval of expenditures, and the purchase can still be described as unilateral.</li> <li>• The term automatically refers to automated provisioning.</li> <li>• The question arose as to whether a ticketing system supports the requirement for automated provisioning. The Cloud Services Working Group members suggest “yes,” as long as the provisioning is fast enough to support CSC requirements as described in the Service-Level Agreement (SLA).</li> </ul>
<b>Benefits</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “As needed” access to computing capabilities.</li> </ul>

### 3.2 Broad network access

*“Capabilities are available over the network and accessed through standard mechanisms that promote use by heterogeneous thin or thick client platforms (e.g., mobile phones, tablets, laptops, and workstations).” – NIST Definition of Cloud Computing*

<b>Primary Criteria</b>	<p>The computing capability is available from a wide range of locations using standard protocols.</p> <p><b>Option A)</b> Available over the Internet.  <b>Option B)</b> Available over a network that is available from all access points the CSC requires.</p>
<b>Entity capable of confirming</b>	<p>The CSC or CSP can confirm Option A.</p> <p>The CSC will confirm Option B (this is based on the CSC's requirements for the cloud service).</p>
<b>Additional Clarification</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Examples of thin or thick client platforms are mobile phones, tablets, laptops, and workstations.</li> <li>• The phrase “thin or thick” is not included as primary criteria because it includes all clients.</li> </ul>

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The term “standard mechanisms” implies that the computing capability is available using standard protocols such of http, REST, TCP/IP, UDP, and/or other Internet protocols.</li> <li>• The term “broad network” can apply equally to public, private, or hybrid clouds.</li> </ul>
<b>Benefits</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Anytime anyplace access to computing resources from any machine within policy and security constraints,</li> </ul>

### 3.3 Resource Pooling

*“The provider’s computing resources are pooled to serve multiple consumers using a multi-tenant model, with different physical and virtual resources dynamically assigned and reassigned according to consumer demand. There is a sense of location independence in that the customer generally has no control or knowledge over the exact location of the provided resources but may be able to specify location at a higher level of abstraction (e.g., country, state, or datacenter). Examples of resources include storage, processing, memory, and network bandwidth.” – NIST Definition of Cloud Computing*

<b>Primary Criteria</b>	The computing infrastructure is shared among more than one CSC. <b>Option A)</b> Two or more CSCs can share the cloud service resources using a multi-tenant model.
<b>Entity capable of confirming</b>	This is dependent on the internal architecture of the cloud service – therefore the CSP will confirm.
<b>Additional Clarification</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There is a sense of location independence in that the CSC generally has no control or knowledge over the exact location of the provided resources but may be able to specify location at a higher level of abstraction (e.g., country, state, or data center).</li> <li>• Examples of “resources” include storage, processing, memory, and network bandwidth.</li> <li>• The term consumer and CSC are used synonymously.</li> <li>• The essential characteristic is met if the capability to serve multiple tenants exists, regardless of how many tenants are actually served.</li> <li>• According to the NIST Special Publication 500-293 – U.S. Government Cloud Computing Technology Roadmap Volume II, the Resource Abstraction and Control Layer of the Cloud Computing Reference Architecture “ties together the numerous underlying physical resources and their software abstractions to enable resource pooling.”</li> </ul>

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Resource pooling is an inherent benefit of any service model (SaaS, PaaS, or IaaS) that is hosted on cloud infrastructure.</li> </ul>
<b>Benefits</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lowers costs by sharing resources.</li> </ul>

### 3.4 Rapid elasticity

“Capabilities can be elastically provisioned and released, in some cases automatically, to scale rapidly outward and inward commensurate with demand. To the consumer, the capabilities available for provisioning often appear to be unlimited and can be appropriated in any quantity at any time.” – *NIST Definition of Cloud Computing*

<b>Primary Criteria</b>	<p>The computing capabilities can be “rapidly” provisioned and released to scale.</p> <p><b>Option A)</b> Resource allocation modification is automated and near-real-time.</p> <p><b>Option B)</b> Not fully automated, but fast enough to support the requirements of the CSC.</p>
<b>Entity capable of confirming</b>	The CSC or CSP can confirm.
<b>Additional Clarification</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To the CSC, the capabilities available for provisioning often appear to be unlimited and can be appropriated in any quantity at any time.</li> <li>Rapid elasticity generally relates to horizontal scaling.</li> </ul>
<b>Benefits</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ability to quickly grow and shrink computing capability – and associated costs – dynamically according to need.</li> </ul>

