

# CASE STUDY

## INSURANCE SECTOR

# CULLUM CAPITAL VENTURES



**Cullum Capital Ventures (CCV) was founded in 2006 and is a sister company of Towergate Insurance. It specialises in acquiring and grouping together high-quality regional insurance brokers and has 800 staff spread across 40 sites. Its use of several Redcentric Cloud services, including virtual server hosting and managed backup, has led to performance and cost improvements.**

## CHALLENGES

CCV has grown rapidly since its inception in 2006. The dynamics of the business make it essential that CCV's services are able to adjust quickly to absorb any changes. Richard Norris, IT Director at CCV says, "Because of our very aggressive growth strategy, when we were developing our IT environment we needed to concentrate on solutions that could flex at the same speed as the business."

At the same time, Richard Norris was keen to reduce CCV's core data centre costs by removing the expense of new hardware and reducing the cost of running the centre: "I wanted to move to the Cloud because it would enable us to reduce capital expenditure and be more flexible in our operating costs."

In looking for a supplier to meet this strategic plan the key criteria were that it could provide:

- A reliable and resilient back-end infrastructure, ensuring security and service continuity.
- A clearly defined SLA that precisely met CCV's business, service and operational requirements.
- A cast-iron guarantee that CCV's data would remain within the UK at all times to comply with stringent industry regulations.

## REALISING THE BENEFITS

The performance of Redcentric's services has proven excellent – much better and much more cost-effective than we've been able to provide in-house.

Richard Norris  
IT Director,  
Cullum Capital Ventures



## HOW REDCENTRIC HELPED

Through its relationship with Towergate, CCV knew that Redcentric had proven credentials in terms of its investment and commitment to delivering enterprise-grade solutions and so, as Richard Norris explains, "We had no hesitation in approaching them to host our Cloud services."

The reason CCV chose Redcentric was two-fold. "First," says Richard Norris, "Redcentric demonstrated a clear understanding of our business, our strategic plans and what we were trying to achieve. Secondly, the fact that they own their own network and data centres, and their own experts are responsible for management and support, gave us tremendous confidence."

In addition, the ability to integrate CCV's own IT environment with Redcentric's network to provide a seamless authentication process was an important advantage.

CCV chose Redcentric to provide managed network services, a virtual private network (VPN) and a range of other services including:

- Virtual server hosting of its Microsoft Exchange email system
- Hosted Microsoft Office Communications Server (OCS) for its central support teams

## TECHNICAL INFO

- Virtual Server Hosting
- Hosted OCS
- Managed Backup Services
- Bare Metal Restore
- Managed Network Services and VPN:
  - 21CN WES 100
  - NTL 10Mbps circuit
  - 2Mbps PPC
  - ADSL and PSTN circuits
  - Internet and Managed Firewall

Managed backup services, including bare metal restore, to backup branch offices' business data on a daily basis.

## BUSINESS BENEFITS

Since choosing Redcentric's services, CCV has seen a number of improvements. Richard Norris says, "The performance of Redcentric's services has proven excellent – much better and much more cost-effective than we've been able to provide in-house."

Specific benefits include:

### Reduced capital expenditure

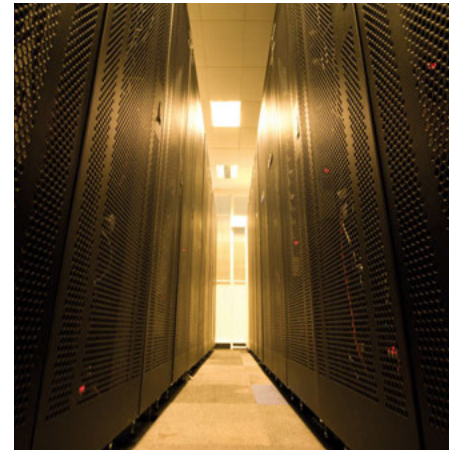
Reducing CCV's core data centre utilisation by using Redcentric's virtual server hosting and managed backup services has resulted in significant cost reductions and met the company's objective of moving to an operational cost model. The hosted OCS solution across the central support teams has also reduced travel costs.

### Security

Richard Norris says, "The security issues around the private Cloud are much easier to control than those of a consumer-grade public Cloud." In addition, because of the seamless integration of Redcentric's network with its own domain structure, CCV can control where its data sits and who has access to it – a key requirement under industry laws.

### Flexibility

CCV has been able to grow its server estate in a much more flexible and dynamic model than when it was on-premise, and the ability to adjust the resources available to its Platform as a Service servers – one of the main reasons



for taking up the service – has, says Richard Norris, "proved very worthwhile indeed."

### Service continuity

A detailed SLA has been consistently met, ensuring CCV's ability to provide resilient services company-wide. Hosted OCS has made communication between the support teams easier and quicker while of particular benefit, says Richard Norris, "is the knowledge that the back-end infrastructure is absolutely enterprise grade with the bolt-on services, such as managed backup services and bare metal restore, providing an additional feel-good factor in that we know we can rapidly recover from an incident on our servers."

### Support

The availability of round-the-clock expert support and regular meetings with Redcentric have helped CCV enhance its service delivery, and Richard Norris says, "There's a great bunch of account handlers and technicians that work at Redcentric and we're really happy to work with those guys."

One of the main benefits is working with a great team. There's a great bunch of account handlers and technicians that work at Redcentric and we're really happy to work with those guys.

Richard Norris  
IT Director, Cullum Capital  
Ventures