the *Availability Digest*

@availabilitydig – Our September Twitter Feed of Outages
September 2014

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.

Redmond Communications outage shows the vulnerability of our critical infrastructure.
On 20 September, a construction crew working on a stormwater treatment project in Redmond, Washington (USA) accidentally caused a major telecommunications outage for nearly six thousand customers of Frontier Communications when they dug in the wrong place and severed vital fiber and copper wires. The outage resulted in a total, catastrophic failure of Frontier's Internet, television, and phone services in the Redmond area.

http://t.co/gBuI8zk5gX

Alaska Communications still recovering financially from July earthquake that severed an undersea fiber optic cable.
A magnitude 5.9 earthquake that struck Southeast Alaska woke residents and rattled shelves but did little damage -- except to one company. Alaska Communications System Group's crucial undersea fiber-optic cable providing phone, Internet and other data services to Southeast Alaska was severed.

http://t.co/scn0e99duN

IBM Cuts Ribbon on Cloud Resiliency Center
Big Blue has opened the doors to its brand new U.S.-based cloud resiliency center as it battles to save its customers from potential costly disruptions to their businesses.

http://t.co/JLPx2pzMOI

OpenVMS Boot Camp 2014, 29 Sept - 1 Oct. Bedford MA USA. 9 tracks, over 48 breakout sessions.
The Connect OpenVMS Boot Camp will be THE 2014 event for OpenVMS practitioners to gather for four days of technical content and peer-to-peer networking in the traditional Boston area

http://t.co/7RY5txx255

Dominion to start burying some of its most outage-prone lines

Dominion Resources plans to bury about 4,000 miles of its most outage-prone power distribution lines over the next 10 to 12 years.

http://t.co/jvk3IBBX9j

Digest Mg Ed Bill Highleyman says "DDoS Attacks Can Take Down Your Online Services." Part 1 - TechPro Essentials

DDoS attacks have been used for retaliation, for political statements, for competitive reasons, and even for ransom.

http://t.co/GzoNINGggm

Salesforce cloud goes titsup: Users face another long weekend

Customers dependent on Salesforce were kicked offline on 5 September as Marc Benioff's cloud went titsup. The blank screens seemed to be the result of a problem in two of the company's instances serving EMEA and North America.

http://t.co/IGiqsDOtU1

Beware the Risks of Government Data Center Consolidation

In an effort to cut costs, Washington is consolidating its data centers, and though consolidation is a smart move, data centers – both federal and otherwise – invite specific risks when they are merged.

http://t.co/sYu05B0QL2

eBay, Facebook, Tumblr ALL go TITSUP in me-too MULTI-FAIL

In what proved to be a frustrating day for online time-wasters everywhere, eBay, Facebook, and Tumblr all experienced brief service outages in early September.

http://t.co/0shI0yqKKN

On A Clear Day: Downtime In Cloud Computing

Power outages don't happen often, and they rarely affect the whole service. It's still, however, a disconcerting thought that downtime, or data loss can result in huge losses and angry customers. Furthermore, if entire data centers are affected, entire apps and websites can be impacted for hours at a time.

http://t.co/j9SZUIznyF

Facebook, EBay and Apple Experience Interruptions on Websites

Facebook Inc. (FB), EBay Inc. (EBAY) and Apple Inc. (AAPL) experienced disruptions that prevented users from accessing some or all of their websites over several days in early September.

http://t.co/osG5JbuL7a

Power Outage Hits Egypt Subway, TV Stations

Egypt suffered a massive power outage that halted parts of the Cairo subway, took TV stations off the air, and ground much of the country to a halt for several hours in early September. Officials offered no clear explanation for how the country suddenly lost 50 percent of its power generation.

http://bit.ly/1oehtys

How do we define availability? System uptime in terms of "9s."

