Cloud Strategy and Transformation

Working with a global company on their data centre hosting and cloud services

intergence
PLATFORM. DELIVERY. EXPERIENCE.

To create the foundation for this group mission our client needed a Data Centre and Cloud Services strategy

THE CLIENT

Our client is a global loyalty and benefits company which works with major international brands to acquire, engage and retain customers. Offering products that range from loyalty and travel priority schemes to insurance and travel assistance, it has brought value to leading companies across the world for nearly three decades. With over 25 locations, in 17 countries, +2000 employees and +20 million end-managed customers, the company is a leader in the market and has extensive expertise in partnerships, technology and product innovation.

BACKGROUND & CHALLENGES

Our client has experienced huge growth, both organically and via strategic acquisition. Nearly 30 different companies have now merged with the group, each with its own structures, processes, procedures and IT services.

The challenge for the client was to evolve its business structure from being a network of formerly independent SMEs to a seamless global enterprise. Creating unified IT systems was central to this mission. To highlight one fundamental problem, the company's data centre services were being delivered from 17 internal facilities, alongside 38 separate contracts with 20 external providers. This meant the group's data centre services were being delivered from 56 different locations!

Similar fragmentation of IT systems was apparent across the company's legacy structures. For example, dozens of different HR, finance and sales departments relied on a huge range of different software, hardware and hosting. It was business critical for the company to unify and rationalise its IT structures, giving it more collective bargaining power when negotiating contracts, allowing it to leverage preferential pricing and giving it a joined-up view of its own data.

To create the foundation for this group mission our client needed a Data Centre and Cloud Services strategy to transform its IT systems at every level.

FINDING THE RIGHT SOLUTION

The client needed a trusted advisor to work with the business globally and lead the creation of the Data Centre and Cloud strategy. It turned to Intergence.

Our team's key priorities were to gain a detailed understanding of the client's complex supplier arrangements, data centre hosting, cloud services, applications and infrastructure, budget structures and compliance obligations. A detailed understanding of the market landscape and developing Cloud Services was critical to success.

The next task was to create a vision and strategy to transform the organisation's IT, drawing on our strong market knowledge and experience. To deliver the strategy, Intergence undertook a three-step process.

1. Evaluating the business and the cloud.
This involved assessing the current state of the company's IT, prioritising cloud initiatives and assessing value and readiness.

2. Mitigating key risks.
Here we identified cloud risks and roadblocks, building strategies to mitigate them.

3. Completing the cloud strategy.
This saw us define a strategic target state, review the impact on the business and finalise an action plan.

As a result of this process, we agreed an objective of designing and executing a global hosting strategy for the group business. To achieve this, we worked to:

- Align the IT hosting strategy to the corporate strategy to operate and coordinate as a group.

- Devise a long term, sustainable, and continuous data centre hosting and service optimisation strategy.

- Use a standardised group-wide shared utility services approach.

- Provide consistency in the use of external hosting suppliers.

- Provide a simplified data centre topology that can be scaled to provide high availability and disaster recovery for service resiliency and business continuity.

Core to this consolidation was delivering a high proportion of software services from the public or private cloud, retiring those that were no longer needed and moving the different areas of the business to shared systems.

BENEFITS

The Global Data Centre and Cloud strategy underpins the company's goal of operating and coordinating as a group by delivering a balanced portfolio of data centre services.

The services meet all necessary rigorous compliance requirements while offering the agile, flexible and cost-effective value of the cloud.

The strategy has driven the understanding of Cloud Services and broken down the barriers of adoption. It also drives the ongoing realisation of the following business goals.

The services meet all necessary rigorous compliance requirements while offering the agile, flexible and cost-effective value of the cloud.