

How Do Cloud Providers Elicit Consumer Requirements?

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Abstract: Applying appropriate requirements elicitation techniques is a vital precondition for delivering successful systems. When eliciting requirements for cloud services, however, existing methods such as workshops are challenged and some are even rendered obsolete. Therefore, we interviewed 19 cloud provider companies to understand the current state of practice regarding the adoption and implementation of existing elicitation methods. Our talk summarizes the results of this recent exploratory study [TSG13], showing that only a few cloud providers try to implement and adapt traditional methods, whereas the large majority uses ad-hoc approaches for identifying consumer needs. Ad-hoc methods range from guessing and inventing requirements to imitating competitors, and generally lead to dissatisfaction among cloud providers. This situation is mostly caused by the incompatibility of traditional methods with the cloud paradigm, hence motivating the investigation of dedicated elicitation techniques for the cloud. After clarifying the challenges and identifying key features for cloud-specific methods, we introduce a new approach for understanding cloud consumers' needs. This approach analyzes customers' advanced search queries for services, and interprets them using fuzzy Galois lattices [TG14]. Further, this new technique allows eliciting real requirements unobtrusively and at a global scale.

References

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