

## Aqua-Man Goes Hi-Tech - Microsoft's Plunge Into Deep Sea Data Storage

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In addition to all things cyber security related, we here at CyberWatch love to see new technologies being developed and Microsoft's latest data storage project has us all excited.

Microsoft has leveraged the technologies of submarines and renewable energy to plunge an experimental 12 metre long datacentre into the sea near Scotland's Orkney Islands. The project, known as Project Natick, seeks to understand the benefits and difficulties in deploying subsea datacentres powered by offshore renewable energy.

Microsoft believes the technology has the potential to transform the core of its business and the wider cloud computing industry. Given that nearly half the world's population live within 200 kilometres of a coast, locating datacentres in bodies of water near coastal cities could improve the speed of web browsing, streaming and boost AI-driven technologies.

The cylindrical storage container has 12 racks containing 864 servers with a self-sustaining cooling system adapted from the heat-exchange process used in submarines. The project team aims to create sustainable datacentres that are powered entirely by renewable energy and are completely recyclable.

Microsoft hopes to leave the data centre in place for five years without having to intervene as once submerged, it's impossible for engineers to gain access to the facility. AI will be used to monitor the servers and other equipment for signs of failure for the next 12 months to assess the practicality of the idea and to identify any correlations between environment and server longevity.

After this initial testing phase, Microsoft says it will allow access for a select few clients to start using the datacentre to further test how the system will operate.

We can't help but notice there is no mention of how Microsoft intends to keep their datacentres secure. But we suppose that something short of James Bond-esque villains diving down and tampering with the centre means the bottom of the ocean is probably a pretty safe spot for now.

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