

University of York

One of the leading research universities in the UK required help with its complex cloud billing.

Key Services

People Powered FinOps



The University of York positions itself as one of the premier institutions for research in the UK. In recent times especially, there has been a shift in how students want to study and the capabilities they expect from the university's resources.

Cloud technology is a key enabler in this modernisation process, providing unlimited data access and a range of ready-made services, allowing the university to innovate quickly and continue to be agile to student's needs. However, the University of York required the help of a financially focused cloud reseller like Strategic Blue to ensure that they could better manage, control, reduce and optimise their cloud costs.

Challenge

Previous to using cloud services, there was an automated process in place for requesting databases, this would usually take around 2-3 days to complete and there was a lot of friction in the process. The university made the decision to start using Amazon Web Services (AWS) as a development platform and make all of their development serverless, making the end-to-end process faster.

Their focus during this time was on developing their inhouse team and giving them the tools they needed to become the key enablers of change within the university, however around 2 years after making the move to cloud, their billing process was becoming more and more complex and difficult to manage.



Reduction in complexity of monthly cloud billing



Reduction in internal cloud management time



Significant monthly cost savings

As each developer was given their own account, along with separate accounts for the project's production, development and testing, there ended up being hundreds of accounts with hundreds of bills going through each month.

Solution

Whilst the university were confident with the basics and day-to-day usage of AWS, Strategic Blue could provide them with additional support when it came to the financial side of things, offering discounts and resources that the university would not have had access to as a single entity.

As Strategic Blue is a G-Cloud 12 Crown Commercial Service approved supplier in the UK, the university was also able to purchase via government frameworks, ensuring a compliant procurement with a range of payment options that are not readily available in the private sector.

The university felt that the advice and support given by Strategic Blue was at exactly the level they needed, and this has resulted in a trustworthy and beneficial partnership.

Results

With access to additional discounts that are negotiated across multiple clients and personalised advice on reporting and cost control, the University of York has found that working with Strategic Blue has not only not cost them anything, but it has actually saved them money.

The level of control and rigour in the service that Strategic Blue provided is incredibly hard to find, and has given them more freedom and agility in the services that can now be provided to their developers, and in turn, their staff, students and researchers.

The reduction in cloud management time has enabled the developers to produce services in shorter time frames, a huge benefit for their students, staff and researchers.

“ They understood our position as a university and empathised with and understood the challenges we faced. We have a very collaborative relationship - they consider our suggestions.”

Arthur Clune, University of York

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