

SERVICE

Cloud IT Infrastructure

Increasingly, large organisations are moving their technology estates from traditional datacentres to the cloud – a multi-tenancy, virtualised services provided on a “pay for what you use” basis from providers such as Amazon, Microsoft and Google.

The change can be thought of as moving from a building, maintaining and running your own electricity generator or plugging into the grid and buying from a utility company.

The benefits of moving your data to the cloud infrastructure are compelling.

- **Cost:** we see clients regularly make savings in their running costs of 30–50% compared with more traditional data-centre operations;
- **Speed:** Cloud IT services are available instantly - there is no lead-time to order and provision hardware;
- **Flexibility:** if sizing estimates prove incorrect or an experiment proves wildly successful, capacity can be added or withdrawn in minutes. Solutions can be built to scale up and down in response to demand, meaning that seasonal businesses don't need to have expensive assets sitting idle waiting for peak periods;
- **Resilience:** solutions can be engineered to automatically “throw-away” failed components, and re-provision replacements, with no impact to the user;
- **Security:** cloud providers invest in security services at every layer of their offer, and are able to share the costs of such protection across multiple clients;
- **An “Evergreen” service:** a move to the cloud infrastructure avoids the need to spend capital refreshing hardware every 3–5 years to ensure that it remains serviceable. This work is done by the provider as part of the service.

“Done right, a move from traditional data-centres to the cloud can significantly reduce cost, improve service, and ensure that your infrastructure is always up-to-date.”

Dave Machin
Partner



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The move to the cloud brings its own unique challenges that we have extensive experience in helping to solve. We can help with:

Legal

Making sure that the legislative and regulatory implications of holding data in the cloud and potentially in different geographies and legislative regimes are understood and appropriately mitigated.

Organisational

Cloud IT skills are “hot” in the market so developing them in your teams without losing them to the highest bidder, whilst continuing to attract and retain the talent that your business is increasingly dependent on, can be increasingly difficult.

Behavioural

The move to cloud isn't just a technical change - it turns many of the principles and philosophies that have underpinned technology organisations for years on their heads. For example, leading-edge cloud practices include throwing away and re-building platforms every night to keep costs down, implementing the latest builds and security patches automatically on a daily schedule to take away the risk of malware attacks; and deliberately “killing” server instances to continually prove operational resilience.

Commercial

Selecting and contracting with the right cloud partner(s) is a big decision and will need to factor in the consequences on your entire supplier landscape. There can be material implications for the financial balance between Capex and Opex, for software licenses, and for existing infrastructure and application support and maintenance agreements.

Transitional

Making the move from on-premise to the cloud is a large and complex exercise in its own right. Determining which applications to “lift and shift” with minimum change, and which to re-engineer to take maximum advantage of the move, is key to the overall success. And like any big change programme, strong leadership, good governance and rigorous execution are critical.

Our experience

We're experienced in tackling these challenges in the largest and most complex organisations:

- We helped a major global manufacturing company evaluate and select a cloud infrastructure service provider on which to run its new ERP system. We helped establish selection criteria, a decision-making team, and a short-list of potential suppliers. We ran the selection exercise and helped negotiate the contract for the service.
- We led the project to migrate the global, multi-brand web-estate for a large energy super-major to the cloud in response to a huge increase in web-traffic volatility and a number of security threats. The project implemented a new Content Management System, and helped establish a process for each brand entity to migrate their sites.
- We led the programme to migrate a FTSE 250 manufacturer's entire data-centre estate onto the cloud, including both Unix and Windows services, ERP and best-of-breed package and bespoke applications.
- We led the evaluation, selection and migration of core HR platforms onto Workday and Cornerstone for 170,000 users across 106 countries, including the integration to over 40 payroll providers.
- We helped a large retailer establish a cloud IT competence centre, to provide a set of policies and standards and to jump-start the capability within the organisation with a set of re-usable templates.
- We helped a large retailer migrate its HR systems to a self-service SaaS solution for 20,000 colleagues.