### 3.5 Measured service

“Cloud systems automatically control and optimize resource use by leveraging a metering capability<sup>1</sup> at some level of abstraction appropriate to the type of service (e.g., storage, processing, bandwidth, and active user accounts). Resource usage can be monitored, controlled, and reported, providing transparency for both the provider and consumer of the utilized service.” – *NIST Definition of Cloud Computing*

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<b>Primary Criteria</b>	<p>Cloud services characteristics including resource usage are measured with enough detail to support the requirements of the CSC.</p> <p><b>Option A)</b> Cloud service characteristics are measured with enough detail to support the requirements of the CSC.</p>
<b>Entity capable of confirming</b>	<p>The CSC or CSP can confirm.</p>
<b>Additional Clarification</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The term consumer and CSC are used synonymously.</li> <li>• Typically “metering” is done on a pay-per-use or charge-per-use basis, though metering may be used for “showback,” as well as chargeback. For example, in a private cloud, metering may be used to show organizational leadership which parts of the organization are consuming what portion of cloud resources.</li> <li>• Examples include tracking units of services consumed and associated costs, and tracking resource usage to the application level.</li> <li>• Resource usage can be monitored, controlled, and reported, providing transparency for both the CSP and CSC of the utilized service.</li> </ul>

### 4 Analysis of Cloud Service Models

In SP 800-145, cloud services are the computing capabilities that are provided by the CSP (that supports the essential characteristics of cloud computing). The NIST Cloud Computing Definition provides three possible cloud services categories (called service models): Software as a Service (SaaS), Platform as a Service (PaaS), and Infrastructure as a Service (IaaS). With respect to the NIST Cloud Computing Reference Architecture (CCRA), cloud services are made available in the Service layer, which is part of the Service Orchestration stack.

The Service Models are depicted in the CCRA as “L shaped” horizontal and vertical bars, rather than as a simple “three-layer cake” stack. The reason is that, although cloud services can be dependent upon each other in the stack, it is also possible for the services to be implemented independently and interact directly with the resource abstraction and control layer.

SaaS, PaaS, and IaaS are best distinguished by two factors: the computing capability that is provisioned and the primary CSCs (end user, developer/deployer, or IT operations). The term “platform” in the PaaS context refers to a development platform and/or deployment platform for cloud-enabled applications. The term “platform” is broadly used in the computing industry. It therefore helps to understand the context of the term with regard to Platform as a Service.

**This section supports the categorization of a given cloud service as a software, platform, or infrastructure service.** This guidance for categorizing cloud services supports Requirement #4 of the U.S. Government Cloud Computing Technology Roadmap Volume I (SP 500-293, October 2014), which calls for “clear and consistently categorized cloud services.”

The primary determining factors for categorizing a cloud service are:

- 1) The computing capability that is provisioned (software application, platform or infrastructure); and
- 2) The primary CSCs (end user, developer/deployer, or IT operations).

#### 4.1 Software as a Service (SaaS)

The capability provided to the CSC is to use the CSP’s applications running on a cloud infrastructure.<sup>6</sup> The applications are accessible from various client devices through either a thin client interface, such as a web browser (e.g., web-based email), or a program interface. The CSC does not manage or control the underlying cloud infrastructure including network, servers, operating systems, storage, or even individual application capabilities, with the possible exception of limited user-specific application configuration settings.

<b>Primary Criteria</b>	<p>1) The service that is provisioned is a software application, described as computer programs designed to permit the user to perform a group of coordinated functions, tasks, or activities.<sup>7</sup></p> <p>AND</p> <p>2) The primary CSCs are end users of software applications.<sup>8</sup></p>
<b>Entity capable of confirming</b>	The CSC will confirm.
<b>Additional Clarification</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The term “applications” in the SaaS context refers to cloud-enabled applications (e.g., web or mobile) by nature of supporting essential characteristic #2 – broad network access. This differs from VM/desktop applications that may be installed on a virtual machine.</li> <li>• SaaS applications are accessible from various client devices through either a thin client interface, such as a web browser (e.g., web-based email), or application programming interface (API).<sup>9</sup></li> <li>• SaaS applications may be extensible by way of an API.</li> <li>• A web application is not necessarily considered SaaS, unless the application itself qualifies as a cloud service.</li> <li>• The SaaS provider is typically responsible for all aspects of making the software service available, including the availability of any PaaS and IaaS dependencies. The NIST Reference</li> </ul>

<sup>6</sup> See definition of Cloud Infrastructure on page 5.

