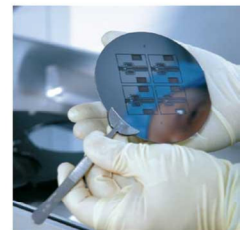# IMTECH ICT LIMITED

BESPOKE CLOUD SERVICES FOR G-CLOUD

Cloud Enablement

Imtech is currently helping many of its customers in their own particular journey towards the Cloud, some wanting to consolidate their ICT portfolio or datacentres to reduce costs; some with automating their virtualised infrastructure provision; some with realising the promise of Software-as-a-Service (SaaS) applications by integrating with their existing applications; and some considering the security and compliance implications that cloud brings to the foreground.

Imtech can help your organisation to re-think ICT in the shadow of the Cloud, and allow you to seize new opportunities as they arise, cope with demand spikes and troughs, cut energy usage, charge for ICT services more fairly, reduce the need for manual intervention and reclaim unused ICT resources.

Imtech possess a wealth of hardware, software, infrastructure and security capabilities making us the ideal choice to assist you to the Cloud. Our flexible delivery options include solutions for hybrid clouds, private clouds and purpose built-infrastructure. We are a leading UK cloud builder and technology provider and we can help your organisation define your cloud strategy, and work in partnership with you to deliver real results.

Imtech has proven market ability to rapidly prepare your infrastructure for Cloud Enablement. As well as assistance with the planning of Cloud solutions, we can make recommendations on managing any up-front investments, on-going operational costs and the disposal of any legacy assets.

Cloud offers next generation computing which allows organisations to create a flexible, dynamic and secure ICT infrastructure whilst addressing commercial pressures, by shifting from fixed to variable operating costs, for example. Imtech ICT ensures our clients have the right strategy in place to make the journey to Cloud a success

Cloud computing represents not only a change in the way technology is used, but a change in perspective for everyone involved in ICT. As cloud is both a service consumption and delivery model, the different perspectives can become confused amongst the hype. Ultimately, cloud can help improve business performance, control costs, cut waste, increase agility and efficiency thus vastly improving organisational IT and what it afford the business. There are solutions for small and large businesses; as well as both those providing services, and those consuming them. Cloud can even help efficient provision and consumption of ICT services within the same organisation.

Business Benefits

- Reduce and smooth ICT costs without jeopardising service levels
- Improve efficiency by automating processes and cutting waste
- Scale rapidly and accurately in line with demand
- Improve customer retention and experience
- Reduce data centre footprint and therefore energy usage and carbon emissions

Cloud Builder

If you want to host your own cloud, whether for your own or for others' use there are many challenges that remain prevalent, and some new ones too. Self-hosted clouds require complexity and intelligence built-in up front in order to benefit from simplicity later.

As soon as you start thinking about the benefits of virtualisation, you start thinking about sharing, pooling and consolidating and a natural progression would be to make this smarter and more automated, releasing even more of the same types of cost-savings and agility benefits.

Virtualisation alone is not enough: it has a lot of well-publicised benefits, but unless a great deal of care is taken, it makes it even more readily possible to lose control. If you go to the effort of pooling resource, then why would you allow it to be more easily wasted?

Whether or not you like the word cloud, the technologies we now know by that name are the future of ICT, and the change in model has already happened.

Imtech offer both bespoke and packaged solutions to bring the cloud into your datacentre, wherever you are on the journey to smarter infrastructure that really works for the business, rather than constrains it.

Imtech have specialists in every area of the cloud, from software to manage, automate, integrate, control and monitor, advanced storage technology, through to connectivity and datacentre design and security throughout.

Imtech cloud solutions can help you supercharge your virtualised or physical infrastructure, manage your estate no matter how large, automate time-consuming manual tasks, standardise for simple management, monitor resources in-use and reclaim those no longer in use, empower users, cut change control times, enforce ITIL processes and become more agile.

Many applications on the web now describe themselves as Software-as-a-Service (SaaS), but often these applications are a website which offers key functionality within the business from CRM to ERP, collaboration to finance, analytics to backup and so on. More and more ICT functionality is available over the web, with a huge choice of global and local players in the market. The vast investment behind these offerings means that their marketing is hugely attractive and compelling, but there are some key restrictions and constraints which are often ignored in the journey to the cloud:

- The scope for customisation is low and the boundary of functionality is rigid, although clearly documented
- Providers will rarely be concerned about how you get data in and out of your other applications
- The ease to which it is possible to sign-up as a customer for these SaaS means that this often undertaken without involving the IT department
- The migration cutover from an on-premise application to a SaaS equivalent means that these applications must run in parallel for a potentially extended period

Even though usage of SaaS for peripheral systems such as CRM is the most common adoption pilot scenario for cloud, these concerns together mean that the journey to the cloud is fraught with relatively unpublicised pitfalls.

One of the defining characteristics of a SaaS application is a well-defined and documented Application Programming Interface (API) with which other applications can execute operations on, and access data within the SaaS application. However the SaaS model depends on standardisation – the scope for customisation is low and the ability to support data and message flow originating from the SaaS application therefore would require changes to other applications in the architecture.

Cloud Integration

Integration platforms i.e. those which sit between applications and permit them to talk to each other with minimal or zero application changes have been around for some time (the notion of the Enterprise Service Bus or ESB), but the development of integration applications still needs to be undertaken in many scenarios. A new emergent platform however leverages standardisation between known and un-customised commercial applications whether in the cloud or on-premise such that it is possible to integrate these types of applications in days rather than weeks or months. There are multiple deployment models for this platform – either physical or virtualised appliance, or hosted itself in the cloud. Payment models can also reflect outright purchase or subscription, as with the cloud.

