

the Availability Digest

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@availabilitydig – Our May Twitter Feed of Outages

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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.



From the Availability Digest: "Iowa's Data Center Taken Down by Fire."

In the article "Fire in Your Data Center: No Power, No Access, Now What?," Robert Von Wolfradt, the IO for the U.S. State of Iowa, described a fire that took down Iowa's primary data center. He relates an orderly progression to restore service and concludes with several lessons learned. The fact that Von Wolfradt took the time to publish this account is a service to all who are responsible for their data centers' uptimes.

<http://t.co/iPnWqVfPYy>

Encouraging failure: How Amazon AWS promotes innovation and invention.

Businesses can't afford to move slowly in the face of technological revolution, but how agile can an organization be when the average length of time to obtain and set up a new server is typically between 10 and 18 weeks? Such a delay has a crushing effect on innovation. Engineers don't bother to invent because it takes too long to get the servers they need to test an idea.

<http://t.co/ypSIYJckLF>

Adobe Creative Cloud outage highlights need for IT contingency provision

Failures in the Creative Cloud suite, which lasted more than 24 hours for some users, highlight the importance to companies of setting in place contingency plans to ensure critical business activities can be maintained should their businesses be hit by a service outage.

<http://t.co/j29rIDcBCQ>

From the Availability Digest: "Heartbleed - The Worst Vulnerability Ever"

Heartbleed, a flaw in the OpenSSL cryptographic software library, allows attackers to read memory data from both client and server devices to obtain private keys, passwords, and user names. Virtually impossible to detect, Heartbleed now exists on an estimated 17% of all secure web sites.

<http://t.co/6VJ4CsIQBj>

HP Tweaks NonStop, HP-UX Systems

Windows and Linux servers may dominate sales at HP, but the company still has a sizeable business peddling NonStop and HP-UX systems. These machines need care and attention from time to time, and HP is now updating the hardware for NonStop systems and the HP-UX operating system for its Integrity and Superdome machines.

<http://t.co/CoYKSQOdkz>

From the Availability Digest: "So You Want to Mine Bitcoins?"

Bitcoin mining is how new bitcoins are minted (digitally, that is). Mining involves packaging bitcoin transactions into blocks and appending them to the bitcoin block chain that records every bitcoin transaction. For each block that a miner adds, he is rewarded with 25 bitcoins. At today's Bitcoin value of about \$600 USD, this amounts to \$15,000. Sounds like a fast way to make a lot of money.

<http://t.co/cxs7Ofu0PN>

Infosecurity - IT Downtime Has Serious Security Implications and Can Cost \$1 Million per Hour

System downtime has many fallout consequences for companies, from the very real danger of data-theft to churn and the impact on core brand identity from customers. It's also staggeringly costly.

<http://t.co/m6KoBrQ7VT>

Barclays 'Fires' 9,000 Idle Servers From Data Centers

As it prepares to make huge cuts to its investment banking business and lay off 7,000 employees, Barclays has also been busy firing idle servers from its data centers.

<http://t.co/hLdhvByx2g>

From the Availability Digest: "Let's Share Outage Information for the Benefit of All"

Outages happen. Much of what we do as engineers is to design systems to avoid or minimize the chance and impact of outages. It is important to share our lessons learned after an analysis of an outage. The tough lessons learned in these situations are too valuable to others to be kept secret.

<http://t.co/wqzpwgwNwu>

Air traffic system failure caused by computer memory shortage

A common design problem in the U.S. air traffic control system made it possible for a U-2 spy plane to spark a computer glitch that recently grounded or delayed hundreds of Los Angeles area flights, according to an inside account and security experts.

<http://t.co/xjOlpeJO4>

Just how devastating is core system failure for your business?

Lost sales, data and productivity hit companies hard. Alarming details about the devastating effect on business when core systems fail have been revealed in a new study by [Globalscape](#), a developer of secure information exchange solutions.

