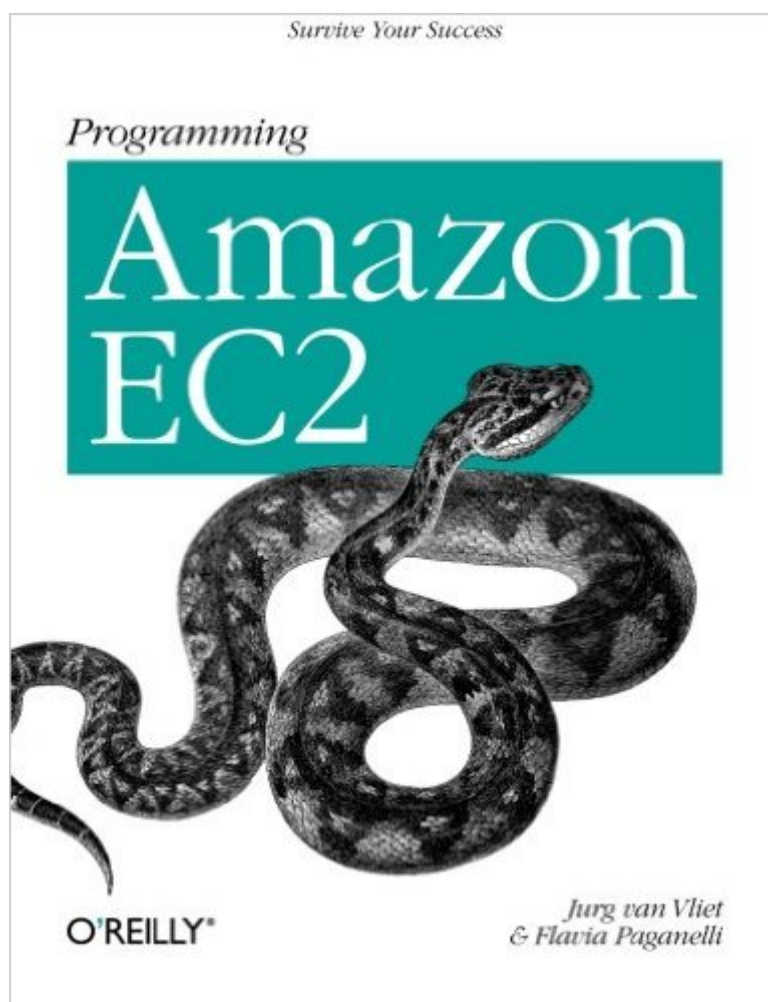


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Programming EC2



Synopsis

If you plan to use Web Services to run applications in the cloud, the end-to-end approach in this book will save you needless trial and error. You'll find practical guidelines for designing and building applications with Elastic Compute Cloud (EC2) and a host of supporting AWS tools, with a focus on critical issues such as load balancing, monitoring, and automation. How do you move an existing application to AWS, or design your application so that it scales effectively? How much storage will you require? Programming EC2 not only helps you get started, it will also keep you going once you're successfully positioned in the cloud. This book is a must-read for application architects, developers, and administrators. Determine your application's lifecycle and identify the AWS tools you need. Learn how to build and run your application as part of the development process. Migrate simple web applications to the cloud with EC2, Simple Storage Service, and CloudFront content delivery. Meet traffic demand with EC2's Auto Scaling and Elastic Load Balancing. Decouple your application using Simple Queue Service, Simple Notification Service, and other tools. Use the right tools to minimize downtime, improve uptime, and manage your decoupled system." Jurg and Flavia have done a great job in this book building a practical guide on how to build real systems using AWS." --Werner Vogels, VP & CTO at .com

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Customer Reviews

Because this is a short book, I'll write a short review. Programming EC2 (PAE) explains how to use certain elements of Web Services to deploy applications in 's cloud infrastructure. The discussion

centers on the authors' experiences deploying live, production Web sites (like Kulitzer) using AWS. I found this approach refreshing and novel, because it reads like a playbook for recreating similar infrastructure for the reader's own purposes. PAE regularly explains how to accomplish tasks using the AWS Web interface, but crucially (for me anyways) the book also generally shows the same processes using command line tools on Linux. Because I find it easier to read CLI instructions than follow screenshots of Web sites, I appreciated the text-based approach. PAE also helps the reader understand the reasoning behind 's release of various AWS offerings. It's clearer now the problems was solving internally, which drove the delivery of new capabilities to customers. My main problem with PAE is the almost total lack of security considerations. I say "almost" because the word "secure" does appear on p 87: "One advantage of SimpleDB here is that it's ready to use right away. There is no setup or administration hassle, the data is secure..." Sure it is! The authors also mention using Access Control Lists to permit Internet users to use Web applications, but otherwise there is no discussion of the risks of relying on cloud infrastructure. Reading recent news should be enough to remind the reader of these issues. Overall, you will like PAE if you're looking to see how another small company jumpstarted their business by deploying applications in AWS. For future editions I would like to see discussions of security plus comparisons to other cloud offerings.

Programming EC2 Programming EC2 is a hands-on guide to use of 's cloud platform, with a focus on showing the reader how to approach the various components of the EC2 ecosystem. The authors state early on that the goal is to give the reader "a sense of all AWS functionality", so you will not find any one area explored in extreme detail. The text generally achieves its goals. After a brief history of EC2 at , it moves quickly into establishing the necessary tools environment and then connecting to a new machine instance. This is not a cookbook, and some mundane yet critical details (e.g., setting permissions on your key files to 400 when running on Linux) are skipped; these are not fatal omissions, but they may hamper your experience if you are not seasoned on your platform of choice. Also, most examples are geared toward the Linux (Ubuntu) environment, so you will need to be able to translate those commands and concepts to your chosen environment. Once the machine image has booted, this text will assume that you are fully competent to administer the operating system of that image, including package installation, editing configuration files, etc. Overall, good breadth of information in a relatively quick read, although you will need to follow along and try the examples with your chosen image/environment/application to really see a return on time invested. Disclaimer, I was provided access by O'Reilly Publishing to an electronic copy of this book for review purposes.

This book gives a great and broad overview of EC2. Even though It is a complex platform, it is explored in a straightforward and practical way. The most important services are explained with enough detail to quickly start trying them. Using as examples the web apps they've put in production, the book goes from an initial and simple deploy, then through scaling and load balancing, refactoring, decoupling and finally decreasing downtime and managing uptime efficiently. One of the strongest points of this book is the authors' real-world usage of EC2: every recommendation, tip and best practice is based on day to day experience. While the web administration console is covered and used for some tasks, many others are done with the command-line tools, as one would do with in a real production environment. When reading the scripts one can appreciate what is really going on. Some useful third party tools are also described. Keep in mind that this text requires some technical background. You will not find here how to install or setup a Django or Rails environment from the ground up. But this is actually a good thing for people like me who already work with deployed apps and want to move them to the EC2. The only downside to mention is not really the book's fault. EC2 is constantly being improved and new services are being added all the time, and third party tools and services are constantly popping up, so some sections can look incomplete in the future. A website for the book could be a good complement.

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