Nominee: EBC Group

Nomination title: EBC Group- Your workplace technology partner

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

EBC Group is an award-winning managed service provider of IT, telecommunications, print solutions and document management services. As an integrated partner of managed services we plan, implement and support our clients IT and technology enabling them to run their business smoothly and securely.

Having provided managed IT services for over 28 years, the company has grown from strength to strength, with the business now encompassing 3 geographical locations with a privately owned data centre housed at their head office in Halesowen, near Birmingham and replicated at their Northampton office.

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

EBC Group is independent and accredited to the highest standard, working with a host of world leading technology brands, including Dell, Cisco, Microsoft, Kaspersky Lab, BT, Virgin and VMware. Their partnerships with technology and software partners ensure they can offer the best solutions available, and that their employees receive the highest standard of training and certifications. EBC Group are also ISO certificated in the provision of managed services, data and data centre management, and hold Cyber Essentials Plus.

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

Operating in multiple verticals, including legal, public sector and manufacturing, EBC Group has successfully delivered a range of diverse projects throughout the past 12 months, that has seen businesses benefit from new IT infrastructure, disaster recovery, cloud and connectivity solutions.

Businesses that have benefitted from EBC Group's services within the past 12 months include Birmingham based Mainstay Group Ltd, who approached EBC Group with a view to updating their IT infrastructure. Their existing systems had become tiresome, and struggled to keep up with the demands required of it, with performance becoming increasingly degraded, virtual outages becoming more frequent and fears regarding an imminent hardware failure beginning to surface.

EBC Group conducted an in-depth analysis of their core infrastructure, establishing where their current bottlenecks were, and what future growth plans the business had. EBC Group provided Mainstay with a brand new clustered VMware environment, utilising the latest Dell hardware. A tiered solution was implemented with SSD's as the tier one layer, which vastly improves the IOPS performance and is combined with dual sixteen core processors and five hundred and twelve gigabytes of RAM per host to enable future growth.

With the infrastructure upgraded, EBC Group installled an advanced back-up software and storage via a Veeam Backup and Replication solution that was put in to meet their backup and disaster recovery needs. The onsite infrastructure is fully replicated in EBC Group's datacentre allowing for a true disaster recovery with fast RTO (Recovery Time Objectives). The 10g backbone enabled Mainstay to complete a full back-up overnight so as not to slow the system during the working day.

When EBC Group were first approached by Shropshire based PDM Produce they were experiencing significant growth throughout the company, with an IT infrastructure that struggled to keep up. As one of the UK's leading producers of fruit and veg in the UK, PDM require a large workforce that remain onsite during peak seasons, and are housed in a large, purpose built caravan park. Due to the rural location of the business, connectivity was a real issue, with most of the site unable to gain any access to the Internet.

Providing 600 users with Wi-Fi access in the Shropshire countryside required in-depth scoping and project planning. From a blank field EBC Group were able to integrate full cabling and switching across the caravan park, via underground CAT 7 and fibre optics. Outdoor switching cabinets were also installed, as well as hardened outdoor access points via a Xirrus Wi-Fi solution. Utilising innovative cloud management solutions have given PDM a state-of-the art Wi-Fi solution, that gives the business enterprise class firewalling, complete application control and reporting of Wi-Fi usage, in addition to being able to easily on-board new devices, whether that be employees or visiting clients.

EBC Group also overhauled PDM's existing infrastructure, with the integration of a new VMware hosted environment, the latest MS exchange server as well as an email archiving solution and firewall protection. In addition, a new backup and disaster recover solution was installed which included offsite backup to EBC Group's data centre.

• Please highlight any particular aspects of customer service delivered as part of the program(s)

With a number of highly trained specialists and support teams, EBC Group ensures each project is met with the same level of attention, from initial enquiry, through to the implementation and client support. EBC Group believes in creating an on-going partnership with a business to ensure they fully understand the whole organisation and their objectives for now, and in the future. The aim is to be able to provide clients with a proactive service, where EBC Group act as a personal IT

advisor who are able to go above and beyond for each client, whether that's through additional training, out of hours assistance or providing support during an office move.

Graham Godber, Customer Service Manager at Mainstay Group Ltd comments ''I have been very happy with the way EBC have performed over the duration of this project, their engineers are very knowledgeable and happy to help out where they are needed. It's been really beneficial to have them come in and include my team with the project to impart some of their knowledge on''.

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

"The project itself has been a huge success. The speed has increased dramatically, the backups are no longer on tapes, we have a full DR plan which can be up and running in under 4 hours should anything major happen and everything is actively monitored by EBC Group to ensure the business is constantly available. I can't recommend EBC Group enough and when I compare them to who we used previously... I'm annoyed we didn't find them sooner."

-Graham Godber, Customer Service & IT Manager at Mainstay Group Ltd

"Cyber security is massively important to a business like ours. We hold a lot of personal and confidential information about our clients; we also handle a substantial sum of money through the business on a daily basis. Businesses like ours are seen as a soft target to cyber criminals. EBC Group have provided us with a series of firewalls and anti-virus protection meaning that our information and client data is much more secure and protected from cyber criminals. We recently obtained Cyber Essentials which is a government backed scheme which establishes that our systems are well protected."

-Rebecca Widdowson, Managing Partner at HallmarkHulme

'EBC Group really are our central IT hub, all of our IT, servers and data are backed-up and stored with them and they have also helped us put in a large Wi-Fi system. We have gone from being a complete IT illiterate company, to cutting edge from an IT perspective. EBC Group are our first choice and are the first people we go to when we have any IT problems. We have had a very good learning experience with EBC Group, and a very good partnership with them, and are looking forward to all of the clever things they come up with in the future.''

-Chris Akers, Manging Director Wheels Divisiion at Titan Europe Plc

Why nominee should win

- **Successfully providing a range of managed services to over 500 customers for over 28 years.**

- **Understanding that IT issues do not strictly occur between traditional working hours, their support and service is designed to provide 24/7 help.**

- **With a state of the art dual data centre, and unique infrastructure designed to provide Cloud solutions, EBC Group is completely independent, never replying on 3rd parties**

- **EBC Group's service is both clear and transparent, not only making them a managed services provider that is easy to work alongside but allowing the customer to really understand what is happening every step of the way**