



Case Study



Octopus Investments

Business continuity and data centre selection strategy all taken care of: Researched, delivered and implemented so that everyone can stop Worrying and focus on business as usual.

Octopus Investments - was founded in February 2000 and has been growing rapidly ever since, alongside and within the financial services marketplace in the UK. From the beginning Octopus has been driven in developing its portfolio, growth, and people whilst heavily investing in groundbreaking ideas and strategic partnerships. Today they have close to 500 employees and manage £6 billion on behalf of more than 500,000 investors.

The Situation

Like many other rapidly growing, demanding IT and Data reliant businesses have found, the current Data Centre provision was no longer deemed appropriate for the needs of an expanding, diversifying and closely regulated financial services company.

Identifying that DC selection is a key priority alongside the IT infrastructure requirement was a key driver and it became clear that changing the current provider, location and deliverables would be essential to support the ongoing demands of meeting the stringent and ever changing regulatory and compliance demands of the Financial Services Industry.

Already a trusted advisor to the business, Atech were the ideal partner to utilise alongside the in house expertise to run a selection process to identify the best Data Centre Strategy for Octopus for the future.



octopus
investments

 Industry:
Financial

 Location:
UK

 Number Of Users:
600+



What Atech delivered

Key strategic decisions and priority projects require considerable stakeholder management and sponsorship to ensure they are successful and get over the line. Considering the options for a Data Centre partner clearly demanded a consultative, clearly defined and methodical analysis of the marketplace to ensure that the resulting selection process provided detailed insight. The output provided a fully transparent and auditable process that ensured the resulting shortlist of providers was indicative of the range, capability and options in the marketplace.

Using a proven consulting and project methodology provided the client with clear provider and solution choices and comparisons carefully selected to meet the clients existing and future needs of a Data Centre solution.

Broad and extensive knowledge of the industry coupled with practical insight into the client business objectives made the process efficient and effective and mindful of the wider needs of the business strategy.



Data Centre Selection Strategy



The Challenges

There were a number of main considerations that the process needed to address and be aware of:

- Ongoing reliability issues with the current Data Centre and why they occurred.
- The incompatibility of the current pricing model of the Data Centre with industry standards.
- The current provider was owned by a third party with a potential conflict of interest.
- The current provider was unable to meet the medium to long term requirements for growth.
- The decision making needed to become part of the overall IT strategy.

Data Centre's typically have many variables between the service they provide such as:

- Resilience
- Innovative and complex management systems

- Security levels
- Connectivity speeds
- Carrier and Cloud options
- On-net Telcos supplied
- Client risk profile

It was essential that the selection process addressed these variables alongside general due diligence and analysis of the current service providers demonstrating comparative rankings, positives and negatives, data gathering and comparisons at each stage.

Clearly defining the client requirements and objectives was crucial with extensive stakeholder management and support during the process and in conjunction with each of the milestones.

Understanding the absolute brief involves a step by step process designed to fully challenge and interrogate the current and future needs and expectations to ensure a perfect match with the solution provider offerings.

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- Selection of... compare
- Network design
- Detailed 'As is' audit
- Contract and price negotiations
- New centre move
- Data centre closedown

Balancing risk and expense becomes increasingly tough as businesses grow and the data held increases exponentially.

Customers need a more efficient way to manage their growing data needs whilst maintaining data integrity and accommodating country specific data privacy rules and regulations.

Growth needs managing and the supplier offering the service needs a rapid and stable plan for scalability and dependability.

Typically, Data Centres will seek to adhere to internationally recognized DC standards for Uptime. The US Uptime institute, has 4 levels (1-4) with 4 being the highest rated. The tiering system allows for unavailability of service over a period of one year or 526,500 minutes.



What did the client really want and what were the key differentiators between providers?

There are a number of Key Negotiation Options and differentiators (when comparing the key players) which needed to balance with the clear and rigorous requirements of the client.

- Charges associated with Security Arrangements
- Discounts on proposed lease length
- Number of cabinets required and sizing
- Maximum power per cabinet
- The overall power draw cap
- HVAC requirements
- Telco requirements
- Metered or Allocated Power
- Rights of First Refusal options (ROFR)
- Rent free periods during set up of service
- Support services offered (offsite or onsite)
- CCTV arrangements
- Uptime institute Classification Tier
- Information Security Management Standards
- Existing Contractual commitments

All of these key deliverables are considered as part of the discovery and negotiation between the client and the proposed suppliers.



Clear solution choices carefully selected to meet the clients needs



The Result

Data Centre selection, design and implementation should be a top priority and firmly embedded within every IT Strategy.

The introduction of a formal selection process designed, implemented and communicated by a professional consultancy and project management team ensured that this business critical decision was given sufficient attention, kudos and influence throughout the business.

Identified as a pivotal project within the overall IT strategy the process of choosing and integrating a new provider and business partner enabled Octopus to gain the comfort that it was all in hand and that they could focus on other elements of the business.

The thorough and detailed methodology for managing the vendor selection enabled a clear and transparent view of all the options available. This data collection and presentation of the facts and market landscape facilitated a carefully justified and informed choice for any future Data Centre partner. The rigorous process ensured that the client had access to suitable contract terms, negotiation options and above all the offer of a blended service that clearly and accurately met their specific requirements.

The ability to identify and resolve Data Centre inefficiencies is a key success factor and demonstrates a deep understanding of how to evaluate, score and benchmark providers against each other.

Octopus Investments have arrived at an ideal position and can now negotiate between just two ideally suited potential partners and select their final provider in the knowledge that the playing field is level and that they are comparing apples with apples.

Microsoft Gold Partner

Being a Microsoft Gold-Certified partner means that Atech has earned the highest standards of Microsoft's widely recognised partnership program.

If you'd like to explore digital transformation call Atech on 020 3757 7500 or email hello@atech.cloud