

CLOUD CONSULTANCY

JSA counts on Sungard Availability Services for availability around the clock



Millions of people in Britain now work outside the PAYE system so employers and individuals look to firms like JSA for professional advice on their accountancy service needs. By offering a broad range of services for both umbrella and limited company contractors, JSA enables employers to make savings on their back office and resourcing costs while at the same time helping contractors remain compliant with HMRC guidelines.

With thousands of customers reliant on its payroll services being operational around the clock, JSA has zero tolerance for downtime. Kwasi Missah, Chief Operating Officer for the JSA Group, explains, “Our customers expect us to be available 24/7/365. Availability is a very significant differentiator for JSA. There aren’t that many providers on the market who can claim to have the same level of resilience that we do. Servicing many thousands of customers around the clock as we do means we really had no option.”

Yet Kwasi Missah recognised the business was vulnerable. “We’re exposed to the same risks as any other business of our type – fire, flood, theft and so on – and knew that with our previous environment it would take at least a week to recover from a business interruption. We wanted to invest in a business continuity solution that would take all our core systems and place them somewhere much safer than a standard office.”

Having contracted Sungard AS in the past, JSA’s Chief Operating Officer Kwasi Missah was aware of its scale,

expertise and experience. Nonetheless, he also assessed two competitors to ensure he chose the best availability partner. He remarks, “In this market, track record and reputation are among the most important considerations and were a huge factor in our decision-making process. When choosing a supplier with which we will be inextricably linked in so far as them providing a service that makes our business, frankly, available we wanted to make sure that they are as robust as can possibly be.”

JSA initially contracted Sungard AS’s cloud consulting service to assess whether a cloud environment was right for its business. Kwasi Missah was impressed by the objectivity of the exercise. “I found the consulting engagement extremely useful. What was most marked was that it was actually quite detached from the sales process so it was very impartial. The consultant took the time to understand exactly what we do and how the business works. At the start our objectives were somewhat unclear and he helped us distill our requirements and bring some clarity.”

Business challenge

The JSA Group had long recognised the importance of availability to their business and realised its IT infrastructure was vulnerable to external threats. The social unrest that hit London and other major UK towns in the summer of 2011 was the catalyst to review its IT strategy and make its business more resilient.

Solution

- Cloud Consultancy
- Infrastructure as a Service
- Workplace Recovery.

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Business benefits

- Ensures business as usual
- Frees IT team to support the business
- Preserves JSA's reputation for reliability
- Prevents customer defections
- Peace of mind.

JSA ultimately made the decision to work with Sungard AS as it was one of the few providers able to deliver a **hybrid solution that seamlessly integrates physical and virtual servers with workplace recovery**. JSA now relies on Sungard AS's Infrastructure as a Service for its live production environment along with testing and development, while its vital legacy systems are managed and maintained using Sungard AS's Hosted Managed Services. JSA also contracts 50 seats at one of Sungard AS's workplace recovery centres to give key staff a fully-equipped workspace in the event its own building is hit by a disaster.

This comprehensive blended solution means that technology downtime is zero and JSA's workforce can be up and running within three hours of a disruption, giving JSA's directors huge peace of mind. Commenting on the partnership with Sungard AS, Kwasi Missah notes, **“Our core systems – effectively everything that enables us to provide a service to our clients –**

is in Sungard's hands. We have many thousands of customers who depend on us. We in turn are dependent on the systems hosted for us by Sungard and it's one of our most important business relationships. Now we've implemented this solution, our finance director can sleep at night!”

He adds, **“As a fast-growing business, scalability was a vital issue for us and the Sungard solution offers us that. The partnership with Sungard gives us resilience, robustness of our infrastructure and allows our business to continue 24/7 uninterrupted.”**

As JSA's business continues to go from strength-to-strength, Kwasi Missah sees the relationship with Sungard AS deepening. **“The calibre of the Sungard staff we've worked with has been exceptional. I've been impressed by their attention to detail and it's clear to me that Sungard is a business that cares about customer relationships. We value that because it's our business too.”**

About Sungard Availability Services

Sungard Availability Services provides managed IT services, information availability consulting services, business continuity management software, and disaster recovery services. To learn more, visit www.sungardas.co.uk or call 0800 143 413

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