Integration is key to the successful adoption of SaaS in an organisation – rarely can an application exist in isolation. Order history from ERP might need to be seen in CRM; a workflow application might need access to customer data; or two separate data sources might need to be kept in sync. There are endless scenarios, but importantly a SaaS provider will end their responsibility to enable this at the API – the rest is up to you.

For many integration scenarios the approach advocated by Imtech ICT drastically reduces the time, effort, risk and cost associated with implementation, often requiring no code to be written in doing so. Value can be seen very easily, potentially under a project budget rather than requiring separate consideration and sign-off.

There are a vast number of applications supported, both traditional on-premise, SaaS or other cloud models, with more being added all the time. As it is nearly always cheaper to buy than to build, and less code to write is less code to maintain there can be no better way currently to embark on integrating with the cloud.

Key reasons to embark:

Business outsourcing and commercial off-the-shelf software is nothing new, but Cloud, and more specifically Software-as-a-Service (SaaS) has brought about brand new opportunities to reduce and spread software license cost and negate the need for costly ICT asset ownership and maintenance. The hype surrounding cloud is such that even the general public have an awareness, and uptake due to hype rather than taking a balanced view is commonplace.

Pushing business functionality outside of the organisational boundary creates some challenges that must be overcome in order to realise the true benefits, and the greatest of these is the transfer of data to and from on-premise data and applications, and even other SaaS applications. Without access to key and up-to-date business data, SaaS applications can be rendered useless; a white elephant. The security concerns around storing data in-the-cloud mean that it is often undesirable (as well as unwieldy) to transfer data in bulk out to SaaS applications.

A better approach is to integrate SaaS applications to on-premise data and applications, such that only the required data be moved, synchronised, updated and created, and also one application can trigger behaviour in one or more others. Your sales force can see order history in their CRM package, and they are always sure that customer data is up-to-date; your workflow system can pull information from the cloud; quotes can be turned to orders on the road and anything else you might think of.

However, home-grown integration is complex, takes a long time to implement and is costly to maintain in the long run. Why not outsource the integration aswell as the applications? We can integrate SaaS applications to commercial off-the-shelf applications in days, not weeks or months; using a de-risked implementation majoring in reusable components, and with flexible payment models meaning you only pay for what you use, just like in the rest of cloud.

Business Problem:
- ✓ SaaS application cannot communicate with my other applications
- ✓ SaaS vendor won't support customisation, or is very costly
- ✓ Home-grown integration code is fragile, requiring attention frequently
- ✓ Cost of home-growing integration is significant
- ✓ IT department need to be freed up to work on other things
- ✓ Don't want to pay for all of integration up-front
- ✓ Need to try-before-I-buy

✓ Don't want to pay for unused functionality

✓ Don't want to or cannot host an integration platform or application

Stakeholders:

- Economic – CTO, CEO

- Business – Business users, Business Analysts

- IT – CTO, developers, project management, development manager

Customer profile:

- Early stages of moving away from hosting IT estate and towards cloud

- Perhaps implemented CRM in the cloud e.g. SalesForce.com, but experiencing pain in getting customer order information to display, or synchronising data

- More receptive to buy versus build OR reducing/repurposing IT capability

- Maybe outsourced a lot of IT recently

- Home-grown mechanisms to get applications to talk to each other – this will be painful – using lowest common denominator technologies such as FTP, SQL, flat file, CSV

- Maybe a company considering cloud, or possibly ruled it out based on data security worries

- Maybe currently working around un-integrated applications using human-intensive methods such as printing and re-keying ("swivel-chair integration")

- Use commercial applications without much customisation

- Maybe want to test this out using a low budget or offset against a single project

- Efficiency-driven – do more with less – savings come before expenditure

Competitors:

- Home-grown or custom code – up-front effort to implement, ongoing effort to maintain, tough to scale, where will it run? Technologies used are not bang up to date, need to understand API, sequencing, message structures, data

- ESB/EAI – up-front effort to implement, ongoing effort to maintain integrations, tough to scale still need to understand API, sequencing, message structures, data

Objections:

- My developers will do it – it is never 'finished', will need maintenance, buying always cheaper than coding; up front effort and risk in understanding APIs – just buy that knowledge and de-risk

- Is this proven? Thousands of customer integrations say yes

- How can you deliver so fast? Application integrations are picked from a store-front (a bit like Apple app-store) and composed right off the shelf. This is made possible because we have invested the effort in integrating all the best known commercial applications together so the hard work is already done – just add some config! In many scenarios there is no code to write and test, and no installations to undertake.

- I can't afford it. You can make the efficiency savings before you realise the cost, because of the flexible payment models

- I don't have time to integrate all the applications I want to. OK so just try one for now, reap the benefits and use the platform to integrate more in future, paying for what you use.

The Imtech Approach:

- Applications audit

- Analyse user pain-points

- Opportunity analysis – where can this give benefits

- Data analysis – what needs to be moved and when, how

- Proof of Concept

- Implementation

- Ongoing integration reviews

Cast Iron

IBM WebSphere Cast Iron Cloud integration uses a "configuration, not coding" approach to easily connect a hybrid world of public clouds, private clouds and on-premise applications in days using a single complete, trusted and proven solution. Imtech is uniquely positioned as one of the largest system integrators and IBM Business Partners in Europe to be able to provide world class cloud solutions.

Imtech Background

Imtech ICT, a technical solutions provider, combines its knowledge of world-class technology providers to support its client's business transformation to Cloud. Our expertise in high performance networks and dynamic infrastructures gives us the unique capability to design tailor-made, best-of-breed Cloud solutions to meet individual requirements. By understanding how technology can accelerate success, Imtech has a proven track record in delivering highly complex technical infrastructure projects and carrier class networking solutions to enterprise and service provider customers worldwide. This legacy ensures we have the right knowledge and skills to build effective Cloud Solutions.