<sup>7</sup> <http://www.pcmag.com/encyclopedia/term/37919/application-program>

<sup>8</sup> Reference Architecture 2.2 (Cloud Consumer); and USG Cloud Computing Technology Roadmap 2.2.2.1

<sup>9</sup> <http://csrc.nist.gov/publications/nistpubs/800-145/SP800-145.pdf>

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	<p>Architecture for Cloud Computing clarifies that the SaaS provider is responsible for deploying, configuring, maintaining, and updating the operation of the software applications on a cloud infrastructure. The term “provider” refers to the entity responsible for making the service available and may therefore be different than the SaaS application developer.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Many modern SaaS applications are extensible. Extensibility alone does not denote that a software service is PaaS.</li> </ul>
<b>Common categories</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Custom (For example, custom applications built or deployed using PaaS)</li> <li>• Off the shelf (For example, cloud-based email applications)</li> </ul>

### 4.2 Platform as a Service (PaaS)

The capability provided to the CSC is to deploy onto the cloud infrastructure CSC-created or acquired applications created using programming languages, libraries, services, and tools supported by the provider.\*<sup>3</sup> The CSC does not manage or control the underlying cloud infrastructure including network, servers, operating systems, or storage, but has control over the deployed applications and possibly configuration settings for the application-hosting environment.

*\*<sup>3</sup> This capability does not necessarily preclude the use of compatible programming languages, libraries, services, and tools from other sources.*

<b>Primary Criteria</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The service that is provisioned is a software development and/or deployment platform, described as the capability to [develop and/or] deploy applications<sup>10</sup> without the complexities of managing underlying infrastructure services.<sup>11</sup></li> </ol> <p>AND</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2. The primary CSCs are application developers who design and implement application software, and application deployers who publish applications into the cloud.<sup>12</sup></li> </ol>
<b>Entity capable of confirming</b>	The CSC will confirm.
<b>Additional Clarification</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The term “platform” in the PaaS context refers to a development and/or deployment platform for cloud-enabled applications.</li> </ul>

<sup>10</sup> <http://csrc.nist.gov/publications/nistpubs/800-145/SP800-145.pdf>

<sup>11</sup> <http://www.networkworld.com/article/2163430/cloud-computing/paas-primer--what-is-platform-as-a-service-and-why-does-it-matter-.html>

<sup>12</sup> Reference Architecture 2.2 (Cloud Consumer); and USG Cloud Computing Technology Roadmap 2.2.2.1 (Cloud Consumer)

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The term “applications” in the PaaS context refers to cloud-enabled applications (e.g., web or mobile) by nature of supporting essential characteristic #2 – broad network access. This differs from VM/desktop applications that may be installed on a virtual machine.</li> <li>• PaaS is distinguished from an extensible SaaS or web application by its primary CSCs: developers and deployers versus end users.</li> <li>• The applications can be CSC-created or acquired.</li> <li>• The applications can be created using programming languages, libraries, services, and tools supported by the provider. This does not necessarily preclude the use of compatible programming languages, libraries, services, and tools from other sources.<sup>13</sup></li> <li>• A PaaS provider may be responsible for making the platform service available, including any IaaS dependencies. These typical terms may be negotiated as a shared responsibility model.</li> </ul>
<b>Common Categories</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Application development platforms</li> <li>• Application deployment platforms</li> <li>• Integration platforms</li> </ul>

### 4.3 Infrastructure as a Service (IaaS)

The capability provided to the CSC to provision processing, storage, networks, and other fundamental computing resources where the CSC can deploy and run arbitrary software, which can include operating systems and applications. The CSC does not manage or control the underlying cloud infrastructure but has control over operating systems, storage, and deployed applications, and possibly limited control of select networking components (e.g., host firewalls).

