Grids and clouds: Enabling Grids for E-sciencE clears the mist
Istanbul, 24th September 2008

Grids and clouds have been depicted as competing technologies but in many ways they are complementary in what they offer. At the annual Enabling Grids for E-sciencE (EGEE) conference in Istanbul, Turkey, Peter Vosshall, Vice President & Distinguished Engineer of Amazon.com spoke about providing easy-to-use services to customers based on a distributed computing "cloud" and described some examples of how clouds and grids are working together.

"Amazon offers a scalable infrastructure that allows applications to meet infinite demand, cheaply and reliably," explained Peter Voshall at EGEE'08. "In the future, Amazon Infrastructure Services will be evaluated on the factors of security, scalability, availability, performance and cost-effectiveness."

EGEE has developed the world's largest multi-disciplinary grid infrastructure and businesses are increasingly keen to explore grid technologies and benefit from other users' expertise. In many business sectors cloud computing is picking up momentum as the next "big thing". At EGEE'08, EGEE is aiming to clear the mist for business.

For a sustainable future, the watchword is interoperability. Public grids, such as EGEE, used by the academic and research communities, and commercial cloud services should integrate to benefit from each other. Grid computing has a lot in common with an earlier product of the research community, the web. For Tim Berners-Lee when he was at CERN, the future of the web relied on defining universal standards accepted by all, using Open Source implementations. The web would have lost much of its world beating power if the services from each company could not talk to each other – the same is true for grids and clouds.

Clouds and grids are in concept very similar. Many of the ideas and paradigms first developed for grid apply to clouds - they both offer a means of accessing a potentially limitless set of computing resources that can grow dynamically. But grids also offer some functions and features that are not present in most cloud systems. EGEE has, for example, developed a set of Open Source grid services that give tens of thousands of users unrestricted access to computing resources. Open Source services enable resource sharing in multi-administrative domains, a task that is challenging and complicated but ultimately paves the way for a new standard that can provide access to all regardless of their computing environment.

At the heart of grid computing lies collaboration in a secure environment, a community of trusted users sharing data. For commercial cloud providers, services must be as easy to use as possible to attract and keep users. EGEE is working to help the grid to interoperate with clouds, keeping both philosophies in mind to allow users access to the resources, tools and interfaces best suited to them and their research. For both technologies, grids and clouds, the future lies in interoperability, open standards and the best possible choice for users.

Last Update: 24/09/2008

Notes for Editors

The Enabling Grids for E-sciencE (EGEE) project is co-funded by the European Commission. The project aims to provide researchers in both academia and industry with access to major computing resources, independent of their geographic location.

EGEE's main aims are:

1. To build a secure, reliable and robust grid infrastructure
2. To supply a computing resource specifically intended to be used by many different scientific disciplines
3. To attract, engage and support a wide range of users from science and industry, and provide them with extensive technical and training support.

For more information see **http://www.eu-egee.org/** or contact Catherine Gater, EGEE Dissemination, Outreach and Communications Manager, on + 41 22 767 41 76 or email Catherine.Gater@cern.ch.

For conference details visit **http://egee08.eu-egee.org/**

Follow the EGEE conference live via the EGEE'08 GridCast at http://gridtalk-project.blogspot.com/

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Last Update: 24/09/2008