Welcome to the podcast on the topic of Cloud Computing. In the discussion are Daniel Boehrer, Tivoli Software Sales Leader IMT Alps and Andreas Meier, Infrastructure Architect at the IBM research lab in Rüschlikon.
The interview was carried out by Manuela Kerker.

Manuela Kerker: „Andreas, could you provide us with some information about yourself and your function at IBM?"

Andreas Meier: „I have now been working at the IBM Research GmbH in Rüschlikon in infrastructure services for 20 years. We provide the computers, the infrastructure, the networks and the software for our researchers' Living Lab Environment."

Manuela Kerker: „Daniel, could you also provide us with some information about yourself and your function at IBM?"

Daniel Boehrer: „I have now been working at IBM for 25 years, and have had various roles. For a long time I was responsible for banks, and about 7 or 8 years ago I switched to the Software Unit and have been responsible for Tivoli in the IMT Alps region for about 7 years. In addition to Cloud Computing, Tivoli also includes numerous other aspects such as Security Storage and Enterprise Asset Management."

Manuela Kerker: „What significance does Cloud Computing have for everyday life?"

Andreas Meier: „The first signs of the impact can now be seen daily. When we move around in the Internet and start a search machine, we come into contact with the Cloud technology. Although we can not yet download the services directly from the network, the first signs for this are also apparent. Let us take an application shop such as the iPhone as an example, where the application can be downloaded directly, and where the whole handling process is as if it were a service. You don't have to attend to either the update of the application nor to its management on the iPhone, everything is automated via Cloud Computing."

Manuela Kerker: „Andreas, which technical components support Cloud Computing?"

Andreas Meier: „As I come from the network sector, my immediate thought is of a highly available and very fast network, in order to be able to bring the various services quickly to the end customer.
For this there is the service catalogue, which is made available from any one of the various devices available, whether mobile or fixed, within the Internet or Intranet. The end customer can then create their own wish list for the desired services and infrastructure components. As soon as one of these services is selected, it needs to be provided quickly, which is known as Rapid Delivery. This is an automated process, which installs the required services on a platform within the shortest possible time, so that they are then available to the end customer."

Manuela Kerker: „Daniel, what software forms the basis for Cloud Computing?"

Daniel Boehrer: „Tivoli certainly plays a main role in the overall area of Cloud Computing. It primarily concerns making available software tools which can manage the lifecycle of Cloud Services, from the service definition up to the service termination. One of the first products that we announced in Cloud Computing was the Tivoli Service Automation Manager. It was developed in Böblingen and is the first tool for the management of this lifecycle. But other Tivoli products and software applications also play a central role in Cloud Computing, primarily in the area of integration and automation. Provisioning tools are also important; these handle the allocation of various user IDs or software units, without knowing which infrastructure is behind it. Another important tool is the Health Checking Monitoring software. We need to be able to understand and manage the condition of a complex infrastructure under the cloak of Cloud Computing. There is a whole array of various Tivoli products right up to the CMDB, which serve to define and understand the dependencies between the individual CIs."

Manuela Kerker: „Where are the advantages of Cloud Computing for corporate activities?"

Daniel Boehrer: „What is important is the following: Cloud Computing promotes innovation! Moreover, we are forced to think about new concepts, especially in light of market changes which are occurring at an ever faster rate, and which compel us to react quickly. We therefore need a dynamic infrastructure, which heads us in the direction of Cloud Computing. Furthermore, Cloud Computing is a driver for cost reductions thanks to automation, which is certainly a significant advantage. I also think that the end user constantly wants to acquire more services, just as we acquire electricity from a socket, and this is only possible with the help of a model such as Cloud Computing."

Manuela Kerker: „How does Cloud Computing influence our society?"

Andreas Meier: „I can already visualize how the manner in which we communicate with each other, how we obtain information, how we shop or enjoy ourselves will be shaped by the Cloud Computing paradigm. We can constantly be reached and we are more or less continuously connected with a large network, be it with the Internet or the Intranet at work. The small devices that we carry around with us everywhere, the PDAs or Smartphones, are constantly connected to these networks. There, various data streams with various services can be brought together, e.g. my location data (where I am at the time) and a community assessment (e.g. how good a restaurant is). I can therefore quickly find a good restaurant nearby."

Manuela Kerker: „What potential does Cloud Computing harbor?"

Andreas Meier: „An important question for me with respect to the potential for Cloud Computing is: how do we handle time, for example, the time that we need to realize new business ideas and to implement them in a profitable manner, or the time that the customer needs to obtain what he is looking for and needs? This time can and will be minimized by the rapid provision of applications and services."

Daniel Boehrer: „I think that a new form of collaboration between IT and the end user will arise, be it in the private, leisure or business fields. There will be significantly more companies who use Cloud Computing to offer new services. I think we will see a shift here, with new innovative products and companies taking a slice of the market away from established companies, and providing services using Cloud Computing.“

Manuela Kerker: „Many thanks for your comprehensive remarks.“