<b>Primary Criteria</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The service that is provisioned is infrastructure.</li> </ol> <p>AND</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2. The primary CSCs are an IT Operations role creating, installing, monitoring, and managing services and applications deployed in an IaaS cloud.<sup>14</sup></li> </ol>
<b>Entity capable of confirming</b>	The CSC will confirm.
<b>Additional Clarification</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The infrastructure service is typically software-defined.</li> <li>• Infrastructure as a Service is distinctly different from cloud infrastructure (see definition) and also different from the underlying physical infrastructure.</li> </ul>

<sup>13</sup> <http://csrc.nist.gov/publications/nistpubs/800-145/SP800-145.pdf>

<sup>14</sup> Reference Architecture 2.2 (Cloud Consumer); and USG Cloud Computing Technology Roadmap 2.2.2.1 (Cloud Consumer)

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The terms “software” and “application” in the IaaS context refers to VM/desktop software and applications, rather than referring to cloud-enabled SaaS or web applications.</li> <li>• The infrastructure service may optionally include a pre-installed operating system and other support VM/desktop software and applications, such as webserver.</li> <li>• The term “arbitrary software” in this context means that the CSC can deploy and run many types of VM/desktop software.</li> </ul>
<b>Common Categories</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Computing resources</li> <li>• Network resources</li> <li>• Storage resources</li> </ul>

## 5 Analysis of Cloud Deployment Models

### Definition of the Cloud Deployment Models

In SP 800-145, cloud deployment models describe how the cloud is operated and who has access to the cloud service resources. The four deployment models are defined in SP 800-145 as follows:

**Private cloud.** The cloud infrastructure is provisioned for exclusive use by a single organization comprising multiple CSCs (e.g., business units). It may be owned, managed, and operated by the organization, a third party, or some combination of them, and it may exist on or off premises.

**Community cloud.** The cloud infrastructure is provisioned for exclusive use by a specific community of CSCs from organizations that have shared concerns (e.g., mission, security requirements, policy, and compliance considerations). It may be owned, managed, and operated by one or more of the organizations in the community, a third party, or some combination of them, and it may exist on or off premises.

**Public cloud.** The cloud infrastructure is provisioned for open use by the general public. It may be owned, managed, and operated by a business, academic, or government organization, or some combination of them. It exists on the premises of the cloud provider.

**Hybrid cloud.** The cloud infrastructure is a composition of two or more distinct cloud infrastructures (private, community, or public) that remain unique entities, but are bound together by standardized or proprietary technology that enables data and application portability (e.g., cloud bursting for load balancing between clouds).

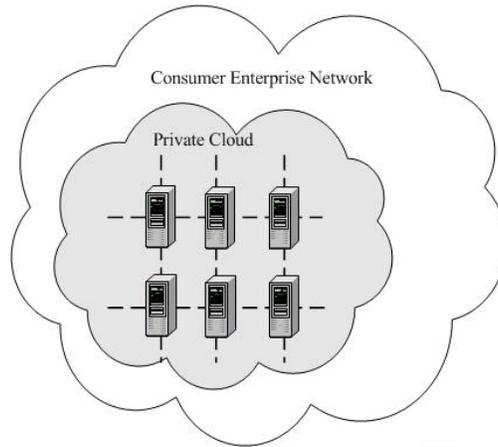
### Details of the Cloud Deployment Models

The following detailed discussion of cloud deployment models is from the NIST Cloud Computing Standards Roadmap.

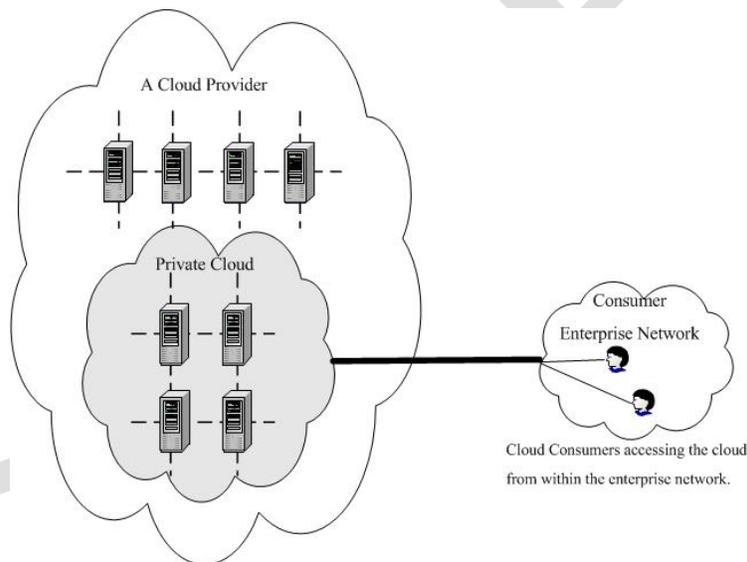
**Private Cloud** - A private cloud gives a single CSC’s organization the exclusive access to and usage of the cloud service and related infrastructure and computational resources. It may be managed either by the CSC organization or by a third party, and may be hosted on the organization’s premises (i.e., *on-site*

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*private clouds*) or outsourced to a hosting company (i.e., *outsourced private clouds*). Figure 1 and Figure 2 present an on-site private cloud and an outsourced private cloud, respectively.



