

# *the* Availability Digest

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## **@availabilitydig – Our January Twitter Feed of Outages**

January 2015

A challenge every issue for the Availability Digest is to determine which of the many availability topics out there win coveted status as Digest articles. We always regret not focusing our attention on the topics we bypass. With our new Twitter presence, we don't have to feel guilty. This article highlights some of the @availabilitydig tweets that made headlines in recent days.



### **Which cloud providers had the best uptime last year?**

Amazon Web Services and Google Cloud Platform recorded impressive statistics for how reliable their public IaaS clouds were in 2014, with both providers approaching what some consider to be the Holy Grail of availability: five nines.

<http://t.co/hruUJLmTvm>

### **Vietnam's fragile internet connection fails again**

Vietnam's branch of the Asia-America Gateway (AAG) cable system has suffered the latest in a series of physical ruptures that have plagued the country over the last year. The breakage occurred in the S1H section of the cable, not far from the shores of Ba Ria at the coastal city of Vung Tau. The connection is one of only five pipes serving a country of 93 million people.

<http://t.co/9LshQlcSsq>

### **Channel Tunnel closed again and 11 Eurostar trains cancelled as power outage brings fresh travel chaos just one day after lorry fire**

Thousands of Eurostar passengers are stranded again for a second day after a power outage brought the Channel Tunnel to a halt. Travelers were hoping to take journeys they abandoned yesterday after the route was shut by a lorry fire, causing chaos and triggering compensation bills running into the millions. But just as services were back up and running, 11 more Eurostar trains with room for up to 8,000 people were cancelled.

<http://t.co/esUxTr1SOy>

### **Windows 7 mainstream support ends**

As Windows 10 approaches, Microsoft will no longer offer free help and support for the ageing but still popular Windows 7.

<http://t.co/DJGxbls6EV>

### **Too Hot to Connect: Can the Internet withstand climate change?**

Rising temperatures and other extreme weather caused by climate change are going to have a heavy impact on infrastructure. But extreme weather, the scarcity and the rising cost of water as well as high temperatures could be bad business for technology companies as well.

<http://t.co/bgSK6kmSop>

### **Up early down under: Phone alarm glitch wakes up Aussies an hour early**

Imagine the horror of Virgin mobile and Optus customers in Queensland, Australia, when their phones woke them up an hour early. The phone networks' services had been impacted by a bug that turned back the clock and selected the annual switchover to Daylight Saving, something Queensland had abandoned way back in 1972, before mobiles were even invented.

<http://t.co/DvSRL7OCI0>

### **Updated: Telstra suffers outages on ADSL, wireless and online apps**

Telstra restored ADSL and wireless data services following outages on 14 January but suffered lingering problems with an array of online applications. During planned works on the power system in parts of the St. Leonards NSW Data Centre, power was switched over to the standby unit, which then failed.

<http://t.co/ZBH0Tn5OMZ>

### **Weekend Outage Puts Verizon Cloud on Defensive**

Verizon continues to take heat following what was apparently a planned 40-hour cloud outage last weekend. The outage was attributed to a massive upgrade of Verizon's enterprise-class cloud infrastructure aimed at preventing future outages.

<http://t.co/UQR6ARZEK8>

### **Computer chaos feared over leap second**

The year 2015 will have an extra second. At 11:59 p.m. on June 30, clocks will count up all the way to 60 seconds. That will allow the Earth's spin to catch up with atomic time. The Earth's spin is gradually slowing down, but atomic clocks are constant. That means that occasionally years have to be lengthened slightly to allow the slowing Earth to catch up with the constant clock. The last time it happened, in 2012, it took down much of the Internet.

<http://t.co/57LPWvC4FI>

### **Natwest and Sainsbury's Bank customers hit by IT outages**

Natwest and Sainsbury's Bank customers were unable to make payments due to separate IT glitches yesterday. Natwest – which is partly state-owned – issued an apology to customers after a system failure prevented payments and transfers via online banking. In a separate incident, Sainsbury's Bank customers were unable to make debit and credit card payments and access savings due to an unspecified glitch on Tuesday.

<http://t.co/aP5O4PqJqW>

## Banks Opting For Less Secure Signature Cards

Many major U.S. banks could be looking toward better security measures that use chip-and-PIN technology but instead are opting for new credit cards to use chip-and-signature security.

<http://t.co/9ocmRjpTIG>

## Upcoming Verizon Cloud Downtime May Be Wakeup Call for Some

For some Verizon Cloud customers, this coming weekend's prolonged downtime will be a resiliency test for their architecture. Some will simply experience a period of downtime they knew could come at some point. Yet for some, the outage may serve as a wakeup call.

<http://t.co/b9YdBO2Rt7>

## Heatwave, Cooling Failure Bring Down iiNet Data Center in Perth

A data center in Western Australia was knocked offline due to equipment failure and record-breaking temperatures in the area. A heatwave that caused outside temperatures to rise to about 112°F brought down Internet Service Provider iiNet's data center.

