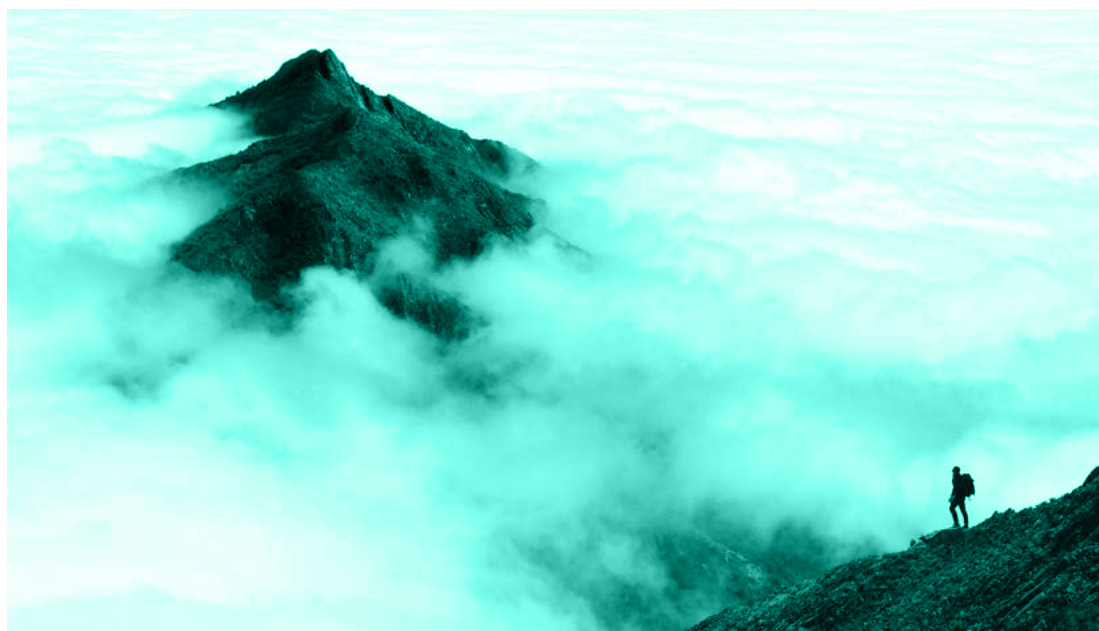# Uncomplicated cloud
Defining your strategy with Highlander

The allure of cloud

Delivering some, or all of your IT as a service is becoming customary, and cloud is very much at the forefront of this movement. Businesses are increasingly thinking cloud-first, enticed by cost-effective commercials and scalable services that deliver a level of freedom and flexibility not experienced with on-premises infrastructure.

As the popularity of cloud grows, there are many considerations for those contemplating their pathway to migration and how best to maximise the value of the investment.   There is lots of choice and fierce competition from cloud providers, which makes identifying the right solution a challenging and sometimes scary prospect.

Re-defining cloud

Building the right cloud is not just about picking and using the right public cloud solutions. For some apps and workloads, it does not make sense to move them off conventional on-premises infrastructure or away from specialist in-house admin resource you may already possess. For this reason, hybrid cloud – a mix of private on-premises infrastructure and off-premises public cloud services is emerging as the optimum solution for most organisations. The goal is to deliver a cloud-like experience across all IT no matter where it lives.

Your data controls your destiny

Cloud-first is becoming a watchword for IT teams, but it should not be cloud at all cost. The secret to achieving true value from your cloud actually begins with a data-first approach. It should be the driving force behind any cloud strategy and requires an understanding of the key data within your business. Not just what this data is, but who is creating it, who needs to access it, who is managing it, and how valuable it is.

With a grip on your data, you can identify where best to keep it so it is not only managed appropriately and utilised efficiently, but also correctly protected. More than that, you can also start to unlock the potential of your data, turning it into valuable information that drives innovation in your business.

We believe cloud should be uncomplicated

The cloud doesn't have to be complicated and it should unlock new possibilities for your business. This starts with creating the right environment, which can only be achieved with a deep understanding of your business needs. We're disciples of the data-first approach, and it underpins everything we do for our customers and how we set about creating an environment that delivers on all the promise of the cloud.

We adhere to the highest standards including ISO 27001 for Information Security Management (ISMS), the international standard for organisational security. These frameworks and principles shape every solution we design.

We start by understanding your cloud-readiness. It's a thorough discovery process to ensure we understand the intricacies of your business – not just your existing IT, but what you do, how you work and your future ambitions. What we uncover informs the requirements for your data.

It's a journey, not a destination

There is no perfect vision for a cloud-based future and building the right cloud for you won't happen overnight. Understanding your data means that we can help you make the right choices at the right times, ensuring that everything lives in the environment that best suits its needs.