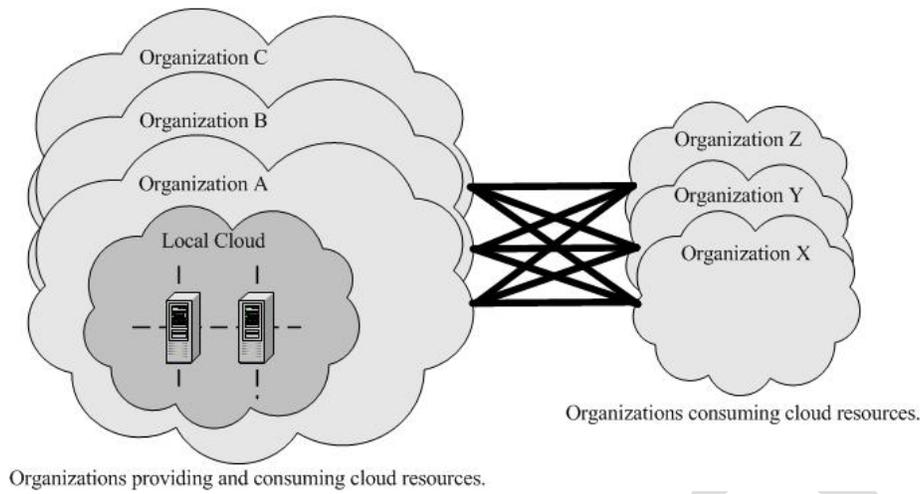
**Figure 1: On-site Private Cloud**



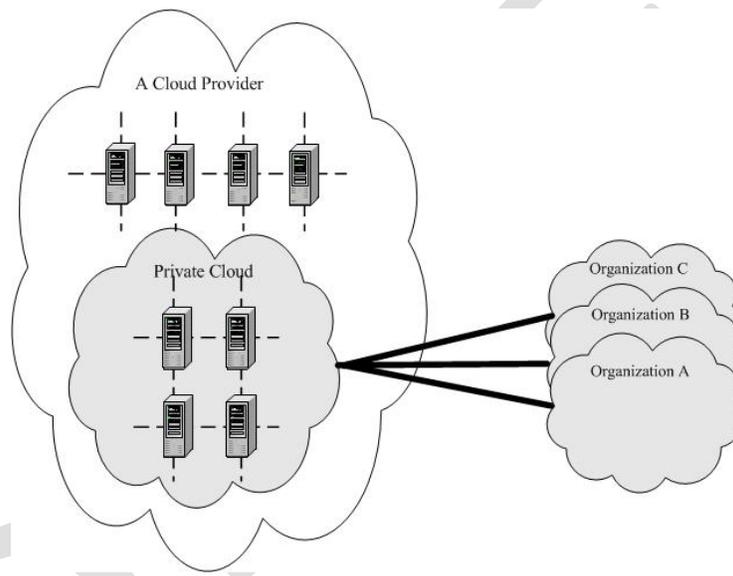
**Figure 2: Outsourced Private Cloud**

**Community Cloud** - A community cloud serves a group of CSCs that have shared concerns such as mission objectives, security, privacy and compliance policy, rather than serving a single organization (e.g., a private cloud). Similar to private clouds, a community cloud may be managed by the organizations or by a third party, and may be implemented on the CSC's premise (i.e., *on-site community cloud*) or outsourced to a hosting company (i.e., *outsourced community cloud*). Figure 3 depicts an on-site community cloud comprised of a number of participant organizations. A CSC can access the local cloud resources, and also the resources of other participating organizations through the connections between the associated organizations. Figure 4 shows an outsourced community cloud, where the server side is outsourced to a hosting company. In this case, an outsourced community cloud builds its infrastructure off premise, and serves a set of organizations that request and consume cloud services.

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**Figure 3: On-site Community Cloud**



**Figure 4: Outsourced Community Cloud**

**Public Cloud** - A public cloud is one in which the cloud infrastructure and computing resources are made available to the general public over a public network. A public cloud is owned by an organization

providing cloud services, and serves a diverse pool of clients. Figure 5 presents a simple view of a public cloud and its customers.