<http://t.co/nxZsrz0j1s>

## What is needed for continuous availability?

**Active/Active Systems**  
**What is Needed for Continuous Availability?**

- **Redundancy:** a backup for every component.
- **Isolation:** no dependency between redundant components.
- **Dispersion:** geographically distributed to survive disasters.
- **Failover:** fast and reliable failover.
- **No lost data:** all data is safe-stored.
- **Active/active systems provide all of these attributes.**

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<http://t.co/MO4RSKicJl>

## Verizon Cloud customers brace themselves for two-day outage

Not surprisingly, a number of Verizon Cloud customers were frustrated at the announcement that Verizon would take its cloud services offline for as long as 48 hours the weekend of 10-11 January, during which time all virtual machines hosted there would be unavailable.

<http://t.co/JZqadnoX3Q>

## Cue the scary Jaws music. "The Navy's New Robot Looks and Swims Just Like a Shark"

The American military does a lot of work in the field of biomimicry, stealing designs from nature for use in new technology. The latest result of these efforts is the GhostSwimmer: The Navy's underwater drone designed to look and swim like a real fish and a liability to spook the bejeezus out of any beach goer who's familiar with *Jaws*.

<http://t.co/gBzK5PslZt>

### **Massachusetts Awards \$18.4M to Cities and Towns for Energy Resiliency Projects**

The U.S. state of Massachusetts has awarded \$18.4 million for energy resiliency projects to keep the lights on in critical facilities throughout the state when storms and disasters bring down the electric grid.

<http://t.co/5t1UbsDo6Q>

### **FBI watchful as firms explore cyberoffensive against hackers**

The hacked are itching to hack back. So say a dozen security specialists and former law-enforcement officials, who described an intensifying and largely unspoken sense of unease inside many companies after the recent breach of Sony's networks.

<http://t.co/KnX4QUtm3Y>

### **Nightmare before Christmas: frustrations grow after Amazon 1p glitch costs businesses thousands**

One seller was forced to sell stock worth £11,000 for only £146.59 after a software glitch reduced thousands of Amazon items to a penny.

<http://t.co/x9rt0xOoJb>

### **Regulators Say Etihad Must Honor Its Mistaken Low Fares -- But the Rules May Change**

On Christmas morning, a computer system at Etihad Airways began to issue tickets at ridiculously low fares, including \$187 from New York to Abu Dhabi and \$277 from New York to Johannesburg. Etihad eventually recognized the error and dropped the fares. The U.S. Department of Transportation requires airlines to honor all tickets it issues, even if a mistake caused tickets to be issued at a low price. But the DOT is reconsidering that requirement.

<http://t.co/qjWRva4ziR>

### **Amazon sellers hit by nightmare before Christmas as glitch cuts prices to 1p**

From 7-8 pm on Friday, December 11, software used by Amazon third-party sellers to ensure their products are the cheapest on the market went haywire and reduced prices to as little as 1p. "Amazon is all kinds of broken," one observer tweeted. "Mattress 1p. Headphones 1p. Batteries, clothing, games all 1p."

<http://t.co/GOdm5Tvm4y>

### **Here's Why Xbox and PlayStation Were Offline on Christmas**

On Christmas day, Sony's PlayStation Network and Microsoft's Xbox Live were both down as a result of apparent distributed denial of service (DDoS) attacks by hackers.

<http://t.co/j5N0C5Omb9>

### **The NHS's chaotic IT systems show no sign of recovery**

Paperless patient records are a necessity, but a new U.S.- made system at Addenbrooke's in Cambridge is a chronic misreading of patient needs.

<http://t.co/E7C8vWTz2p>

## **The 10 Biggest Cloud Stories Of 2014**

It's been a transformative year for the cloud. Many experts believe one day we will look back at 2014 and recognize a tipping point – the year businesses big and small finally accepted the inevitability of cloud-based IT and started planning for that future.

<http://t.co/jS5WkxdXJO>

### **Twitter Goes Down Millennium-Bug Style: Three-Hour Twitter Outage Provokes Social Media Havoc**

On 29 December, many Android users of Twitter experienced a three-hour outage that made them unable to access their accounts. Reports said that the outage was caused by a millennium bug-style date crisis. A server date change left users locked out of their accounts, while others noticed their tweets and posts were dated back 365 days.

<http://t.co/T3GKkN2TyF>

### **Cloud outage audit 2014 reveals AWS on top, Azure down**

Cloud outages happen -- but for major providers such as AWS, it isn't often. See how Azure, Google, Rackspace and other IaaS vendors fared in 2014.

<http://t.co/3OoL1U7rZb>

### **Sony Hack: Business Continuity Lessons**

In the wake of the Sony incident, planning for all computers to be rendered inoperable by a massive cyber attack must be part of any organization's business continuity effort.

<http://t.co/zxUfYufkh8>

### **The LEGO Approach to Closing Federal Data Centers**

Just closing and relocating data centers may not save all that much money. The feds need to focus on data center optimization.

<http://t.co/e7Rc3dqCh7>

### **The Inside Story of How British Spies Hacked Belgium's Largest Telco**

In June 2013, Belgium's largest telecommunications provider determined that its computer systems had been infected with a highly sophisticated malware that was disguising itself as legitimate Microsoft software while quietly stealing data. The hackers were British government spies.

<http://t.co/hNeCbtOYfa>

### **Microsoft confirms Azure outage was human error**

Microsoft has given a final - and painful - explanation for a major outage of Azure cloud services on November 18, 2014. The downtime left some customers of Azure Storage and other offerings without internet services and was caused by human error.

<http://bit.ly/1BJtfbg>