

Cloudcell boosts business with BT Wholesale partnership

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The mature start-up required a comms and data platform partner with reliable and secure technology to integrate with its customer solutions



- Cloudcell are leaders in delivering highly available fully managed cellular connectivity and IP voice services, starting life in 2015 and will double its revenue this year.
- BT Wholesale has more than 25 years in the M2M sector and millions of connections to thousands of customers.
- BT has the largest R&D centre for a global telco, where £470m is invested annually and 5,000 people are dedicated to innovation and development of the networks, platforms and services.

Challenge

Cloudcell wanted to work with a partner who could provide the widest, most reliable network coverage to ensure its customers could get connected, anywhere, anytime. The start-up also required a platform that was easy to integrate and included reporting and remote monitoring for its customers.

Solution

BT Wholesale works alongside Cloudcell to help it grow. Supplying its BT Control Centre technology, BT Wholesale offers support when required, such as highly technical integration within customer sites. Working together, BT Wholesale and Cloudcell serve the construction, marine and events sectors.

Summary

Only two years old, Cloudcell is a mature start-up providing specialist cellular connectivity services to a range of sectors. Majoring in construction, marine and pre-ethernet provision, Cloudcell offers instant connectivity in challenging environments using the BT Control Centre solution. With an array of blue chip customers Cloudcell have pioneered voice over LTE and it is now a service its customers rely on. However installing voice and data services quickly is just part of the solution. Customers also require automated analytics and reporting, which Cloudcell is able to offer through the BT Wholesale platform. Combined, the hardware and SIM services work to give Cloudcell customers reliable, secure and data-capable connectivity, regardless of their location.

“Having the support of BT Wholesale behind us when we’re a small growing team is a good feeling to have. We know we can rely on them. The expertise and competence of the engineers and the account management team is very high, and gives us and our customers confidence in the solutions,” Kevin Boyle, managing director of Cloudcell.

The challenge

Cloudcell customers are not always standard office-based companies. Serving geographically dispersed, temporary or mobile organisations means that installing connectivity solutions at customer locations usually involves mud, water or both. Operating in such extreme environments, whether it be a green field site or a heavily congested urban area, Cloudcell needed a provider who could offer not just ruggedized technology, but also the widest, most reliable network coverage. The Cloudcell SmartSite and SmartNet+ Solutions are crucial to the success of their customers operations, so downtime is not an option. Cloudcell customers require timely data and reporting to ensure the ongoing health of their network, whether it’s in place for three weeks or three years.

The BT Wholesale solution

Cloudcell adopted the BT Wholesale BT Control Centre solution for its portfolio, convinced by the ease of integration, network reliability and the investment BT had made in its 4G M2M offering. BT rolled out the UK’s first dedicated 4G M2M proposition in 2015. BT Control Centre is integrated into Cloudcell’s SmartSite solution and delivers rapid connectivity to customers within days. Cloudcell primarily serves customers requiring fully managed, rapidly deployed, reliable connectivity on a short term or ongoing basis.

Case study

Cloudcell are experts in providing their pre-ethernet service to companies who are awaiting fibre connection, or are unable to get fibre to their location. Cloudcell's flagship construction customer Cala Homes, requires voice and data services in remote locations for site offices, where traditional methods of connectivity can't be used.

"We've got a vast estate of construction connections, which are often in the middle of a field - no postcode, no building and no fibre connectivity," said Kevin Boyle, managing director of Cloudcell. "We get voice and data services there quickly so the site manager can communicate with suppliers and the building work can start." The firm also delivers its 4G connectivity to marine sites. Nautical connectivity is usually delivered via satellite, which can be costly and has high latency issues - around 800 milliseconds. With Cloudcell using the BT Control Centre solution, this latency drops to around 30-70 milliseconds, alleviating the customer frustration of a slow connection.

"One marine customer was having connectivity issues because of the high and low tides on the Thames. It's the busiest cellular location in the country, but working with BT engineers we were able to get concise information on where the pinch points were, make several configuration changes to get the customer up and running," said Boyle.

"A start-up business can be challenging, that's why having the right partner in place to help our business grow is essential. Our mantra is 'service excellence' and with BT Wholesale's help we deliver that," Boyle said.

It's not just the network coverage that enticed Cloudcell to select BT as a partner. According to Boyle, customers' expectations are rising in terms of what they expect from a connectivity provider. Data, reporting and analytics are also required from customers seeking to better manage their network and costs.

Cloudcell uses an online portal to deliver remote monitoring, diagnostics and configuration support. The system, which includes the BT Control Centre management platform, enables Cloudcell to inform customers when data limits are approaching or of any network problems. Cloudcell has automated much of the process so it requires fewer in-house resources to manage and emails are sent automatically when customers are close to their data limits. Sold as a managed service, the system means Cloudcell can manage an estate of services and customers, and boost margins in the process. "It's also a great way for us to troubleshoot," said Boyle. "Our team can manage issues with the network, or printers, PCs and laptops attached to the network without having to visit the site, so it saves time and money for us and our customers."

The future of the partnership

Cloudcell has already started to expand its vertical market reach, with several pilot projects within the charity sector. One pilot involves a complex network configuration due to a merger of several organisations each with its own location and network. Cloudcell are helping to integrate three sets of Multiprotocol Label Switching (MPLS) networks across different sites, where Fibre to the Cabinet (FTTC) would be unworkable. The company has augmented the cellular services by adding its hardware at the edge of the MPLS networks to securely deliver connectivity between the sites on a cellular link. It hopes this project will spawn others within the sector.



BT wholesale

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