Taking Financial Control of Trust Technology

Challenging your IT Strategy.

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Taking Financial Control of Trust Technology

Of interest to anyone looking to make savings against their Trust's budget will be the increased use of cloud-based technologies and the direct impact cloud-hosted services are having on reducing IT and phone costs, cutting workloads and improving Mutli Academy Trust operational efficiencies.

This is no more relevant than for Multi Academy Trusts, whose schools are spread across wide geographic areas, and because of this, can benefit the most.

This paper sets out considerations for MAT board members and school senior leadership teams, to help shape a new approach to finding a balance between central economic control of IT and localised IT activity.

> *"We recommend that all education providers actively consider and evaluate the benefits of moving to a cloud-based approach for their IT system (moving away from relying solely on 'on-site' servers). Cloud-based systems are usually more secure, cheaper to run and enable more flexible working."*
>
> **Releasing the potential of technology in education. DfE April 2019**

Cloud-Hosted Services Consultation
Request your free consultation.
Email: info@schoolsbroadband.co.uk

Cloud-Hosted Services Benefits Overview

Understanding the principles of cloud-hosted technologies is the starting point to challenging current MAT IT strategies, if this hasn't been done already. Listed below are some fundamental benefits of using cloud-hosted services.

Reduced Capex	As cloud-hosted services do not require the purchasing of on-site equipment, it reduces capital expenditure.
Reduced Opex	As there is no requirement to own on-site equipment (services are subscribed to instead), there is no requirement to upgrade or replace equipment. The hosting ISP takes care of this.
Increased Efficiency	Cloud-hosted computing technology enables control of an entire Trust's IT estate, from one central point, allowing for more effective deployment of IT staff. If required however, schools can still maintain autonomy and control.
Improved Economies of Scale	Connecting to cloud-hosted services allows any number of schools to plug in to any number of services. Individual on-site equipment is not required, therefore significantly improving economies of scale, particularly when growing MATs.
Reduced Phone Costs	Cloud-hosted phone services (VoIP & SIP) give excellent quality, free site to site communication. VoIP and SIP phone services also vastly reduce phone bills and allow for a centralised telephone reception.
Reassurance	Centralisation of critical hosted services such as Web Filtering & Security ensures each school within the Trust meets regulatory requirements such as that stipulated as part of the DfE's Prevent Duty and KCSIE.
Trust Standards	Cloud-hosted services allow Trusts to introduce Trust-wide minimum standards for network security policies and minimum web filtering policies.
Autonomy and Independence	Academy schools who need to maintain a local identity, or who have regional Web Filtering requirements can also manage policies at school, classroom or device level via cloud-hosted services if permitted to do so by the Trust.
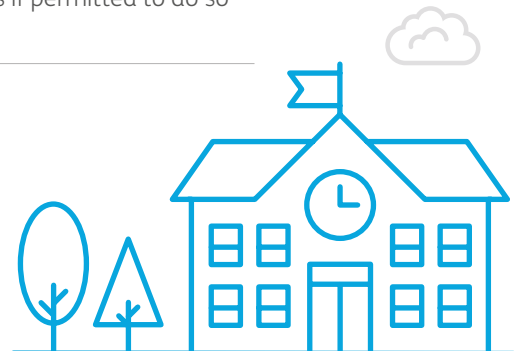
Cloud-Hosted Services verses
On-Site Equipment Cost comparison

Significant cost savings can be achieved by moving from an on-site solution to a hosted one; whether as an individual primary or secondary school and certainly as a Multi Academy Trust.

Below are some indicative costs demonstrating the types of savings achievable as a school or Multi Academy Trust over 3 or 5 years.

	On-Site Solution	Hosted Solution
Cloud-Hosted Services verses On-Site Equipment Cost comparison	On-site Appliance	Hosted Carrier Grade Equipment
	Warranty Required	Warranty Included
	Filtering Licensing Required	Filtering Licensing Included
	On-site Installation	Remote Installation
	WAN is Extra	WAN Ready
	Upgrades Chargeable	Upgrades Included
	Capex & Revenue	Revenue
Typical Primary Cost 2FE with a 100Mbps/100Mbps Leased Line	**£6,387**	**£4,895**
Typical Secondary Cost 5FE with a 1Gbps/1Gbps Leased Line	**£10,355**	**£9,495**
Typical MAT Cost 2x Secondary and 10 Primary	**£84,580**	**£67,940**
3 Year Cost Saving	**£49,920**	
5 Year Cost Saving	**£83,200**	

Reducing Costs
using Hosted Services

Until recently, schools have purchased, managed and maintained their own on-site servers, appliances and PBX equipment to enable ICT provision and phone services.

This traditional access to services, via the purchasing of onsite equipment, requires regular upgrades and equipment maintenance in order to maintain optimum service performance. Upgrades come with associated costs, making on-site appliances a less efficient way of managing IT infrastructures and phones services, particularly when managing multiple schools such as MATs, as costs will be multiplied.

By replacing individual, on-site school appliances with connections to a centrally cloud-hosted, high capacity server, the need for ongoing management of local on-premise devices is removed, along with the overhead associated with this management, including a reduction of contract management.

