Compete 366

Microsoft Partner

Gold Cloud Platform
Gold Small and Midmarket Cloud Solutions
Gold Cloud Productivity

Case Study

Transforming for growth with Office365 and Azure

Specialist software developer, TigerBay delivers a leading travel technology platform to specialist tour operators.

This case study explains how TigerBay leveraged Office365 and Azure to support its growth plans, supported by the skills and expertise of Compete366

With an in-depth understanding of the requirements of specialist tour operators and their customers, TigerBay has built a comprehensive platform that can support travel bookings from simple to complex, and from luxury to budget options. With a deep understanding of the business needs of specialist operators - from villas to camping, sailing to skiing, adventure to escorted tours – TigerBay works with each customer to ensure they have the technology solution to meet their specific needs.

TigerBay needed to have full control over its cloud platform and applications, to enable it to continue to provide a high level of service for its clients whilst enabling better collaboration within its team, and most importantly to allow it to respond to seasonal peaks in demand for its platform.

Tiger Bay needed a flexible IT solution that allowed the company to respond to the seasonal needs of its Tour Operator customers. The project was formed of two key elements – firstly to move the cloud hosting platform for their tour operator platform from an internal one to Microsoft Azure, and the second to migrate the TigerBay team to the Office365 collaboration suite.

TigerBay was recommended by Microsoft to use a Cloud Solution Provider (CSP) who would not only provide the licences required, but also provide ongoing support and guidance.

Microsoft Gold Partner selected to lead deployment

Even though TigerBay is a company full of development experts, they decided to look for an external CSP that understood its needs and challenges. Compete366, an Azure and Office 365 Gold Partner, was selected from a shortlist of Microsoft partners. As Richard Hodge, Technical Director from Tiger Bay explains:

"*We were impressed from the outset by Compete366 as they were the only Microsoft Partner where during our initial engagement we spoke to an Azure technical consultant rather than a salesperson. They seemed like a good fit with our business and we got on well as a team. In addition, we got the impression that Compete366 were the right size to care about us and our needs.*"

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Choosing the Azure cloud platform

TigerBay had decided that it was important to take control of its hosting platform which was being managed internally as part of the bigger group (in several data-centres). Their growth goals would only be achieved by:

- Being able to better respond to client demands in a fast timescale
- Provide scalability for clients

TigerBay chose Azure over other options such as Google cloud or AWS because it works so well in their environment. As the entire TigerBay technology ecosystem is based on Microsoft and its tools, it means that all of the elements are seamless and pre-integrated.

When TigerBay first engaged with Compete366, they did a piece of work to review their Azure architecture from the perspectives of:

- Resilience
- Security
- Cost
- Management

This resulted in Tiger Bay making a number of changes and improvements to their Azure architecture which they implemented before putting their first customer live in Azure.

The key benefit of the Azure platform for TigerBay is that it is scalable to grow immediately, and Azure consumption is tunable up and down based on demand. This is critically important in a seasonal business such as travel. Peak sales periods can vary amongst tour operators depending on their products – and TigerBay needs to be responsive to these. For example, many tour operators experience a huge surge in enquiries and bookings in the post-Christmas to early January timeframe. The Azure platform allows TigerBay to respond to these changes in demand and means that clients only pay for exactly what they use.

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Migrating to Office365 collaboration suite

As well as the move to Azure for the client platform, TigerBay also decided to migrate to Office365 in parallel.

TigerBay had originally used the Google suite when it was founded, and then moved to Microsoft when it became part of The ATCORE Group. However, as part of a larger group, TigerBay had found some aspects of collaboration hard – for example resorting to sending documents via email, and accessing shared drives remotely. The time was right to establish a more seamless way of working that was effortless for the team and would allow them to scale and grow. Initially a small number of team members moved across to O365 for a trial and then as soon as that was successful, the rest of the team were migrated across. Micorsoft Teams is now the core communication tool for the business. Every day, there are short 15 minute catch-up calls which allow the company to work to their two week sprint development cycle. Once the platform migration is achieved for all clients, then the planned next steps included ambitions to migrate the in-house phone systems into O365 too.

So why did an ISV / Software Developer need to use Compete366?

It might seem strange that an organisation which develops software as its core business would need to call on the skills of Compete366.

But as Richard explains *"We have a good team of developers who are very knowledgeable in our core software development areas. However, Azure is incredibly broad, and we had no-one internally with the networking knowledge required. We needed to move quickly and have ambitious goals to migrate our key customers to Azure by end mid 2020. So I felt that it was important that we had the right back up and advice to call on to make sure we were doing the right thing".*

Next Steps?

Using the combined Microsoft solutions has given Tiger Bay a platform for growth, allowing the company to scale as required, in line with its ambitious growth plans. They can easily add on additional licences as they grow, knowing that the consumption-based model works well for a rapidly expanding, ambitious business.

Plans are also in place to move to the Azure SQL Database, and to evolve their architecture, delivering their platform as a service (PaaS) rather than just the Infrastructure (IaaS).

As Carl Morgan, MD of TigerBay explains "*By using Compete366, our technical experts have been able to focus on the business of developing world-class platforms for our clients, safe in the knowledge that the cloud platform and collaboration tools that underpin our business are well thought through and fully supported by the certified experts at Compete366*".

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Delivering real business benefits

Speed: Moving to an external CSP with certified experts means that TigerBay can respond to clients faster.

Value: Office 365's bundled products and services have replaced numerous third-party applications delivering improved, connected services at better value.

Effectiveness: the MS Teams tool,along with the rest of the integrated O365 suite has been invaluable for enhanced collaboration and effectiveness.

TigerBay remains engaged with Compete366 through regular monthly calls. Compete366 keeps on top Office 365 developments for TigerBay and makes proactive recommendations as improvement opportunities arise.

About TigerBay

Launched in 2008, Tigerbay's technology and services are designed to meet the needs of today's specialist tour operators. Focused on technology and travel, they keep a close eye on new and emerging trends to help their customers make the most of technological innovations

Based in Cardiff, their dedicated team is committed to maximising efficiency, profitability and customer experience for their clients. We do this by listening carefully to their challenges and opportunities and by working closely with them to find affordable, effective solutions that will deliver ROI.
Tigerbay is part of The ATCORE Group, one of the world's leading travel tech players.

To find out more about migrating to Office365 or Azure, please call Warren Duke on 07500 919547 or email engage@compete366.com quoting "TBCS".

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