



# BT cloud gets Amey stamp of approval

## Challenge

Working in partnership with local authorities across the UK, Amey helps transform the delivery of public services, using the latest technologies to save money and increase efficiency. As part of its 10-year contract with the Northern Ireland Library Authority, the company provides a full range of technology, from network infrastructure to desktop computers.

The service covers 98 libraries across Northern Ireland, delivering ICT to around 1,000 employees. Sites range from rural locations with just two public access terminals, to town libraries with up to 40.

A big challenge for such a diverse and distributed organisation has been Disaster Recovery (DR). One library location was used for back up for the main library management system as well as Active Directory users and file folders.

“Originally we had an unresilient, static solution where we backed up to a black box on another location. Data was retained but it wasn’t synchronised,” said Delia Campbell at Amey. “If our main site went down we would have been able to retrieve the data but there would have been a lag and it would take weeks to restore.”

At the same time as Amey was looking to streamline the solution, it was starting to explore cloud computing as a longer term strategy, a new wave of ICT delivery that looked like a good fit for DR.

BT was already a main provider of services to Amey. The timing was good because BT had just launched a portfolio of cloud offerings, part of which could be used as a flexible and inexpensive, Infrastructure as a Service DR solution.

## Benefits

Amey became the first full deployment on the island of Ireland of BT Virtual Data Centre (VDC),

a family of enterprise class data centre services that deliver the on-demand benefits of cloud computing .

Deployed out of a BT data centre, the pre-provisioned infrastructure gives Amey 99.9per cent availability and a disaster recovery solution that can fully restore data in days rather than weeks.

From its Belfast office, the Amey team can create, deploy, monitor and manage the library DR service through a self-care portal. A crucial part of BT offering, it means services can be stopped or started in minutes, virtual servers deployed in less than an hour, giving Amey the agility to ‘flex’ the business up or down to meet the needs of the libraries. “The portal also allows us to go in and see what the DR element will cost when we roll out new services,” said Campbell.

Within the contract period, BT typically saves its customers 40 per cent of the cost of traditional data centre services. “We are now replicating in real-time with minimal operational overhead,” said Delia Campbell. “We only pay for full DR if it is has to be used.”

Peter Russell, BT’s Head of Public Sector in Northern Ireland, believes Amey will be the first of many customers to realise the benefits of VDC. “We offer the very latest in virtual computing solutions, helping our customers on their journey to the cloud with all the benefits around cost and flexibility that businesses need to stay competitive,” he said

The project has been a great success and a signpost to the future for the Library Service. “We have created a more robust cloud computing and disaster recovery solution that will also inform our library strategy going forward,” said Campbell. “It ticks a lot of boxes including the wider sustainability agenda that is important to the Library Authority. We only use what we need.”

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