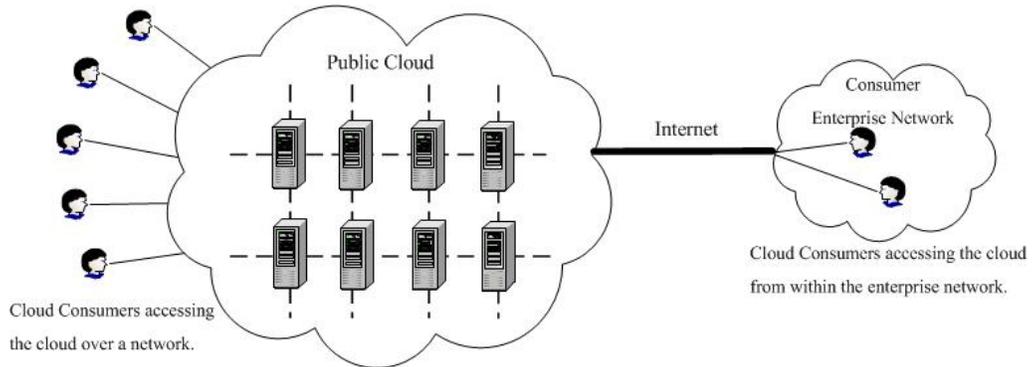


Figure 5: Public Cloud

A hybrid cloud is a composition of two or more clouds (on-site private, on-site community, off-site private, off-site community or public) that remain as distinct entities but are bound together by standardized or proprietary technology that enables data and application portability. Figure 6 presents a simple view of a hybrid cloud that could be built with a set of clouds in the five deployment model variants.

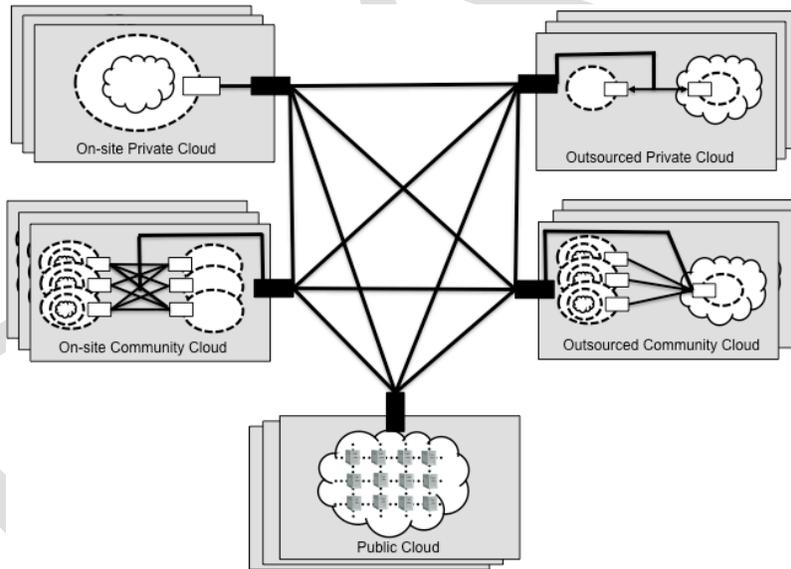


Figure 6: Hybrid Cloud

### 5.1 Private Cloud Computing Service Deployment

<b>Primary Criteria</b>	Only one organization can use the cloud service and the underlying resources.
<b>Entity capable of confirming</b>	The CSP must confirm.

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<b>Additional Clarification</b>	<p><b>Organization in private cloud context</b> – In a private cloud context, the model, definition, and associated risks to an organization remains intact, as the cloud resources are provisioned for exclusive use by a single organization comprising multiple business units. In a private cloud model, the organization gets affected in the following ways:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Organization’s cloud resources may be owned, managed, and operated by organization, a third party or a combination.</li> <li>• Private cloud may be on premises or off premises and provides much greater control over data, underlying systems, and applications.</li> <li>• Private cloud model provides an organization greater control over security, assurance over data location, and removal of multiple jurisdiction legal and compliance requirements.</li> </ul>
<b>Common categories</b>	<i>on-site private cloud</i> <i>outsourced private cloud</i>

