

Google Compute Engine For All

Written by Marco Attard
16 May 2013

Google makes a couple of announcements regarding the Google App Engine (GAE) service at the I/O developer fest-- the Platform-as-a-Service is now available for all (not just customers paying for support) and features PHP support.



What does this mean? In a few words, GEA now supports the three more widely used web languages (Python, Java and PHP) together with the Google-sponsored Go.

"This isn't like your existing PHP stack," Google technical infrastructure senior VP Urs Hölzle says. "We patch it and manage it for you. Because it's GAE, if your site gets no traffic it costs you nothing but if your site gets a lot of traffic we can scale it up fast."

PHP allows GAE to host web applications such as WordPress, Drupal and Magento, with auto-scaling responding to spikes in traffic-- making it similar to the likes of Windows Azure, Amazon Web Services (AWS) Elastic Beanstalk, AWS-based Heroku and Engine Yard, and App Fog.

Funnily enough, PaaS was supposed to kill off PHP, since it makes it easier to deploy and host Python and Ruby app. However the PaaS model also found use for the older PHP apps companies still need to run in the same place hosting all their other apps.

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A further GAE-related announcement at I/O is a beta of App Engine Server-- a means for modularising applications, allowing the sharing of data stores on in-memory cache. It also provides separate scaling, deployment, versioning and performance settings for individual modules.

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