<http://t.co/yDhu2JL3pM>

Inside United Airlines' nerve center

United Airlines operates 1,800 daily flights, all overseen from the 27th floor of the Willis (formerly Sears) Tower in downtown Chicago, the location of United's network operations center.

<http://bit.ly/T7B6Qf>

The backup plan: how to craft the bespoke backup and recovery solution your organisation needs

Growing data volumes are hiking up the cost of essential backup and recovery. Thankfully, the range of on-premise and cloud options available is also growing, allowing those in the know to craft cost-effective, tailor-made solutions.

<http://t.co/F9sFbCGrCU>

FAA says U-2 confused computers

The Federal Aviation Administration explained that the air-traffic control problem in Los Angeles on Wednesday, April 30th, was sparked by a U2 spy plane that essentially confused the agency's aging computers.

<http://t.co/iCkjCuafQG>

FAA upgrades air-control computers

The failure of the Federal Aviation Administration's air-traffic control computer in Los Angeles was fairly routine and part of the growing pains in updating the system while still using it.

<http://t.co/mqufCrZurN>

Avoiding battery failure and outages

While eliminating downtime altogether is a challenging undertaking, data center managers can start with the most frequent cause of unplanned outages – uninterruptible power supply (UPS) battery failure.

<http://t.co/lh0SzptTNX>

Newfoundland faces 'unacceptably high risk' of future blackouts

Lack of generation capacity, equipment upkeep and training were factors as lights went out across Newfoundland last winter, says a new report flagging an "unacceptably high risk" of future blackouts.

<http://t.co/aFsxuhSHyl>

World Cup Power Cut Fears Spur Record Brazil LNG Buying

World Cup soccer, the planet's most watched sporting event, faces challenges as host country Brazil contends with a drought that has reduced water supply needed for hydro power to near-critical levels.

<http://t.co/XwglOgLVq7>

Confusion reigns over cloud SLAs

Nearly two-thirds of CIOs and other IT decision makers have very little idea about what constitutes a failure of a cloud service provider's service level agreement (SLA).

<http://t.co/hdBD2NYqUW>

New Survey: Half of IT Professionals Make Undocumented Changes to IT Systems

Just 60% of organizations have change management controls in place, leaving 40% at risk from security threats or system downtime.

<http://t.co/KerBhjOD1U>

GE Seeks Patent on Using Social Media to Detect Power Outages.

A recent General Electric patent application involves a novel system of addressing power outages when a utility network doesn't receive notification of the event directly from customers. This system allows a utility network to scan social media posts for relevant information about outages and then to turn those posts into instructions for maintenance crews.

<http://t.co/zHYdQDwJOK>

Bulletproofing the Grid

A gun attack on a Silicon Valley substation has utilities looking to boost physical security.

<http://t.co/Qybd2jOHF>

Open Compute In Full Bloom At Facebook North Carolina Datacenter

Most of the hyperscale giants are very secretive about their server, storage, switching, and datacenter designs. However, Facebook recently invited *EnterpriseTech* to take a tour of Facebook's Forest City, North Carolina, facility and see some of the refinements that have been made to Facebook's datacenter and server designs.

<http://t.co/ZF1chEBj9h>

Fire at Samsung Backup Data Center Takes Services Offline

A fire at a Samsung datacenter in Gwacheon, South Korea, temporarily knocked out access to Samsung.com. Basically, any Samsung device that requires Samsung servers to operate – or uses Samsung servers for some selection of its features – was rendered inoperable as a result of the fire.

<http://t.co/jx8bg1z6y9>

Digest Mng Ed. Bill Highleyman presents "DDoS Attacks - the Latest Availability Thread." NENUG (NE NonStop User Grp) 4/24 Andover, MA, USA.

Dr. Highleyman has presented papers and seminars on high- and continuous availability and has written extensively on these topics. He holds several patents in the core technologies required to implement active/active systems and is a coauthor of the three-volume series, "[Breaking the Availability Barrier](#)."

<http://www.availabilitydigest.com/seminars.htm>