### 5.2 Community Cloud Service Deployment

<b>Primary Criteria</b>	<p>A specific community of CSCs from organizations that have shared concerns have exclusive use of the cloud service and the underlying resources.</p>
<b>Entity capable of confirming</b>	<p>The community of cloud CSCs forming the group of organizations verifies the scope of the group of organizations, while the CSP must confirm that the service and underlying infrastructure are exclusive to the group.</p>
<b>Additional Clarification</b>	<p><b>Organization in community cloud context</b> - In a community cloud context, the model, definition, and associated risks to an organization are shared by other organizations, as the cloud resources are provisioned for exclusive use by a specific community of CSCs from organizations that have shared objectives and requirements. In a community cloud model, the organization gets affected in the following ways:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Organization’s cloud resources may be operated by one or more of the organizations in the community or a third party.</li> <li>• Community clouds generally get the cost benefits of a public cloud while providing heightened privacy, security, and regulatory compliance.</li> </ul> <p>A cloud service auditor can conduct independent assessment of cloud services to confirm the scope of the group and confirm</p>

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	that the service and underlying infrastructure are exclusive to the group.
<b>Common categories</b>	<i>on-site community cloud</i> <i>outsourced private cloud</i>

### 5.3 Public Cloud Service Deployment

<b>Primary Criteria</b>	Unrelated CSCs use the shared cloud service and the underlying resources.
<b>Entity capable of confirming</b>	The CSC will confirm access to the provided services.
<b>Additional Clarification</b>	While the CSP may limit access to a service, the CSC has no control over the set of users accessing the service.
<b>Common categories</b>	

### 5.4 Hybrid Cloud Service Deployment

<b>Criteria</b>	At least two or more distinct cloud infrastructures are connected together to facilitate hosted data and application portability.
<b>Entity capable of confirming</b>	The CSP will confirm.
<b>Additional Clarification</b>	
<b>Common categories</b>	

<b>Criteria</b>	The cloud service infrastructure for each set of CSCs is virtually separated from the other sets of CSCs.
<b>Entity capable of confirming</b>	The CSP will confirm.
<b>Additional Clarification</b>	
<b>Common categories</b>	

<b>Criteria</b>	The cloud service infrastructure hardware is shared between all sets of CSCs.
<b>Entity capable of confirming</b>	The CSP will confirm.

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<b>Additional Clarification</b>	
<b>Common categories</b>	

## 6 Worksheets

### 6.1 Cloud Service Worksheet

The following worksheet may be used along with Section 3 to determine whether a service is a cloud service.

<b>On-Demand Self-Service</b>
Can the computing capability be provisioned without human interaction with the CSP?  ___ YES ___ NO  If Yes, what level?  ___ Option A) Fully automated service provisioning  ___ Option B) The CSC uses an automated interface to request and track the service, but the CSP may use manual labor to provisioning the service.
<b>Broad Network Access</b>
Is the computing capability available from a wide range of locations using standard protocols?  ___ Option A) Available over the Internet using internet protocols  ___ Option B) Available over a network that available from all access points the CSC requires
<b>Resource Pooling</b>
Can two or more CSCs use a single cloud service where the resources are shared based on a multi-tenant model?  ___ YES ___ NO

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Can the resources be assigned and reassigned according to CSC demand?

YES  NO

### Rapid Elasticity

Can the computing capabilities be “rapidly” provisioned and released to scale?

YES  NO

Option A) Resource allocation modification is automated and near-real-time (within five minutes).

Option B) Not fully automated, but fast enough to support the requirements of the CSC.

### Measured Service

Cloud services characteristics including resource usage are measured with enough detail to support the requirements of the CSC.

YES  NO

Option B) Cloud services and/or resource usage are measured with enough detail to support the requirements of the CSC.

## 6.2 Cloud Service Model Worksheet

The following worksheet may be used along with Section 4 to determine whether a service is a cloud service.

### Is the cloud service SaaS, PaaS or IaaS?

#### Software as a Service (SaaS)

• Is the cloud service a Software Application?  YES  NO

• Is the primary CSC an “end user” of the application?  YES  NO

#### Is the service Platform as a Service (PaaS)?

• Is the cloud service a Software Development and/or Deployment Platform?  YES  NO

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Is the primary CSC a developer or deployer? <input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO</li> </ul>
Is the service Infrastructure as a Service? (IaaS)?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Is the cloud service IT Infrastructure? <input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Is the primary CSC supporting an IT Operations role? <input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO</li> </ul>

### 6.3 Cloud Deployment Model Worksheet

The following worksheet may be used along with Section 5 to determine whether a service is a cloud service.

