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From colo to cloud case study: Abstract Design

"They were offering more than just infrastructure. We were getting the reassurance of a standard of support and service that we already had experience of."

— **Daniel Meggit**, Director, Abstract Design
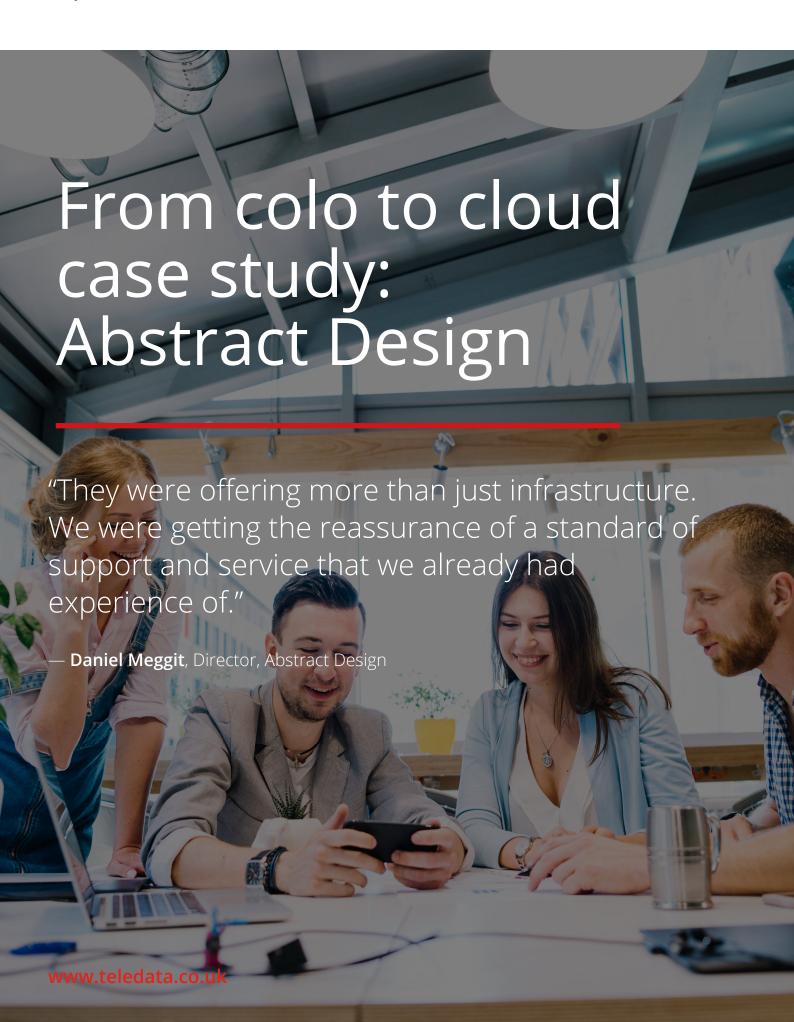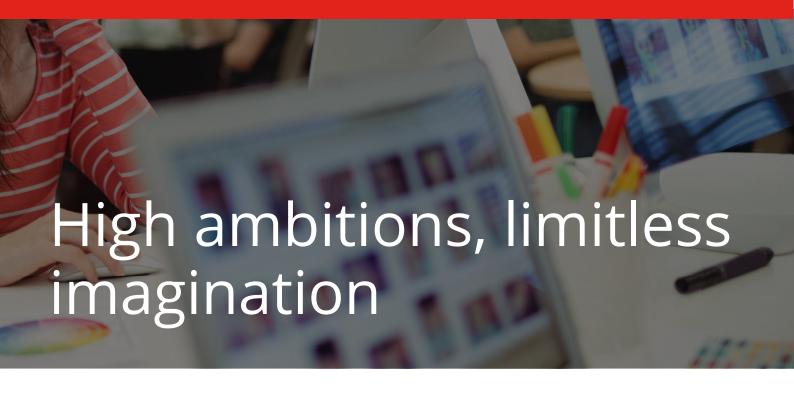
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High ambitions, limitless imagination

Abstract is a multi-disciplinary creative design agency that specialises in branding and visual identity, marketing communications, and brand management solutions.

Based in Kenilworth, Warwickshire, the company serves a global customer base and clients include household names such as PHS Group, Aggreko and Siemens.

One of Abstract's solutions is an innovative web-based application called **NetPrint**, which allows companies to create an easily accessible online library of approved branding elements and templates, ensuring consistency across all their communications.

abstract

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Multi-disciplinary creative agency

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The challenge

Abstract's NetPrint application was originally hosted in-house, but a fast-growing customer base led them to look for third-party data centre space so it could outsource some of the responsibility for keeping the application up and running.

Abstract's original colocation provider was based in the London Docklands area. Despite the prime location, however, the company soon ran into service level issues that had an impact on end users. This, combined with a seven-hour round trip to fix problems in the data centre, left Abstract with a strong commercial impetus to find other arrangements closer to home. This led them to get in touch with 1st Easy — now part of the TeleData Group — and arrange a tour of one of their Manchester data centre facilities.

Daniel Meggitt, Director at Abstract, recalls:

"The fact that senior management took the time to personally take us round their operation in real detail gave us genuine confidence that there was a solid, physical and support infrastructure in place to take care of our business.

"Once we were up and running in the new data centre, any issues we had were resolved quickly, and we knew we could rely on their remote-hands service if we needed any quick jobs taking care of. Individual touches such as lending us hardware when we had a failure only added to the feeling we were in the right place."

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The solution

Hosting NetPrint in Delta House gave Daniel and his team newfound confidence in their ability to deliver a global application without fear of performance issues or unplanned downtime. And, with the data centre only a couple of hours away from their offices in Kenilworth, their transport and travel costs were also much lower.

Even so, the Abstract team would eventually come to feel constrained by the responsibility of looking after their own hardware — not least because the need for IT expertise was at odds with the creative nature of their business. "If a server needed replacing, it was a big chunk out of my day and took time away from my more valuable role within the business," comments Daniel.

Finally, a weekend hardware failure tipped the balance, and Abstract decided the solution was to move to the cloud as a way to reduce both hardware and maintenance costs.

"As part of the process, I spoke to a number of big name cloud providers who were actually very attractive in terms of pricing. However, when I had detailed questions about their services, I never felt I was in contact with the people who would in effect be responsible for my business. It all felt too big and too impersonal."

For this reason, Abstract decided to stay with 1st Easy and continue to the next stage of their technology journey without leaving their established Manchester data centre base.

"They were more expensive than some of the other providers we looked at, but they were offering more than just infrastructure. We were getting the reassurance of a standard of support and service that we already had experience of."

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The benefits

Over the next few months, Abstract moved NetPrint to the cloud and gradually shifted responsibility for hardware and infrastructure to 1st Easy and TeleData. What's more, Daniel and his team were able to rely on their new partners for truly personal, high-quality support when performance issues cropped up at the eleventh hour.

"With the one-to-one help of Dean in their support department, we worked together to come up with a new architecture for our cloud. I don't think we could have expected that kind of assistance from one of the bigger providers. Here, I was able to deal with the people that actually built the platform, and I had their phone numbers and email addresses, so that feeling of continuity was always there. Indeed, we're still able to call on Dean and the team if we feel the need for any input from time to time."

Today, the Abstract team is free from the burden of looking after their own infrastructure, and can focus fully on the creative side of their business. At the same time, the on-demand flexibility and scalability of the TeleData cloud platform means NetPrint will be able to handle customer growth long into the future.

Free cloud trial
Cloud from TeleData could help your business too — get your free cloud trial with expert support included.

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