Getting started with cloud computing

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Getting started with cloud computing
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In the rough sea of a constantly developing web, texts such as Getting started with cloud computing provide a handy lifebuoy for librarians looking for some stability to catch their breath and look around them.

This edited text has been written as an introduction to cloud computing for information professionals, with some assumed knowledge in information technology.

Clearly arranged into three sections, the early chapters deal largely with various ideas of what cloud computing is and can do. It launches into cloud computing with specific examples, which helps to ground the reader early. The second section covers applications, such as discovery products, cloud-based library systems hosting, file sharing, and repositories. Some of these are interesting; few are truly innovative, and although this is fitting for an introductory text, the level of technical information belies this. The final section provides specific case studies of cloud computing technologies in libraries, giving a window into how others are applying the technology. These case studies help to give the earlier concepts some context.

The authors are largely US based, mostly from academic libraries, and come from a mixture of reference and systems backgrounds. There is some minor repetition in their content, but each of them has a very strong library perspective on cloud computing, including economics, privacy and ownership of data.

There is a US bias, with only US legislation considered with data protection, and costings mentioned in an undefined currency (assumed to be US dollars). These pricings are also likely to date quickly. A glossary would also have been useful.

Cloud computing can be a nebulous term; this text attempts to shed some light on the mystery. It remains technically challenging as an introductory text, and whilst useful for reference librarians, given the level of assumed knowledge, is best suited to systems or web librarians.

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