



Transformational Government: Enabled by Technology

Introduction

1. The Cloud welcomes the publication of the Government's strategy document, Transformational Government: Enabled by Technology and this opportunity to respond.
2. This submission highlights The Cloud's headline position. We would be grateful for the opportunity to discuss these issues in greater depth.

The Cloud

3. The Cloud is an innovative company pioneering the development of wireless broadband in the UK and Europe. The business was launched in January 2003 and today provides sophisticated Wireless Local Area Network (WLAN) – popularly known as WiFi – coverage in over 6,000 locations across the UK with a growth rate in the order of 100 new locations each month.
 - The Cloud operates its own network of public WiFi locations with networks in the UK, Germany and the Nordic Region
 - The Cloud operates a neutral host, carrier's carrier business model; we build the infrastructure and manage the sharing of it between competing service providers. No operators that want to join our network are excluded
 - The Cloud wireless broadband service supports multiple service and network experiences on a single shared infrastructure. This gives customers seamless access to the services they are most familiar with
4. The Cloud installs and operates public wireless internet infrastructure. Many telecoms service providers, including BT Openzone, O2, Vodafone D2, Skype, Nintendo and international operators like Boingo, use The Cloud's network to provide a service to their end users. The model is one where only one physical network need be deployed for multiple providers to offer discrete, branded services. This philosophy of 'build once, use many times' co-exists perfectly with the Government's vision of shared services set out in their recently published strategy paper, 'Transformational Government'. Network security is paramount - The Cloud and its entire network is Intel approved and verified.

The Cloud's Network

5. The Cloud's WiFi network is a public access network. This means that the network supports:
 - Public access provided by a variety of telecoms operators such as BT Openzone and O2.

- Internet consumer applications such as content downloads (music, movie, mobile gaming) and location based content (information, advertising, entertainment)
 - Internet access
 - Voice Over Internet Protocol (VOIP) telephony
6. Community applications such as Instant Messaging, social peering (location-based people search and communication) and location specific information services
 7. In addition, the network accommodates multiple internet business applications, such as Virtual Private Network (VPN) connectivity, enterprise resource applications, and location-based advertising services.

Security

8. The Cloud operates a fully managed secure carrier-grade network. All traffic is authenticated via The Cloud's platform before interconnection with service providers or enterprises. Proactive security management measures are enforced to protect against network abuse, privacy infringement and other threats. The Cloud's network is Intel verified and approved.

Wireless Communications Transforming Government

9. The Cloud's organic wireless infrastructure is an ideal network to leverage the step change required by *Transformational Government*. The technology is ripe to transform the business of government both in terms of service provision and in achieving digital inclusion.

Shared Services

10. The Cloud sees its network as the first step in moving towards shared services in terms of infrastructure.
11. The Cloud's network can support
 - CCTV
 - Public information services
 - Community advertising and digital POS
 - Council to staff communications
 - Council worker handheld applications (e.g. traffic wardens)
 - Tracking of workers and assets
12. The network also has the capability to support private network applications
 - IPCCTV
 - Council VPN access
 - Payment processing for council services (e.g. parking fines)
 - Emergency Services
13. The Cloud is excited by the prospect for Common Infrastructure to enable joined-up solutions, leverage investments and shorten the implementation timeframe of new reforms. This vision meshes very well with The Cloud's underlying structure: a widespread network infrastructure which is provided wholesale to service providers enabling them to deliver the most comprehensive service to their customers. Local Authorities, of course, are the most comprehensive service providers around.

Access to Services

14. The Cloud's network facilitates the attainment of the Priority Areas identified by ODPM and the LGA: 'E-Government techniques can deliver efficiency savings and higher quality services, but these improvements are worthless unless the public and staff can access them in ways that are readily available, convenient and easy to use.'¹
15. The Cloud's network is ideally placed to:
- incorporate online facilities to allow payments to the council '*in ways that engender public trust and confidence in local government electronic payment solutions*'²
 - support new ways of working by enabling council members and staff to work from home or away from the office base³
 - through CCTV and traffic wardens automatically updating a central system through handheld devices, the network could help meet transport needs more effectively through the provision of real-time local transport information, utilising technologies to improve traffic and transport management⁴

Case Studies

16. The Cloud is working with the Shoreditch Trust to deliver CCTV solutions, with the British Library to deliver public access services, and with Bridgend Council to provide Metro Wifi. In April 2006 The Cloud is rolling out hotzones across London, Manchester, Birmingham, Liverpool, Leeds, Cambridge, Oxford, Nottingham and Edinburgh.
17. We would be delighted to meet and discuss these initiatives in more detail as case studies for delivering the change and services envisioned by *Transformational Government*.

¹ Priority Outcomes: Explanatory Notes for Practitioners, Strategic Support Unit, I&DeA, Sept 2004, p118

² *ibid*, p42

³ *ibid*, p73

⁴ *ibid*, p55