If a system is up 99.9% of the time, it has an availability of three 9s: On average: Three 9s - Down 8 hours per year; Four 9s - Down 50 minutes per year; Five 9s - Down 5 minutes per year; Six 9s - Down 30 seconds per year; Seven 9s - Down 3 seconds per year.

http://t.co/mIlYPa1ZIj

The Half-Billion-Pound IT Failure That Has Left Britain's Borders Vulnerable

The failure of an IT project that has so far cost the UK government nearly half a billion pounds has left Britain potentially vulnerable to attack by Islamist militants.

http://t.co/pZMLukMV51

Obamacare site hacked but nothing taken, HHS says

Hackers silently infected a Healthcare.gov computer server this summer. But the malware didn't manage to steal anyone's data, federal officials say.

http://t.co/JYOr9pQ1Xe

System Outages in the Cloud and Why You Should Schedule One

Occasional downtime in the cloud is inevitable, and how a business reacts to these outages may determine the overall success or failure of a cloud initiative. Some major companies are getting a head start by scheduling their own downtime to learn from the event, and midsize businesses should consider doing the same.

http://t.co/bqbTUSrF8P

USPS loses database and backup in hardware failure

The United States Postal Service lost the digital version of an entire database that records and monitors security incidents due to a failure of the hard drive that stored both the database and its backup.

http://t.co/2vtSRfrcoz

Why do you need a recovery plan? "Prediction is very difficult, especially about the future." Niels Bohr, Nobel Prize in Physics (1922).

Massive Internet Outage Points to Flaws in Policy and Technology
A human error that cascaded throughout Time Warner's Internet routers appears to have triggered the outage that impacted all 11.4 million of Time Warner Cable's customers for hours.
http://t.co/PrPQmMNBS8

EE fails to apologise for HUGE T-Mobile outage that hit Brits
Many T-Mobile customers in the UK were without access to the EE-owned network on Friday after the service went titsup due to a "broken fibre cable."
http://t.co/WMDDmPjx0R

Heartbleed bug used in huge Community Health Systems data breach
Hackers stole the personal data of about 4.5 million patients of U.S. hospital group Community Health Systems Inc. after breaking into the company's computer system by exploiting the Heartbleed Internet bug.
http://t.co/fIQsVZuUnQ

Home Depot's credit cards may have been hacked
A massive batch of credit- and debit card information that went on sale on a criminal Internet site in early September may be from Home Depot stores and could be linked to hackers responsible for breaches at Target and P.F. Chang's.
http://t.co/d3JSecUdFM

An Availability Digest product review. "Attunity Replicate."
Attunity Replicate is an appliance-based data replication engine that supports homogeneous and heterogeneous database replication. Replicate supports most relational and non-relational databases as sources and many of them as targets.
http://t.co/wB5t2JaSz5

From the Availability Digest. "The Internet Hits a Capacity Limit."
On the morning of Tuesday, August 12, 2014 (Eastern Standard Time), the Internet slowed to a crawl. The reason was not a datacenter failure or a network outage. Rather, a long-known limit of the Internet had been exceeded. The problem was in the Border Gateway Protocol that interconnects the major Internet domains.
http://t.co/NonvxviDIt

Availability Digest guest author Paul Holenstein, Gravic Inc. EVP, discusses "Adding High Availability to the Cloud."
There remains a reluctance among companies to move critical applications to the public cloud and for good reason. Notable instances of public cloud failures and data loss have been frequently reported, and security is a concern because the organization no longer has direct control over its environment.
http://t.co/KeMK8WPqpm

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Walgreen unable to fill prescriptions due to database failure

Shoppers couldn't fill their prescriptions at Walgreen Co.'s pharmacies for much of the day Friday, after a database crashed during an update. The outage hit all of the chain's 8,200 pharmacy locations and kept many down for hours.

http://t.co/Z9TK2zGJ3s

Time Warner Cable suffers massive outage nationwide

Time Warner Cable customers across the U.S. woke up in late August to a nationwide Internet outage.

http://t.co/Z6Kzv0FIpn

Postal Service Loses Security Data After Backing It Up … On The Same Hardware

A government audit of the U.S. Postal Service found that it lost important data after a hardware failure in April 2014 erased both the data and its backup, both stored on the same piece of hardware. The database lost was considered essential, meaning it was "necessary for daily operations."

http://t.co/GLWdBNUqdi

Internet Outage Left Doctors Without Records For Hours

For several hours in August, doctors at PIM Associates, a primary care practice in Philadelphia, couldn't see patients' lab results or what medications they were taking.

huff.to/1pYKssY