

Exigence: IT Infrastructure solutions for MTP



Exigence IT is an IT service provider specialising in the biotechnology, pharmaceutical and health sector, encompassing on-premise, cloud and hybrid systems, and providing the development, implementation and support of bespoke solutions, such as a secure, cloud-based, private data centre working space solution for the MTPConnect team.

Exigence IT was given a unique opportunity to design a greenfield IT infrastructure for MTPConnect. The requirements were different to the traditional head office and branch office model, as the MTPConnect's offices are based in existing leased university facilities in three states, greatly limiting what equipment can be deployed. Installation of a traditional on-premise IT infrastructure that calls for a dedicated server room and the associated services is not possible.

Exigence was tasked with designing and implementing a highly scalable IT infrastructure to facilitate day-to-day business and productivity services using cloud technologies, and ensuring a strong emphasis on security, mobility, control and regulatory compliance. This included services such as email, shared calendars, instant messaging and file sharing/collaboration.

Exigence developed a solution to these challenges by leveraging Microsoft's Office 365 public cloud services in combination with infrastructure as a service offerings from Amazon Web Services. The resulting IT infrastructure is effectively a virtual private data centre, without any significant capital investment.

This cloud infrastructure is different to the usual approach taken whereby the cloud provider controls security. Exigence's approach was to take the ownership of security away from the cloud provider by encrypting the entire infrastructure, with the encryption keys held by MTPConnect, as well as management and control of data backups. Furthermore, all data is geographically locked and protected by Australian privacy laws.

Dr Alfredo Martinez-Coll, General Manager Stakeholder Engagement at MTPConnect, said “It is great to know that we have easy access to our desktop where and when needed, and can share all company documents, use all Microsoft Office products in a secure, cloud-based environment, without having to worry about the security of public wi-fi networks. The data is secure and keys to access it only rest with Exigence.”

The new innovative design created by Exigence allowed for integration of multiple cloud-delivered services under one regulated and controlled IT infrastructure. It is fully encrypted, highly resilient and easily accessible from anywhere in the world using a single sign-on authentication service.

Vlad Tsyrlin, the Project Manager at Exigence IT, said “MTPConnect’s infrastructure design is the most innovative and exciting project I’ve worked on in years. This project paves the way to all new start-ups and existing organisations that don’t have large capital to invest but still need access to a large gamut of IT services”

Dr Irving Hofman, the Operations Manager at Exigence IT, said “This is the first time I’ve seen a wide range of Cloud Services combined to create a secure and highly controlled IT environment where the ‘key to the door’ stays with the customer – not with the service provider!”

This project means that new Australian medtech, biotech and pharma organisations can now commission complex and secure IT infrastructures without any associated capital expenditure. These can be geographically data locked, encrypted and regulated, and implementation can all be accomplished in a minimal amount of time. Furthermore, the organisation only needs to pay for resources needed at the current time, as future capacity and services can be dynamically added or removed as needed, thus offering flexibility and minimising costs. The cloud-based environment still offers the familiar desktop environment to end users and is accessible from anywhere in the world.

This solution would also be useful for organisations with existing on-premise IT infrastructure who wish to transition to the cloud to avoid hardware refresh and upgrade cycles, with services that can be easily commissioned including:

- Email and calendaring
- Instant messaging
- Document storage and collaboration
- Databases
- Network firewalls
- Antivirus and malware protection
- Backups and archiving
- Full security audit trails

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