The cloud..honestly, is it 'there' yet…??

(Original creator: adriang)

I'd better open this by saying that this is my rambling opinion, and doesn't reflect the overall directions of Compuware or my boss who, rumor has it, has two tattoos, one of them being a cloud! During my usual breakfast/coffee ritual, I found this article on LinkedIn, and thought it was interesting because it actually reflects a few things that I've been wondering about, and looking at the comments (on LinkedIn) it seems like I'm not the only one. My time in Australia, I was mainly working for Aurion, who provide HR and Payroll solutions. It was a great learning experience for me, and it is important to note that payroll systems are typically mission critical applications for most businesses. If they can't pay their employees, then they won't have any employees! So I've used the question 'would you run your payroll on it?' several times, and about the cloud on more than one occasion. Amazon have had a couple of outages in recent times, and I couldn't imagine what would have happened if that kind of outage meant that it was no longer possible to pay all your employees. Of course there are ways to 'mitigate' this kind of risk, some kind of mirroring, or backup, or something similar, but then it starts to become quite complicated, and then it's a case of 'is it worth it'?? Of course the whole private cloud approach gives more security and reliability because the control and management are your responsibility. And indeed this was what we used to provide outsourced services at Aurion. We had a list of SLAs (service level agreements) to make sure that we could provide the appropriate services and overall it worked really well. There was one notable exception, where a cleaner knocked the power supply from a network router with her vacuum cleaner which caused some fun and games! And guess who was the person who had to explain that to the end customer! But managing it yourself takes time, trouble and money. To quote somebody from the Midland Software in the UK, who is a lot more knowledgeable than me on many topics, including the cloud, 'I never thought I'd be responsible for the storage of diesel fuel for backup generators'. ..!! As usual, there is no right or wrong, but it's sure not as black and white as some industry articles might state. (and if you see Aad, ask him about his other tattoo..!).