

NHS Consortium Saves money and delivers applications quickly using BrightCloud secure cloud hosting platform

A recent example of a collaborative IT project was the delivery, across multiple trusts, of a new staffing application. It was established that three trusts were proposing to roll out the same application and each to just a small number of staff, but with the scope to grow to thousands of users in time.

The objective of the application was to streamline processes, increase efficiency and control costs. It was therefore essential that the cost of installation and on-going management and maintenance was inline with this and carefully controlled.

"This project demonstrates the absolute value of cloud services when wanting or needing to deliver a fast, faultless and accessible solution. The ability to scale in both power and cost and to add and decrease users as required is as invaluable as the guaranteed security that comes with a privately hosted solution."

NHS spokesperson

Controlled costs – economies of scale

The obvious solution for the internal IT team would have been a single shared system, but there were operational issues relating to the internal infrastructure that made this difficult to deliver.

Additionally, the capital costs of building a scalable platform were huge and beyond the realistic spend of a carefully controlled IT budget. Add to this the estimated six month lead time to implement an internal solution and the project started to become an untenable option for the NHS Trust consortium.

Following a recommendation from the author of the software, the decision was made to externally host the staffing application with an external partner. BrightCloud was selected.

Secure connection to N3 Network and public internet / compliant

Security was at the top of the agenda. Staff needed the option to access the system from within the secure N3 network and from their home locations via the internet.

With this priority, BrightCloud designed a data protected solution using Citrix NetScaler, the Gartner Magic Quadrant recommended application delivery controller. This would broker secure access to the

application without a direct connection, while still allowing remote access to the application from users on their home internet connection.

This also ensured that the NHS consortium was compliant with IGSoC guidelines.

Scalable cloud for IT budget control

BrightCloud designed an initial cloud-based framework with shared SQL resources; this immediately minimised infrastructure and license costs. Three application servers were then added to guarantee fast performance to the entire user community.

This scalable cloud meant BrightCloud could plan the database, starting with the initial low number of users, but with the scope to scale to a considerable system as demand grows. With continued collaboration, it was later decided to move the consortium to three separate database servers.

This build approach means that the consortium only pays monthly for the IT resources it is actually using. It is quick and easy to scale up (or down) as resource needs change, allowing the consortium to start small and remain in control of costs.

System delivery – Five days from start to finish

Once the design of the hosted infrastructure was agreed with the consortium and software provider, BrightCloud took just five days to set-up a tested system ready for the initial pilot phase.

The pilot phase took longer than anticipated as users got used to the new application and processes, but this meant that the launch phase was smooth. It also proved that being able to access the system remotely helped enormously and users liked the option they now had to work from any access device, from anywhere and at anytime 24x7.

BrightCloud recognised across the NHS for its hosting performance

“We are very proud of the recognition our BrightCloud hosting and managed services have within the NHS, from trusts through to specialist agencies including the Ambulance and NHS Blood and Transplant services.

“Our reputation comes from our team’s ability to guarantee the availability, scalability and security of the vital data and applications essential to the day-to-day functioning of these life saving bodies that make up the NHS,” explained Duncan Little, co-founder and Managing Director of BrightCloud.

Performance is vital to the three trusts within the consortium. BrightCloud provides network and infrastructure performance monitoring allowing issues to be identified before they impact the users

experience. This proactive approach has helped with several potential issues associated with software updates.

This NHS Trust consortium project is a great model for other trusts wanting to save costs, reduce time to deployment and guarantee performance with a scalable infrastructure as a service solution.

For Further Information

Kate.McWhirter@bright-cloud.net

BrightCloud Technologies Limited
Systems House
Cottesbrooke Park
Heartlands Business Park
Daventry
NN11 8YL
Tel: 0370 770 9722
Fax: 0370 770 9725