

Soasta Is First To Bring Testing to the Cloud

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Soasta is releasing a new product for testing cloud applications built on Amazon Elastic Compute Cloud. Soasta's set of technologies fits uniquely in this emerging market space and radically alters the cost of testing.

NEWS ANALYSIS

Event

On 23 June 2008, Soasta announced support for Web application testing via Amazon's Elastic Compute Cloud (EC2) platform. Called CloudTest for EC2, it represents the first cloud computing test platform, and supports load, performance, functional and Web user interface/Ajax tests. It will be available on 15 July 2008 and is priced on a per-instance per-hour rate.

Analysis

Cloud computing platforms are moving beyond simple community and tracking applications to become viable replacements for internally hosted business applications. Cloud platforms will reduce the need to perform certain types of testing. But it will be even more important to understand the performance characteristics for use in mission-critical systems — as well as for integration between the cloud and existing internal systems — and to ensure that the systems function correctly.

Soasta provides support for testing Web applications utilizing rich Internet application and service-oriented architecture technologies. The dynamic nature of the Web makes it difficult to build realistic load tests and provision the required server farm, load balancers and so on. As a result, applications are often inadequately tested or are tested on fractional systems. However, CloudTest for EC2 greatly reduces the cost of creating and provisioning tests with its base price of \$4 per instance per hour. Each instance supports 100 virtual users. And, as with any software-as-a-service (SaaS) offering, users don't have to provision a lab to create tests, don't have to install and manage any software, and can be up and running on the system in minutes. This is the key value proposition of the product. It removes the need for a set of test servers and the hardware, power and infrastructure this would require. This offering is early to market in an emerging space, but its availability could pave the way for faster adoption of the EC2 platform.

Some vendors, such as Gomez, already offer testing suites via SaaS, and more products will use this method in the application development life cycle space during the next five years. Soasta's offering combines a complete testing solution with the Amazon cloud platform, which enables flexible test capacity management. We expect that cloud platforms will first be used by smaller companies or workgroups seeking a way to deliver productivity solutions faster without involving their IT department. Just as the original wave of client/server computing and tools led to end-user-developed solutions that became enterprise solutions, cloud platforms will create a new wave of end-user-driven development.

We expect more companies to move to offer hosted solutions for testing. But Soasta's path from testing appliances (giving it experience with managed configurations) to use of a cloud platform gives it a head start of at least a year. And the size of Soasta's customer base makes it easier to move to new licensing models. But with HP's dominant presence in the market, Soasta needs to form more partnerships and show continued differentiation.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- **Users of cloud computing platforms:** Use cloud-based application life cycle management solutions and testing to ensure that applications perform as expected.
- **Users deploying on Amazon EC2:** Evaluate CloudTest for EC2 to see if it meets your testing needs.

- **Users of traditional testing tools:** Examine the potential savings of moving to CloudTest. Use CloudTest for EC2 as a low-cost way to evaluate Soasta's market-leading Web 2.0 testing capabilities.

RECOMMENDED READING

- "Cloud Computing: Defining and Describing an Emerging Phenomenon" — Cloud computing represents a paradigm shift that will redefine the relationship between buyers and sellers of IT-related products and services. **By Daryl Plummer and others**
- "Cool Vendors in AD, 2008" — The cool vendors of application development that we've highlighted for 2008 provide tools that improve the effectiveness, quality and productivity of development organizations. **By Jim Duggan and others**

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