

The Best Place to Put Data: Out of this World?

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The planet Earth is a fairly dangerous and unpredictable place, startup Cloud Constellation says-- so why not put datacentres somewhere safer and more predictable, such as in orbit?



The proposal is actually simple enough. Dubbed SpaceBelt, the system puts petabytes of data in a satellite and rockets it into space, with direct wireless access negating the need for cabling connecting customer to storage. The result, the company says, allows one to avoid hazards such as hacking and national regulations, not to mention slowdown involved when data traverses through switches and the payment of carriers. Oh, and natural disasters, of course.

Cloud Constellation adds the system can act as a one-stop shop for all data storage and transport needs, and capacity can even be available for cloud providers. As for security, hardware-based encryption comes as standard while Earth-satellite communications take place via advanced stations.

However not everything is plain sailing when it comes to throwing cloud capacity into space-- first off, the hardware needs to be certified for use in space, since cosmic particle bombardment can cause errors. Legal issues also come into place, since according to the United Nations Outer Space Treaty of 1967 the data inside a satellite still lies under the jurisdiction of the nation it is registered under.

Still, analysts suggest the idea of a space-based datacentre is not too far fetched, and as hardware shrinks in size putting storage in satellites will only become more feasible.

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