

Nominee: Storm Internet Ltd

Nomination title: An evolution in Managed Private Cloud

- How long has this organisation or individual been involved in the IT services and solutions market in EMEA?

Storm Internet opened their doors in 2004, led by CEO Salim Benedal, a web designer by trade who spotted a gap in the relatively unsaturated market, giving them the opportunity to provide a large number of businesses with affordable hosting to suit their web development needs.

- Are there any key projects delivered in the last year that demonstrate this candidate's suitability for the award?

Storm Internet has continued to build on its award winning Private Cloud platform "StormCloud Private" over the past year. The solution allows their customers to enjoy the flexibility, scalability and reliability of the cloud, but with the added security and enhanced performance of a Dedicated Server, at a fraction of the price typically associated with a Private Cloud solution. Put simply, it allows their customers to host multiple servers securely and affordably in their own Private Cloud environment.

StormCloud Private is a Private Cloud Platform, enabling Storm's customers to create Virtual Machines (VMs) on a Parent Server, giving them the ability to grow their cloud by simply adding in additional Parent Servers to accommodate more VMs as their business grows. It is simple and quick to create, manage and remove VMs in a point and click process and these VMs can easily be moved between Parent Servers. For example, if more resources are required for a load heavy application or server.

StormCloud Private is managed via a simple to use control panel and once set up enables the user to add or remove processing power, memory, and disk space for each VM as required. Auto scaling is another feature available to scale resources according to limits the user sets.

Every StormCloud Private Parent Server is fitted with a 1GB connection to the internet. More than 200 Windows and Linux operating system templates are available for instant server configuration. With the option of creating custom templates also available. The customer can use one-click or scheduled backups, or rely on Storm Internet's managed daily backups.

StormCloud Private guarantees a Private Cloud environment, free of the threats typically associated with the average Public Cloud and is backed by their 24/7/365 expert support at no additional cost. Customers can add custom software and hardware firewalls at the parent server level and perform custom server lockdowns. Automatic failover solutions guarantee seamless continuity and 24/7 reliability regardless of failed hardware.

StormCloud Private is accompanied by a cash-back 100% network uptime guarantee, and includes penalty-free seamless upgrade and downgrade paths. Cost control through on-demand resource scaling gives the customer the benefit of instant resource availability on usage-based 'cancel anytime' contracts. StormCloud Private starts from £199/month and they offer upfront monthly pricing that's easy to understand with no hidden fees.

Storm have brought this product to market as they wanted to eliminate the technological barriers that stand in the way of their customer's success, helping them to get the most out of their IT infrastructure. Storm performed a substantial amount of market research which revealed that cost was a key factor in preventing SMEs moving to a Private Cloud set up, they therefore put a lot of R&D into creating an affordable Private Cloud solution to ensure it will help their customers to speed up the release of their products and critical applications, cut back on the IT spend and provide the security their users need to transact safely online.

- What key vendor and industry accreditations does the nominee hold?

Storm Internet are both a Dell Managed Service Provider and Microsoft certified partner. Their team are trained to ITIL standards, a number of Microsoft Certified professions (MCP) and several of their server admins are trained to Microsoft Certified Solutions Expert (MCSEs) level.

Their data centres are one of the handful within the UK in which each of their facilities are certified to ISO9001 Quality Management System, ISO14001 Environmental Management and ISO27001 Information Security Management System audited and certified.

Storm are a partner of Carbon Managers and the Trees4business, contributing to their 100% green hosting company accreditation.

Storm are Payment Card Industry Data Security Standard (PCI DSS) compliant, showing their commitment for safe and secure card payments to protect their clients from credit card fraud.

Storm recently won the "Best Cloud Service" and the "Best Host" awards at the prestigious 19th Internet Service Providers Association (ISPA) Awards, making this the fifth successive year of wins at the ISPA's. Previous wins have included the "Best Cloud Product", "Best Business Use of Cloud", "Best Dedicated Hosting" and "Best SME Business Hosting" awards.

- **What endorsements does that nominee have from their customers and/or their technology partners?**

A customer approached Storm Internet looking for a secure dedicated hosting solution to meet their varied hosting needs. They required 6 servers (mail, 2 database servers, development and 2 web hosting servers) and wanted to cut their £1000/month hosting bill by consolidating their infrastructure. They required a fast connection to the internet, high security, the ability to scale resources, and a guarantee customer data would stay in the UK were additional requirements.

Storm realised StormCloud Private would be the perfect fit. With the offer of a free pre-launch trial, the customer created 6 VMs across 2 parent servers. Instant server virtualisation and configuration dramatically reduced setup times and subsequently freed up valuable staff resources.

Impressed with the efficiency of this service, the customer signed up for StormCloud Private – reducing their hosting spend to £420/month; a decrease of 58%.

The above is just one example of how StormCloud Private has helped companies to cut overall IT spend and reduce dependency on physical servers. Since Storm Internet maintain all StormCloud Private Servers, it also allows their customers to free up skills and staff resources, and eliminate applicable maintenance-related costs.

Why nominee should win

- **Reduced hosting, hardware acquisition and maintenance costs, contributing to an overall reduced IT spend.**
- **Resource scalability and flexibility - applications and services are rolled out faster.**
- **Custom Escalation Procedures. Customers define specific, custom instructions for the Storm team to carry out if an alert is triggered. Storm are more than a hosting provider, more an extension of their customer's team.**



- **Services accompanied by a cash-back 100% network uptime guarantee, including penalty-free seamless upgrade/downgrade paths.**

- **Backed by 24/7/365 expert support. True 24/7 support, at least one support team member and engineer always online providing support via live-chat or ticket system.**