

CUSTOMER STORY

A FORECAST OF CLOUD FOR THE FUTURE

Adapting the supply chain from traditional physical infrastructure to cloud-based services

SERVICES

- IT Strategy & Advisory Services
 - Technology Sourcing
 - Transformation Services
 - Support & Maintenance
 - Managed Services
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USER EXPERIENCE

- Enhanced agility and mobility
- Maximised efficiency
- Improved access to information
- Improved user satisfaction

BUSINESS IMPACT

- Accelerates innovation
 - Boosts business agility
 - Strengthens competitive advantage
 - Enriches customer experience
 - Improves productivity
 - Reduces costs
 - Supports digitalisation
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OBJECTIVE

The Met Office is looking to use Public Cloud to enable them to scale-up against increasing data volumes, and to deliver the agility that they need to be able to respond to market demands. Alongside this are three major challenges. Firstly, the Met Office must continue to invest in scientific research and remain at the forefront of weather and climate science on a global scale. Secondly, they must continue to deal with the vast data quantities that they produce every day, both from a research and an operational perspective. And thirdly, they need to keep their 40-years'-worth of legacy IT running, which is still critical to their business.

The overall challenge, therefore, is to move gradually to cloud services, without impacting scientific research, the vast data processing requirements, or the Met Office's super-computer, which underpins not only all their IT-based scientific research, but also their day-to-day operations, too.

SOLUTION

Traditionally, Computacenter's service to the Met Office has focused around procurement and delivery of physical infrastructure, as well as various other services. However, in order to respond faster to market demands, existing services need to be transitioned to the cloud, and new services need to be developed in the cloud.

The Met Office are therefore looking for a compliant route to market for cloud services via Computacenter, as well as the provision of the services and the consultancy and advice that goes on top of that.

OUTCOME

There will be some key changes to the support service, as the partners will gradually move from a relationship that was focused around procurement of physical infrastructure, to one that is based around transitioning services to the cloud and then driving value out of those services.





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Richard Bevan,
Associate Director of
Operational Technology,
Met Office



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Richard Bevan,
Associate Director of
Operational Technology,
Met Office

OBJECTIVE

Enabling faster response to market and customer demands, whilst still addressing major business challenges

The Met Office faces three key challenges from a business perspective.

The first is to continue to invest in scientific research and remain at the forefront of weather and climate science on a global scale. As Richard Bevan, Associate Director of Operational Technology at the Met Office explains: “We have around five hundred scientists working here at our Head Office in Exeter, and in other locations around the UK. So, making sure they have the right IT to support furthering that research is critically important.”

Alongside scientific research, Richard goes on to state that the Met Office also needs to ensure that they have the right IT tools and capabilities to support their business objectives, too.

The second key challenge is dealing with the vast data quantities that the Met Office produces every day, both from a research and an operational perspective. Vitally important is how the Met Office convert those data volumes into products and services that their customers can use to help them make those important decisions to stay safe and thrive.

The third and perennial challenge for the Met Office, is that of their legacy IT – developed over a period of forty years, and which is still critical to the business. But as Richard Bevan explains: “Whilst this legacy IT remains highly tuned to meeting the business challenges that we’ve faced over that [40-year] period, it is also causing us some constraints as we look forward into new ways of working in the future.”

Against the backdrop of these challenges, the Met Office knows that it needs to move services to the cloud to enable them to respond faster to market and customer demands. The overall objective, therefore, is to gradually transform from legacy physical infrastructure to cloud-based services, whilst also meeting the three major business challenges outlined above.

SOLUTION

Moving the supply chain from traditional physical infrastructure to cloud-based services

Traditionally, Computacenter’s service to the Met Office has focused around procurement and delivery of physical infrastructure, and in delivering several years of stellar service for break-fix support for network components and servers. In addition, security services have been provided along with the procurement and delivery of workplace equipment.

As Richard Bevan explains: “The Met Office has a really well-developed relationship with Computacenter which has been built up over a number of years. The advantage for us in this ongoing relationship is that Computacenter really understand us. They really understand our business. They really understand our IT. They understand how we work.”

The Met Office also appreciate the team ethic of Computacenter and their understanding that everything is a joint project. Again, Richard explains: “When we work with Computacenter, they really understand where we’re coming from, and the end-goal that we’re trying to achieve. We work as a partnership to deliver the outcomes jointly, as opposed to engaging in a traditional supplier-consumer relationship.”



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ABOUT THE MET OFFICE

Founded in 1854, the Met Office is the UK’s national weather and climate service employing around 500 UK-based scientists. They also provide vital forecasting services for military and commercial transport across the globe, too.

The Met Office HQ is based at Exeter, with another multi-million-pound operational centre located at Aberdeen, and many other remote locations throughout the UK. International locations include Africa, the South Atlantic, and even Antarctica.

The Met Office’s customers include the public and many industry partners who consume their local and global-scale services. This all goes towards meeting the organisation’s main goal, which is to help people and businesses make better decisions to stay safe and thrive.

However, in order to respond faster to market demands, the Met Office knows that it needs to move existing services to the cloud, and to develop new services in the cloud. As Richard Bevan explains: “Traditionally, Computacenter’s service has focused very much around procurement of physical infrastructure for the Met Office, but increasingly, it is moving into the services space, as we start to consume more cloud-based services.”

For example, the Met Office has a series of post-processing systems that take the raw data that comes out of their weather forecast models and climate models and converts that into the products that their customers consume. These products are typical candidates that will need to be migrated to cloud.

Finally, as part of this ongoing transition, Richard further-acknowledges the importance of an IT partner. “We need to be able to draw upon the expertise of a company like Computacenter that work across the different vendors in the marketplace and therefore can give the Met Office the best options, to meet our business needs. So, we need from Computacenter, firstly, a compliant route to market, and secondly, the provision of services and the consultancy and advice that goes on top of that.”

More specifically, Computacenter’s cloud-oriented services will be as follows:

- Vendor-independent advice on tools, technology and infrastructure best-suited to the Met Office’s cloud needs.
- Advice on software-sourcing to help the Met Office procure marketplace software from a set of independent software vendors.
- Advice relating to the build of an integrated suite of tools to manage the deployment, operation and monitoring of applications and associated datasets across cloud and other infrastructure environments.
- Development of a cloud migration process and methodology which can be adapted and flexed to suit the Met Office’s organisation.
- Development of a cloud strategy aimed at transforming the Met Office’s environment of the future.
- Leverage of Computacenter vendor relationships to take advantage of best-fit cloud infrastructure and software partners available.

OUTCOME

Reaping the rewards of the move to cloud-based services

Clearly, the Met Office is looking to drive greater value out of the services that they are beginning to deploy from the cloud, and as Richard Bevan explains: “I already see Computacenter’s services shifting in that direction. For example, helping organisations exploit tools like ServiceNow and the like, that we may deploy from Public Cloud.”

The Met Office therefore expects many more years of totally reliable support and advice from Computacenter, as the two partners combine to transition their relationship from one focused around the procurement of physical kit and infrastructure, into a partnership driving value out of the services that the Met Office deploy from the cloud. Plans are already unfolding to enable the Met Office to scale-up against increasing data volumes, and to deliver the cloud agility that they need to be able to respond to market demands. Meanwhile, Computacenter also continues to win new business with the Met Office, having recently signed a contract with the Met Office to upgrade their mainframe.

As Richard Bevan sums up nicely: “The partnership between Computacenter and the Met Office continues to develop in a positive way.”

MORE INFORMATION

To find out more about our enterprise services and read more customer case studies, log on to www.computacenter.com