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network news

the newsletter of SICL summer 2011

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C L O U D



SICL Cloud
The Event '11
Business North West

Welcome...



I've just celebrated my tenth year at SICL and in that time I have seen several new waves of IT technology emerge and flourish, fail, or in some cases fail only to be reinvented/repackaged a couple of years later. Most of the major "Next Generation" technologies have been accompanied by huge levels of hype and promises of massive savings and/or productivity gains. This rapidly becomes tedious as every event/publication/email/phone call seems to be about the latest thing whether it's VoIP, WAN Optimisation, Virtualisation and most recently...Cloud Computing. Being in the front line of sales for our business I frequently encounter the fatigue caused by constant exposure to the latest 'On trend' solution. This doesn't make the solution less relevant or advantageous - we see genuine and significant benefits in providing enterprise architecture but at costs scaled to match

customer operations - it just makes it a little harder to make sure our voice is heard. SICL started developing and planning for Cloud Computing in mid-2009 long before the current hype started. We launched SICL Cloud live in October 2010 and have been introducing new customers and services over the last 6-9 months. We believe our 'DataCentre to Desktop' approach is different to much of the 'Cloud' market and gives us a distinct voice. In this newsletter issue we examine the path SICL is taking with Cloud Computing and look at some real life examples that demonstrate this. Thank you for your continuing business.

Henry Barker
Senior Business Manager
April 2011

Cloud Couture - Made to Measure Computing

As Systems Integrator (the original S and I of SICL) we have a very clear understanding of the relationship between IT Systems, IT products and business outcomes. Yes, we sell IT products and IT systems, but only as part of a Solution which delivers business outcomes. For many years we have successfully delivered tailored solutions that deliver tangible returns. We have done this by listening to our customers, understanding their organisations and translating their objectives into technical solutions.

What we have seen with Cloud Computing in the broader market is a move towards what might be termed 'IT Service as a Product'. What this means is you can buy a fixed service as a product - in any colour you like as long as it's black. This is great if you are a Cloud Reseller as it allows you to minimise complexity and cost. For the customer this is great if you are a round peg - not so good if you are a square one. Our experience tells us there are many different shapes for pegs other than round ones.

There are many benefits to cloud computing - Enterprise class resilience and security, Skilled Support, Scalability, Financial Predictability, Lower Total Cost of Ownership - but why should you sacrifice flexibility and control in order to access them?

SICL Cloud is very much 'IT as a service'. Delivering a complete, managed/hosted solution or key systems such as email to enable you to focus on core activities. The platform has been designed to allow maximum flexibility so you don't have to make compromises to go into the cloud.

What really stands us out from the cloud is our understanding that whilst we might deliver services from a DataCentre, you still use them at your place of work wherever that may be - in the office, at home, or on the move. That is why we provide support from the 'DataCentre to Desktop'

The real life examples on the following page illustrate the advantages that some of our customers have gained by moving to SICL Cloud both from on-premise solutions and from alternate cloud providers.



CASE STUDY



Making Life Easier



BACKGROUND

Established in May 2003, Broker Assistance Ltd provides a market leading quality service to their clients. They have a dedicated claims management customer services centre aimed at helping to relieve the stress and aggravation that often comes with having a motor vehicle accident. They aim to be the partner of choice for mobility solutions and provide services into the Broker, Insurance and Fleet sectors with many of their customers being household names.

IT is absolutely critical to Broker Assistance Ltd and SICL were initially referred to resolve network issues leading to a network replacement and relocation project which was highly successful and established SICL as a trusted partner.

SOLUTION

Having established a functional, secure, resilient, and scalable network architecture, Broker Assistance consulted and worked with SICL on the project to provide email and messaging services from the 'Cloud'.

Delivered as part of a PRINCE2 project with careful capacity planning, detailed user requirement capture and meticulous planning to avoid any adverse effect on the operation SICL moved Broker Assistance's email and messaging functions into the SICL Cloud using Microsoft Exchange 2010 in a virtualised, multi-tenanted environment. The advantages are clear: critical services are delivered under SLA on a subscription basis thereby reducing overall costs against traditional models whilst improving and future-proofing services. SICL continues to support Broker Assistance twenty four hours a day, seven days a week.

RESULT

Broker Assistance now has a highly resilient IT architecture and cloud-based email and messaging, which provides many service and cost advantages. "Broker Assistance has an excellent working relationship with SICL. SICL has proven to be a reliable partner for ongoing support and development of our IT infrastructure."