One single vendor, providing a seamless integration of hosted services, reduces customer costs, reduces time to provision, yet increases services available.

Hybrid solutions can run hosted services in conjunction with onsite hardware across a MAT's estate, if schools have recently invested in on-site appliances, until the appliances need updating.

Connecting MAT Schools
using Wide Area Networks

In addition to cloud-hosted services, understanding the basic principles of Wide Area Networks (WAN) is a must for buyers of IT services, if MATs are to take full advantage of reducing costs through technology.

A high-speed WAN does not require the actual laying of cables. Through hosted technology, all a Trust's schools can be connected, giving fast, secure and free site to site communication and access to almost limitless hosted services plus direct interconnects to Microsoft Azure for example. Specialist education ISPs configure networks to enable both central and local control of IT services, enabling individual school IT activity if required, whilst also allowing more efficient deployment of IT staff.

No-cost
networks

Some ISPs will provide a Wide Area Network free of charge as part of their Web Filtering and Security Services.

Controlling Regulatory and MAT Standards across all Schools

Because ISPs providing hosted services are responsible for ensuring their own equipment is always up-to-date and in warranty, there are no equipment maintenance, licence fees or equipment replacement costs for MATs to cover, so reducing long-term on-costs.

If MAT services are required to meet minimum standards, such as Web Filtering and Internet Security, central purchasing of hosted services will ensure each MAT's schools meet those standards, be they regulatory or the MAT's own.

Cloud-hosted
services

Reduces
carbon footprint

Reduces
energy bills

Protecting MAT Networks using Hosted Security Services

Given the severity of the current threat landscape, MATs should deploy only robust and proven network defences. It is now widely considered the safest place to hold school data is within a secure cloud that can be securely accessed.

For the first time, cloud services make connecting to world-class managed security, an economically viable option for MATs, revolutionising the management of IT infrastructure across Trust estates. Any number of schools within a MAT's trust, can connect to advanced cloud-hosted security services, regardless of their location.

A hosted security service provides more robust defences against sophisticated attacks than protection provided by on-site firewalls. We say it is the most efficient firewall you'll never have to buy.

Saving Costs and Improving Data Security

As every school in the country is now required to protect school data with more robust security than ever before, cloud-hosted security releases individual schools from managing the complexities and costs of hiring specialist security expertise and equipment.

Costs once associated with purchasing new onsite firewalls become an expenditure of the past. Hosted services provide Trust schools with access to enterprise grade security equipment, plus specialist security expertise; services that wouldn't otherwise be in the financial reach of a Trust or school.

Taking Central Control, Reducing Staff Costs

There was a time when hosted security reduced the control of firewalls for Network Managers, however some ISPs offer hosted firewalls that can be controlled almost as much as if they were on-site firewalls, giving full visibility and control.

Cloud-hosted technology gives MAT Network Managers the ability to control multiple school IT services, from one central location, helping to form the foundations for creating a more efficient, less dispersed, IT staffing infrastructure.

Providing School Independence with Locally Customisable Services

A hosted service allows central control of critical services such as web filtering and the default standards that are now demanded.

That means every MAT school will be assured of meeting regulatory filtering requirements as outlined in the DfE's Prevent Duty and Keeping Children Safe in Education guidelines. In addition, it gives individual schools the freedom and flexibility to locally customise their own web filtering, tailoring internet access by User, IP Address, Group or Domain.

For schools who prefer not to have to set their own policies, cloud-hosted services provide the best of both worlds by transferring responsibility for this to the Trust.

For a free consultation on cloud-hosted Web Filtering, Security and Phone services plus a Wide Area Network for your MAT

Email: **info@schoolsbroadband.co.uk**
or call **01133 222 333** Option 3

Benefiting Schools
with Cloud-Hosted Services

If MAT schools are purchasing services independently of the MAT, and the MAT wishes to procure services centrally, below are some of the advantages central procurement of cloud-hosted services will provide to the MAT's schools.

No Capital Outlay	Schools will not need to find the capital to invest in new equipment
No Equipment Maintenance	Schools will not need to invest in supporting and maintaining on-site equipment.
No Equipment Replacement	Cloud-hosted services do not require costly equipment upgrades or replacements.
Reduces Workloads	Cloud-hosted services minimise unnecessary staff workloads.
Access to Expertise	Cloud-hosted service providers can manage services remotely for schools.
Reduces Costs	By calling on centralised IT expertise from your Trust or Internet Service Provider, IT staff can be deployed more effectively, reducing schools' costs.
Autonomy and Independence	Schools who prefer to maintain a local identity, can manage filtering policies at school level.
Improved Standards	Trust-wide core policies can help raise Web Filtering and Security standards, so providing improved protection for students and school networks.
Reassurance	Centralising a difficult decision about broadband, filtering and security can help you to make the right choice for your school.
Regulatory Compliance	Centralisation of hosted Web Filtering and Security ensures your school will always meet DfE online regulatory requirements.

Request your free Cloud-Hosted Services Consultation

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Consultations include project scoping for one or multiple schools for:

- Broadband & Connectivity
- Security
- Web Filtering
- Wide Area Networks
- VoIP & SIP Phone Services

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