

the Availability Digest

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[@availabilitydig](https://twitter.com/availabilitydig)

@availabilitydig – Our September Twitter Feed of Outages

September 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.



Don't get hoodwinked by cloud SLA promises

Although service-level agreements are important, desktop as a service vendors often include fine print that minimizes their fiscal penalty. IT shops should focus more on the provider's reputation.

<http://t.co/X3VYpJ91EM>

SUPERMAP: The World's Most Advanced Data Center

SUPERMAP operates the biggest data centers in the world. In Las Vegas (Nevada USA) alone, there are nine of them, with a 10th one coming. Each one holds tens of billions of dollars' worth of customer equipment. SUPERMAP operates on renewable power sources, guarantees zero downtime for servers, and provides military-grade protection in an *ultra*-high security environment.

<http://t.co/29iXB9I05E>

Transformer failure takes out Fujitsu data center

Fujitsu has acknowledged that a major power transformer failure took down its Sunnyvale data center on August 22nd. The failure was not within the data center itself but in the substation that provides power to the facility and under the control of their energy provider, not Fujitsu. Besides highlighting the need for N+1 power provisioning for critical data centers, it appears that the external failure did cause cascading failures within the data center proper.

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

UPDATE: Explosion in Downtown Los Angeles Disrupts Data Center Operations

Call this past August the month of explosion-related data center outages. An explosion in a basement of a high-rise in downtown Los Angeles on 20 August took out an on-site power station, leaving 12 buildings in the area without electricity. The explosion interrupted connectivity on network infrastructure operated by Level 3 Communications, which serves a lot of data center users in the area. Another much bigger explosion caused prolonged data center downtime in Tianjin, China, where a warehouse complex erupted multiple times and killed more than 100 people.

<http://t.co/EfcTLzD09I>

Power Outages Are Getting Longer and Catastrophic Weather Is To Blame

A huge data analysis by a team of Berkeley scientists gives us a glimpse at the future of our drought-addled, storm-riddled electrical system. The analysis looked at 13 years' worth of data, totaling 70 per cent of customers in the US. They were looking for two things: a) whether operational upgrades and better planning has cut down on the number of outages and the duration of those outages and b) how "major events" have affected the grid for better or worse.

<http://t.co/kVBRsGZrmh>

Orbcomm launches 4G wireless failover service

Orbcomm, a provider of machine-to-machine (M2M) and Internet of Things (IoT) technologies, announced the launch of Orbcomm Enterprise Connect, a high-speed failover service for wireless devices and applications.

<https://t.co/mlPOpOEKta>

CBA system outage leaves customers stranded

Commonwealth Bank has managed to get its services back online after a fresh technical glitch left tens of thousands of customers stranded and unable to make any payments on 11 September. The latest service disruption came on the heels of a system error in August, during which some customers were double-charged on their credit and debit card transactions. CBA also suffered a major outage in June, with EFTPOS machines and some online banking service features temporarily taken out of action.

<http://t.co/XjY1XC2hON>

How to Avoid Being the Next Bank Busted by a Software Glitch

Software problems are inevitable, and the financial industry is feeling particularly vulnerable. Many banks have old core systems, in some cases more than 40 years old, and all are under pressure to provide state-of-the-art mobile and online services. This is driving banks to take software risks and software quality more seriously. There are several things banks can do to improve the reliability and security of their code and minimize the odds of being victimized by a major software outage.

<http://t.co/Gn8Wd0oYyn>

The disaster-recovery lessons we learned after Katrina

A decade ago, New Orleans and the Gulf Coast of the United States were devastated by the sixth strongest Atlantic hurricane ever recorded. The destruction from the hurricane itself and the subsequent flooding that put most of New Orleans underwater knocked many businesses out of commission—and more than a few completely out of existence. Thankfully, we have learned a lot of hard lessons in the wake of Hurricane Katrina, lessons that businesses can use to be better-prepared for the next major disaster.

<http://t.co/HKnhMRLpDa>

Netflix shuts down its last data center, but it still runs a big IT operation

Netflix has been shifting technology from in-house data centers to third-party facilities for years, and it says that the process is coming to its logical conclusion - the company is shutting down the last of its data centers. Netflix still operates a huge IT infrastructure, but it has become one for the first big companies to run all of its information technology remotely in what is known as the public cloud.

