

Nominee: Six Degrees Group

Nomination title: Managed Services Provider of the Year

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

Established in 2011, Six Degrees Group (6DG) is a converged technology infrastructure provider that is transforming the managed services landscape in the UK mid-market.

6DG has invested in its own data centres, cloud platforms, next generation data network and voice switching capability and uses these core assets to develop, manage and support its unique portfolio of solutions. 6DG has grown both organically and through acquisition.

In June 2015, Charlesbank Capital Partners entered into an agreement to acquire 6DG from original owner Penta Capital, giving 6DG a significant pool of funding to continue to undergo both organic and acquisitive transformation.

Acquisitions in 2016 have included Insite, a managed cloud provider specialising in Microsoft, and Carrenza a cloud service provider focused on providing cloud services to corporate customers and government bodies.

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

One of the key projects that 6DG has delivered this year is for a FTSE 250 company.

The client chose 6DG to provide it with a Managed Network Solution that has been rolled out across its 500 branches in the UK.

The client had run its entire data centre operations from 6DG's facilities at Birmingham for the past six years. The quality and stability of this service has led to 6DG becoming one of its trusted technology partners.

The client was continuing their strategic IT investment program, replacing legacy systems, updating productivity and collaboration services, and modernising their infrastructure, and knew it needed to upgrade the whole network to support the rollout of new technology.

The 6DG solution includes three key elements: Core Multiprotocol Label Switching (MPLS) Network, Managed Internet Access and Branch Network, across its entire UK business.

What key vendor and industry accreditations does the nominee hold?

6DG has the following industry accreditations:

ISO/IEC 27001 - an international certification that ensures that 6DG's core platforms (datacentres and networks), billing, data management, fulfilment and support meet the standards for information security.

ISO 9001 - certifies 6DG's Quality Management System (QMS) for consultancy, design, build and support of managed hosting services to businesses on a worldwide basis using Cloud Computing Technologies.

PCI DSS - a set of comprehensive standards for ensuring the security of financial payment data.

Six Degrees Group is an accredited Investors in People organisation, achieving the level of Silver and was one of the first UK organisations to be accepted as a participant in the 2016 EU Code of Conduct for Energy Efficiency in Data Centres.

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

A representative from the FTSE 250 company said, "We have a long standing, strong and positive relationship with 6DG that has developed since we started using its data centre facilities. As our company has grown, our IT needs have become increasingly complex. 6DG provides us with a

managed solution that will not only bring our systems up to date, but future proof them. Using the 6DG infrastructure allows all of our businesses to stay connected 24/7, with no worries of overloading the systems or unwelcome downtime”.

Greg Morley, Head of IT, United Living Group, a leader in provisioning affordable housing said; “6DG has provided us with an integrated and sophisticated network that meets our everyday and future business demands. We are now one of the largest providers of affordable housing and sustainable solutions in the UK and downtime is simply not an option. With 6DG, we get peace of mind knowing that we have a resilient provider behind us. 6DG is a breath of fresh air.”

Carsten Staehr, CEO of Cintra, a hosted HR and Payroll solution provider said; “Business continuity is always a key concern for us, as missing just one payslip could prove hugely detrimental to our business. It is therefore imperative that our IT systems are up and running as close to 100% of the time as possible. Whereas previously a system failure could mean it was many hours before we were back up and running, hosting Cintra iQ in the cloud with 6DG means we can be back up again within a significantly shorter time period in the unlikely event of a failure.”

Please highlight any particular aspects of customer services delivered as part of the program(s).

6DG works closely with all of its customers to ensure that each solution is made to measure and managed effectively.

6DG allocates each of its customers a dedicated account manager, showing it is committed to excellent customer services. Each are experts in their field and are trained on all areas of the Group’s portfolio. They are not an anonymous voice on the phone, but also regularly visit customers and are their first point of contact.

Why nominee should win

- * 6DG has invested in its own cloud platforms, data centres, next generation data network and voice switching capability.
- * At the start of 2016, 6DG launched a £12m organic investment programme to support its business growth plans and ongoing ambitious acquisition agenda.
- * 6DG has the strongest end-to-end, core-to-edge capabilities in the mid-market space, which gives it control over what it deploys. 6DG uses its core assets to develop, manage and support its unique portfolio of solutions.

- * **6DG has strong accreditations, including ISO/IEC 27001, PCI DSS, and it has become one of the first UK organisations to be accepted as a participant in the 2016 EU Code of Conduct for Energy Efficiency in Data Centres.**

- * **Each 6DG customer has a dedicated account manager delivering tailored, expert customer support.**