Leanne Fairhurst ICT Manager

CASE STUDY



BACKGROUND

RTITB is the largest lift truck training accrediting body in the UK and Ireland, recognised by the HSE, HSA and HSENI. Working with over 600 of the UK and Ireland's best trainers, including TNT, Coca-Cola and Boots in addition to many SME's. RTITB accredits much more than lift truck training, for example all of the British Airways airside equipment training. RTITB Accreditation is about providing the best service, the best support and most importantly upholding the highest standards.

SICL has worked with RTITB since 2002 and has become a trusted partner during that time, having provided fully managed support services since 2004. This long established relationship made SICL the perfect choice to advise and guide RTITB on the move to Cloud Based Services.

SOLUTION

With all IT fully outsourced to SICL it made sense for RTITB to make the logical transition to a Cloud-based infrastructure minimising expenditure, easing capital expenditure and improving performance. Thin Client equipment for the majority of staff lowered the Total Cost of Ownership and ensures that all critical data is kept securely at a centralised datacentre and replicated to a Disaster Recovery site for high levels of availability and resilience.

The migration of all the data and systems was fully project managed under PRINCE2 methodology ensuring project success with no disruption to the staff or the business, including liaison with third party application providers to assure a smooth delivery of services.

RESULT

RTITB has a Cloud Based infrastructure, ensuring that the business processes are secure, resilient, scalable and fully supported. IT functions are improved whilst costs are reduced and RTITB now have a state of the art IT infrastructure.

"I was apprehensive about embarking upon a totally outsourced solution for our aging IT systems and infrastructure, particularly the solution's potential impact on operations should the Cloud not produce the promised results. My fears were completely unfounded and I have to say the migration and subsequent system operation has surpassed all my expectations. With the support of SICL's team and SICL's cloud services, the way RTITB engages with its IT solution has totally changed and we now have a more efficient, productive and problem free operation."

Laura Nelson - Operations Director



for advice call 0113 238 9900 or find out more at www.sicl.com



SICL is pleased to invite customers to The Event '11 on the 23rd June 2011 at Tockwith Circuit, York. In addition to the annual 'Fast Laps Competition' and 'Hot Rides' you can take part in the 'Karting Challenge' and this year 'Drive an Atom'

Prizes will be available for all competitive activities and SICL will run the Quiz Card feature to win a special prize.

Prize giving and commentary throughout the day will be by Ben Collins. Ben has competed in the British Formula 3 Championships, ASCAR, Indy Racing, British Touring Car Championships and Le Mans but he is best, and probably most controversially, known for his eight years as The Stig for BBC Top Gear, which came to an end in 2010.

SICL expects guests to have a great experience whilst gaining valuable information on the latest technology from our partners: Cisco, Dell, Eaton, LifeSize, Quest, Riverbed and Symantec.cloud in addition to seeing the developments on SICL Cloud and SICL View. Attendance is by invitation only – please contact your SICL Account Manager for further information.

In February 2011 SICL joined the Riverbed® Authorised Support Partner (RASP) program. As a member of the program, SICL will deliver enhanced support to its customers on Riverbed WAN optimisation deployments.



SICL has made significant investment in Riverbed technologies in recent years and has a proven track record of deploying Riverbed in many successful projects in the UK, Europe and globally. SICL joins only a handful of companies in the UK that are RASP accredited.

Britcar



The SICL Britcar Racing Team suffered a major disaster in January when a fire at the race HQ destroyed the new Seat Leon SuperCopa along with all equipment and other cars.

Fortunately no-one was hurt and replacement of car and equipment began immediately. The new car is a Ginetta G50. It is a British built mid-engine GT car, powered by a 300bhp 3.5 litre V6 with a lightweight GRP body and fully adjustable suspension.

The SICL Britcar team is back in business for the 2011 season. As always the offer to come to the races, support the team and have a great day out is available to all customers – please contact your SICL Account Manager for details.

Business North West

BUSINESS NORTH WEST 2011 is set to attract record crowds to Manchester Central over two days on the 4th and 5th May 2011 and SICL invite you to visit Stand 168.

More than 150 companies will exhibit in front of over 5000 regional decision makers and will enjoy an abundance of face-to-face contact, business demonstrations and networking.

Keynote speakers include Australian self-made millionaire and Dragons' Den personality Richard Farleigh, along with a host of speakers from companies including Cisco, Brother and Kellogg's.

Join SICL and enjoy the opportunity to explore new products, new ideas and new technology to fuel the success of your organisation.

Please ask your SICL Account Manager for an invitation.



Coming soon...



Update