<http://t.co/j0a5RjS8RL>

The Illusion of Zero Downtime in IT

The concept of improving uptime has become a popular topic since disaster recovery is such a source of consternation for IT managers. Says one Gartner researcher, "It's a very capital intensive and frustrating activity. You're spending a lot of money on the off-chance that something goes wrong with your IT and even when it does go wrong, it might not even work properly. So the conversation is shifting from preparing for disaster to moving towards high levels of availability." This explains the surge in the use of "zero downtime" in the IT space.

<http://t.co/eif7NBk8X7>

Digest Editor's Jeep Isn't Hackable. Whew! How About Yours?

The threat of malicious hacking has been extended to automobiles. Security researchers recently used a cell phone to breach a Fiat Chrysler Jeep's computer systems via the car's infotainment center. The manufacturer responded by issuing a safety recall.

<http://t.co/IHYHwuM8f>

Can the cloud achieve 'zero loss' instant recovery following an IT failure?

Instant failover with zero data loss is the Holy Grail of maintaining a resilient IT system. With businesses demanding more and more from their IT systems, there is less leniency toward downtime. If you opt for cloud disaster recovery, the current state of play is that you'll have to compromise on either speed of recovery or data loss.

<https://t.co/Uua2OzKcf1>

CenturyLink's "failed chilled water pipe" at its NJ2 data center caused caused a "critical HVAC event"

Communications and hosting company CenturyLink acknowledged on 27 August that a "failed chilled water pipe" at its NJ2 data center was affecting some of its clients. CenturyLink updated the situation Friday morning by saying that the impacted service had been restored as of 6 a.m. ET. The problem was described as a "critical HVAC event" in an incident notification from CenturyLink. Some customers shut down noncritical systems as a precaution.

<http://t.co/SFjWpktTDW>

Virtual SAN 6.1 Released

VMware Inc. has announced the latest release of its extremely popular Virtual San solution, VSAN 6.1. New capabilities include the Virtual SAN Stretched Cluster. Virtual SAN 6.1 allows the ability to create a stretched cluster between two or more geographically separated sites, synchronously replicating data between sites.

<http://t.co/8ToorVce92>

Google Unleashes Container Engine For Docker Workloads

Google Container Engine, which goes by the acronym GKE to avoid being confused with Google Compute Engine (GCE), orchestrates the launch and management of Docker containers on a cluster on Google Compute Engine.

<http://t.co/7Mnn2urZjT>

2015 Verizon Data Breach Investigations Report

Every year for the last several years, Verizon has undertaken an extensive survey on data breaches and then has published its findings in a detailed Data Breach Investigations Report (DBIR). The Availability Digest summarizes those findings for the Year 2014.

<http://t.co/DkDxeEjvYK>

SunGard apologises for BNY Mellon NAV glitch

SunGard recently apologised for the technical failure of its hosted InvestOne fund accounting platform, which left BNY Mellon's net asset value (NAV) calculation and processing disrupted. The failure affected 66 fund accounting clients and about 1,200 fund structures and was reportedly caused by complications in the process of an upgrade scheduled for 22 August. Both the InvestOne platform and SunGard's backup environment became corrupted.

<http://t.co/UxyIQURUj7>

Fast and furious: What happened in the U.S. Treasury market?

In May 2015, U.S. financial regulators released preliminary "findings" that indicated they had absolutely no idea of what triggered the volatile trading day in the U.S. Treasury market on 14 October 2014. It rivaled the volume and whipsaw prices of three years earlier when Standard & Poor's unexpectedly downgraded the federal government's credit rating.

<http://t.co/nORHfYiizL>

Jewel-Osco: Payment System Outage Could Have Caused Multiple Charges On Customers' Cards

In late August, Jewel-Osco's third-party payment processor notified the company that a payment system outage had resulted in some customers' debit and credit cards inadvertently being charged twice or more for one transaction.

<http://t.co/u8zLPsUsQo>