Likewise, adapting to a new approach can take time, and there is no sense in trying to run before you can walk. As different ways of doing things begin to bed in, we make sure that your cloud solutions are implemented at a pace that suits you and achieves the best experience possible.

Your cloud journey

01 DISCOVERY
Discover hybrid cloud

It all starts with your data. We identify who is creating it, who is accessing it and who is controlling it, to design a hybrid cloud that's tailored to you.

02 IMPLEMENTATION
Start small with simple apps

Once we understand your data, we can take the first steps, with a steady introduction involving functional applications for user productivity and collaboration.

04 INNOVATION
Empower innovation & enrich experiences

Your hybrid cloud environment can now deliver greater efficiency and better value. Not just allowing control over your data but capitalising on the opportunities it presents to save money or create new revenue.

03 GROWTH
Capitalise on cloud-only apps

Once we understand your data we can take the first steps, delivering functional applications for productivity and collaboration in the public cloud.

05 OPTIMISATION
Optimise absolutely everything

Every aspect of your cloud is tuned to suit your needs, just like traditional on-premises infrastructure, so you always enjoy best performance and return on your investment.

Seizing new opportunities

It's important to remember that the cloud is not just public cloud services or about creating a like-for-like replacement for what you deliver on-premises. Building a cloud means you'll be able to build apps and create services that were simply not possible on-premises. Innovations in AI, IoT and DevOps capture new exciting opportunities to make your data work harder to enhance the customer experience.

We'll help you every step of the way

We won't just set you on your way and leave you to it, we'll be on hand throughout the entire process. It's a part of our philosophy, built on a four-stage **Advise**, **Design**, **Deliver** and **Support** methodology. This helps us ensure that every step you take is the right one, and more importantly, that you understand exactly what those steps are and why.

Even if you've already begun your move to the cloud, it's not too late to call on our guidance. We can help take you the rest of the way, analysing your environment to provide an honest assessment of where you are today, before showing you where you could be tomorrow. We'll use our data-first approach to understand how you're currently operating your cloud to optimise what you're already using so that you get the most out of your investment. Once you're optimised,

we'll use our knowledge of your data to outline your next steps with a strategy focused on establishing firm foundations then moving to value creation for your business.

Managing in a multi-cloud world

It's almost certain that your hybrid cloud will be a product of multiple clouds – your private cloud on-premises and the various public cloud services you choose. Naturally, managing this multi-cloud operation can bring a new level of complication. Juggling hardware, software and subscriptions from different technology vendors can not only create confusion, but also obscure what you're paying for and how much it is truly costing your business.

Left unchecked costs could get out of control, undermining the value of cloud. That's why we've taken steps to simplify multi-cloud management. With easy-to-use but

sophisticated tools, we can make sure your cloud is always fully optimised – balancing performance, availability and cost across your entire environment.

Our cloud billing portal also brings many of your subscriptions together in one place, so you can keep track of your public cloud services and easily manage your payments.

All this means that you can remove the burden of multi-cloud management on your IT team and free up their resources to focus on how they can use your cloud for the good of your business.

Why Highlander?

We create the right environment

Whatever your ambitions for your cloud, we create something that makes sense for your business in every way.

We focus on protecting what matters

We make sure your cloud is built around keeping your data safe by always putting it at the forefront of our thinking.

We mitigate the risks

We've taken our time to understand the cloud. We know what it can deliver, and how best to get there. It's allowed us to develop proven practices that overcome the risks associated with stepping into the unknown.

We have a genuine track record

Perhaps most important of all we've already done it for customers just like you. We also practice what we preach and have used the same methodology to successfully implement our own cloud.

Cloud in action

A complete migration made easy

Customer– One of the UK's fastest growing house builders.

Challenge – Looking to break away from the restrictions of legacy on-premises infrastructure and build their cloud using cutting-edge services ready to scale with their business.

Solution – Orchestrated an end-to-end migration to

Microsoft Azure, where all critical apps are now hosted within an optimised environment.

Outcome – The business can now rely on its infrastructure to support future growth, with all critical IT now paid for monthly via a consumption-based subscription service.

About Highlander

For more than 20 years Highlander has worked with businesses of all sizes across the UK who require dependable IT support and guidance on how to use technology to positively impact their business. We firmly believe we can inspire change for the better and keep IT the way it should be; uncomplicated. We help ensure IT never stands in the way of users, investments are maximised, and technology becomes an enabler for smarter, more efficient working that supports the goals of the business. Backed by first-class know-how and a personal common-sense approach, today hundreds of companies choose to work with us.

Get in touch

To learn more about our cloud services or to start your own cloud journey, get in touch with a member of the team.

Visit
highlanderuk.com

Call
+44 (0) 114 292 3800

Email
hello@highlanderuk.com

Highlander
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