

Netflix blames Amazon for Christmas Eve outage (Update)

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More than 27 million Netflix members in the Americas may have been

unable to access shows or films online due to a problem at Amazon Web Services, which rents out computing power in datacenters in the Internet "cloud."

The Netflix outage began mid-day in California on Monday and lasted late into the night, according to the company. No problems were reported with viewing offerings at Amazon's rival online film service.

"We are happy that people opening gifts of Netflix or Netflix capable devices on Christmas morning could watch TV shows or movies and apologize for any inconvenience caused Christmas Eve," the company said in a statement.

"We are investigating the cause and will do what we can to prevent reoccurrence."

In a message fired off at Twitter, Netflix referred to the outage as "terrible timing." Netflix noted that users in Europe were not affected.

Amazon told AFP that the Netflix outage was due to "issues with the Elastic Load Balancing service" that affected some AWS customers in the United States.

AWS began recovering late on Christmas Eve and was back in proper working order on Christmas day, according to the Seattle, Washington-based online retail and services titan.

"Our Netflix subscription is back," Twitter user Rebekah Rosser said on Christmas Day. "That was a close call; I almost had to get a life."

The outage exposed a risk inherent in the trend toward depending on "cloud" servers for services ranging from Web-based email to digital news publications and business tasks long the purview of on-site IT

departments.

It also came with reports that Google's suite of online services, including document and spreadsheet applications, is eating into the dominance of Microsoft programs in the business world.

The California-based Internet giant has been enticing consumers with Chromebook laptop computers that serve as little more than gateways to Internet-based software applications and content.

News organizations have also been shifting online in moves seen as essential to survival.

Almost 80 years after first going to print, the final Newsweek magazine hit newsstands Monday featuring an ironic hashtag as a symbol of its Twitter-era transition to an all-digital format.

The second-largest news weekly magazine in the United States has been grappling with a steep drop in print advertising revenue, steadily declining circulation and the migration of readers to free news online.

For its final cover, dated December 31, editor Tina Brown used an aerial archive shot of the magazine's New York headquarters as the backdrop for her message, #LASTPRINTISSUE—the word print emblazoned in red ink.

Early this month, the failure of Rupert Murdoch's pioneering iPad newspaper The Daily underscored the problems of the news industry as it seeks a paid model for the digital age, analysts said.

The News Corp chief called The Daily—exclusively designed for touchscreen tablets—"a bold experiment," but acknowledged that it was unable to find enough paying readers to sustain it.

The paper was initially designed to work on Apple's iPad tablet, and only later made available for some Android devices and smartphones.

"There is no safe bet in this shifting world of media," said Forrester Research analyst Frank Gillett.

"The question is can you find a model that works for your company."

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