

US government takes leap into the Internet 'cloud'

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Cloud computing allows multiple users to share IT services delivered or hosted on the Internet.

"Why should the government pay for and build infrastructure that may be available for free?" said Vivek Kundra, US President Barack Obama's [Chief Information Officer](#). "The federal government must buy smarter."

Kundra, who is responsible for the 76 billion dollars in annual government spending on information technology (IT), unveiled the cloud-computing storefront, Apps.gov, in a speech at NASA's Ames Research Center in California.

He said he planned to lower barriers within federal agencies to adoption of cloud-computing solutions, while addressing security and privacy concerns.

"We recognize that this is not going to happen overnight," he said.

In a blog post on the White House website, whitehouse.gov, Kundra described Apps.gov as a "one-stop source for cloud services."

"It is essential that we have access to the latest and most innovative technologies," he said. "Our policies lag behind new trends, causing unnecessary restrictions on the use of new technology."

Kundra said wider adoption of cloud computing solutions would allow federal agencies to "fulfill their missions at lower cost, faster, and ultimately, in a more sustainable manner."

"Like a utility such as electricity or water, [cloud computing](#) allows users to only consume what they need, to grow or shrink their use as their needs change, and to only pay for what they actually use," he said.

Currently, most [US government](#) agencies operate on separate and distinct IT systems.

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