

CLOUD COMPUTING SECURITY State-of-the-Art Analysis. Year 2014

By Cloud Security Alliance, Spanish Chapter (CSA-ES)

Spanish Cloud Users see Cloud Computing and Cloud Services as a valuable option; whose Pros outweigh the Cons. Spanish Cloud Users also maintain high expectations on Cloud Services even if they are not equally satisfied. To achieve these expectations, they evaluate carefully the security features CSPs include in their services, and consider that these features have improved over the last year.

Along this year 2014, CSA-ES has renewed its insights into cloud security within Spanish and Spanish-speaking cloud market by means of its 2014 Cloud Security State-of-the-Art Study. This Study counted on the feedback collected from more than 60 different companies mainly based in Spain, but also includes other countries and regions around the world such as South and North America.

This Study reveals a 9% increase in the number of companies that are already users of Cloud Services of any kind, up to 86% of the interviewees. Cloud email takes the lead as the most popular services, being used by about 60% of the users, while cloud storage is used by half of the interviewees. These services are popular over other cloud services such as web (38%) or business services (33%).

While some three in four cloud users rely on SaaS services (a 16% increase over 2013), PaaS users more than double since 2013. Moreover, more than one in three cloud users do not constrain themselves to one service, but rely on several cloud service models (PaaS, SaaS, IaaS). This cloud use increase can be also noticed in cloud paradigms, as for private cloud users diminish migrate to hybrid or community Clouds.

As for Security requirements, cloud users demand very high levels of engagement from CSPs. All Security Dimensions (Availability, Confidentiality, Privacy, Compliance and Integrity) score above 4,5 over five points, with minor changes from 2013's requirements. Regarding specific security services and features, users carry on demanding the same features than in 2013: business continuity, CSP internal security controls, locked-in avoidance, compliance or SLAs. Companies declare they are of utmost relevance to choose a CSP. Major changes do occur regarding CSP certifications, which increase in importance. On the contrary, the country where CSP is hosted, digital evidences, or assurance on isolation between cloud customers lose hype, and decrease their relevance more than any other feature.

The Study also has focused on the features that are on heavier demand from Non-users of Cloud services. They are just four: availability, Integrity, compliance ... and host country for the CSP.

In any case, the study reveals a general improvement in satisfaction of current users on his cloud services, even though if only some features reach the 4 points over 5 plateau. General satisfaction from customers on cloud services barely reach those 4 points.

Last, but not least, security incidents are reported to be less intensive when company is supported on cloud services. There are fewer incidents, they are less important and cheaper to fix.