Nominee: Six Degrees Group

Nomination title: Six Degrees Group for Private Cloud Project of the year with Cintra

What was the driving force behind the project – what business or technology challenge needed to be addressed?

Cintra is a multi-award winning provider of HR and Payroll services. It prides itself on delivering true flexibility in elegant and reliable solutions that provide 'recruitment to retirement' services.

In line with the launch of its latest fully integrated HR and Payroll product 'Cintra iQ', Cintra required a cloud hosting provider with full disaster recovery provision that would be more effective, efficient and secure than its existing on-premise solution. Cintra therefore chose to work with Six Degrees Group (6DG) because its team provided a consultative approach to design the most suitable cloud-based solution and fulfilled all of the project criteria Cintra required.

Cintra was impressed by how the 6DG team took the needs of the business into consideration. HR and Payroll data is highly sensitive, so data security, business continuity and compliance are of paramount importance to Cintra's clients. Cintra trusted 6DG because it has the strongest end-to-end, core-to-edge capabilities in the mid-market space, which gives it control over what it deploys, and is accredited to an ISO 27001 standard. 6DG maintains the management of its data centres from the entry gates through to the data racks, which gave Cintra peace of mind when entrusting them with Cintra iQ.

6DG's converged data centres stand out in the market because they are:

- **Located in the company's own buildings**

- **Connected by a network that 6DG built**

- **Managed by the 6DG team of on-site engineers**

- **Supported by services that 6DG has developed**

- **ISO 27001 accredited and IL2-IL3 ready**

- **Fitted with the latest cooling, fire prevention and power distribution equipment**

How did the solution address the challenges and were there any particularly innovative aspects that made it stand out?

Together, Cintra and 6DG decided the best approach would be to host Cintra iQ in a centralised cloud platform to provide both Cintra and its clients with a Software as a Service (SaaS) solution with 24/7 accessibility and a 99.99% SLA. To make the leap to SaaS, both its old and new clients needed the assurance of true business continuity and speedy disaster recovery capabilities, and the 6DG team was capable to deliver this and prove it by performing penetration tests. Not only that but 6DG put a full disaster recovery and business continuity capabilities plan in place for a fraction of the cost of Cintra's previous on-premise solution, saving time and money.

The 6DG team deployed a highly flexible, secure and scalable solution that is fully backed-up, managed and operates across geographically diverse locations. The solution is designed to meet Cintra's current and future requirements, enabling Cintra customers to run their businesses efficiently.

What major challenges were faced during the project and how were they overcome?

Carsten Staehr, CEO of Cintra said: "Business continuity is always a key concern for us, as missing just one payslip could prove hugely detrimental to our business. It is therefore imperative that our IT systems are up and running as close to 100% of the time as possible. Previously, a system failure could mean it was many hours before we were back up and running, but hosting Cintra iQ in the cloud with 6DG means we can be back up again within a significantly shorter time period in the unlikely event of a failure".

Staehr continued, "Dealing with the kind of sensitive data that we do on a daily basis requires our clients to put a great deal of trust in us, and therefore by implication, our suppliers must also be entirely reliable. We are however, entirely confident in 6DG to host Cintra iQ, as with their expertise and experience of the industry come the desired credentials and accreditations".

"We have a long standing relationship with 6DG who historically provided our disaster recovery solution. With our launch of Cintra iQ SaaS, we conducted thorough and in-depth research into the optimum hosting solution. Working with 6DG was an easy choice for us as our experience had proven it would work with us as a valued 'partner', rather than just a 'provider'".

What tangible benefits has the organisation seen as a result of the project's implementation?

In addition to the business continuity and disaster recovery options, the hosted approach delivered significant benefits compared to the on-premise solution, providing Cintra with an elastic scale up/down opex-based solution and the ability to provide dedicated and multi-tenant connectivity with flexible support options. The team at Cintra now has access to technical support expertise and transparent contact with the 6DG tech teams, giving reassurance that their business is being supported at all times.

Using a hosted platform enables Cintra to access 24/7/365 support with a 99.99% SLA. All new and change requests are submitted via a dedicated portal which provides an auditable trace and reporting analysis for account management. This transparency and access is key as it gives Cintra peace of mind. Throughout the project 6DG has given the company guidance, giving it confidence that they are supporting its business and has its best interests at heart.

As part of the solution, 6DG provides a SLA for the Recovery Point Objective (RPO) and Recovery Time Objective (RTO) of one hour and four hours respectively. This is integral to the business as it is fundamental that Cintra's customers' data is secure and able to be recovered as quickly as possible.

Overall, 6DG took the time to work out and plan the most effective and suitable solution for Cintra's requirements and continues to support the business. 6DG's experts are now running Cintra's infrastructure; 6DG manage it, maintain it and take away the worry, allowing Cintra to focus on its business.

Why nominee should win

• 6DG's experts manage and maintain Cintra's infrastructure, taking away the worry, allowing Cintra to focus on its business

• 6DG provides a SLA for the Recovery Point Objective (RPO) and Recovery Time Objective (RTO) of one hour and four hours respectively

• 6DG's solution enables Cintra to access 24/7/365 support with a 99.99% SLA

• 6DG own its own data centre assets, with ISO27001 and PCI accreditations.

• 6DG's solution provides Cintra with a elastic scale up/down opex-based solution and the ability to provide dedicated and multi-tenant connectivity with flexible support options