<b>Is the cloud service private, community, public, or hybrid?</b>
Private Deployment
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Is the cloud service infrastructure, including hardware resources, used only by a single CSC? <input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO</li> </ul>
Community Deployment
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Is the cloud service infrastructure including hardware resources used by a known set of CSCs, but not available to any CSC? <input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO</li> </ul>
Public Deployment
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Is the cloud service infrastructure available for use by any CSCs? <input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO</li> </ul>

### 7 Example Cloud Service Marketing Terms

Cloud service marketing terms are informal terms often coined and used by industry by adding the suffix “aaS” after a computing capability (e.g., Email as a Service). Cloud service marketing terms do not replace the three service models (SaaS, PaaS, and IaaS), which serve as the high-level categorization of cloud services, but rather serve to informally facilitate communication relating to specialized services. At this time NIST does not take a position on defining any given cloud service types. A cloud service type may optionally be informally used to subcategorize the cloud services models; however, the usage is inconsistent depending on the source of the term.

The following is a list of examples identified from various sources, including Internet searches, solicitations, and marketing collaterals. This is not a complete list of all cloud service marketing terms, and the list is not validated or filtered in any way.

Address Verification as a Service Anything as a Service	Encryption as a Service	Mobility Backend as a Service Monitoring as a Service
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<p>API as a service (APIaaS)</p> <p>Application Delivery as a Service</p> <p>Application Platform as a Service</p> <p>Architecture as a Service</p> <p>Authentication as a Service</p> <p>Backend as a Service</p> <p>Backup as a Service</p> <p>Big Data as a Service</p> <p>Broker as a Service</p> <p>Business as a Service</p> <p>Business Process as a Service</p> <p>Cloud Load Balancers as a Service</p> <p>Cloud Search as a Service</p> <p>Collaboration-as-a-Service</p> <p>Commerce as a Service</p> <p>Communication as a Service</p> <p>Computing as a Service</p> <p>Contact Center as a Service</p> <p>Conversations as a Service</p> <p>Data as a service</p> <p>Database as a service</p> <p>Desktop as a Service</p> <p>Development as a Service</p> <p>DevTest as a Service</p> <p>Disaster Recovery as a Service</p> <p>Drupal as a Service</p> <p>Email as a Service</p>	<p>Enterprise Resource Management as a Service</p> <p>Ethernet as a Service</p> <p>Everything as a Service</p> <p>Firewall as a Service</p> <p>Framework as a Service</p> <p>Globalization as a Service</p> <p>Hadoop as a Service</p> <p>Hardware as a Service</p> <p>High Performance Computing as a Service</p> <p>Identity as a Service</p> <p>Infrastructure PaaS</p> <p>Insight as a Service</p> <p>Integrated Development Environment as a Service</p> <p>Integration as a Service</p> <p>Integration Platform as a Service</p> <p>Integration Platform as a Service</p> <p>IT as a Service</p> <p>Java Platform as a Service</p> <p>Knowledge as a Service</p> <p>Light as a Service</p> <p>Logon as a Service</p> <p>Management as a Service</p> <p>Mashups as a Service</p> <p>Message Queuing as a Service</p> <p>Metal as a Service</p> <p>Mobility as a Service</p>	<p>Network Access Control as a Service</p> <p>Network as a Service</p> <p>Operations as a Service</p> <p>Optimization as a Service</p> <p>Payment as a Service</p> <p>Quality as a Service</p> <p>Query as a Service</p> <p>Recovery as a Service</p> <p>Remote Backup as a Service</p> <p>Risk Assessment as a Service</p> <p>Robot as a Service</p> <p>Security as a service</p> <p>Service Desk as a Service</p> <p>Solutions as a Service</p> <p>Storage as a Service</p> <p>Telepresence as a Service</p> <p>Test environment as a Service</p> <p>Testing as a Service</p> <p>Transport as a Service</p> <p>Unified Communications as a Service</p> <p>User Interface as a Service</p> <p>Video Conferencing as a Service</p> <p>Video Surveillance as a Service</p> <p>Voice as a Service</p> <p>Website as a Service</p>
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### 8 Bibliography

The NIST Definition of Cloud Computing (SP 800-145)

NIST Cloud Computing Standards Roadmap (SP 500-291)

The NIST Cloud Computing Reference Architecture (SP 500-292)

US Government Cloud Computing Technology Roadmap Volumes I and II (SP 500-293)

The NIST Cloud Computing Security Architecture (SP 500-299)

GAO Report - INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY REFORM Progress Made but Future Cloud Computing Efforts Should be Better Planned - ([GAO-12-756](#))