

Nominee: Claranet

Nomination title: Claranet: Managed Services Provider of the Year

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

Claranet Ltd is a privately-owned company offering IT infrastructure platforms and services to businesses in the UK, Europe and Brazil, across a broad range of industry sectors. Founded in 1996 by CEO Charles Nasser, it has evolved from a pioneering ISP into a leading MSP with a product portfolio that encompasses network, public and private cloud hosting, communications, and IT security services.

Since its founding, the business has constantly evolved in order to better serve the needs of its customers. To make this evolution a reality, Claranet has spent the last few years bringing comprehensive public cloud services into its portfolio.

The company's work in developing these capabilities has led to it receiving the highest level of certification for delivering managed services on all of the 'big three' public cloud providers – AWS, Azure and Google Cloud. At the same time, Claranet has adopted an 'application-first' approach, creating a broad range of services based on hyper-scale public cloud platforms and its own hosting infrastructure, while also supporting and migrating customers who still use on-premises IT infrastructure.

This has enabled the company to offer a range of hosting services suited to the diverse needs of its customers, with its rich history as a network provider giving it the expertise and knowledge required to hold these complex hybrid solutions together.

The past 12 months has seen Claranet expand considerably, making a series of strategic acquisitions. Building on its acquisition of AWS and DevOps specialist Bashton last year, the company acquired French MSP Diademys and UK-based ITSP Ardenta, further expanding the company's reach and broadening its expertise.

More recently, Claranet acquired three more companies: UK-based security solutions provider Sec-1, French DevOps and cloud specialist Oxalide, and major Portuguese IT services provider ITEN Solutions. The addition of Sec-1 to Claranet's portfolio significantly boosted the company's

managed security capabilities, strengthening its hand in this high-growth section of the market and better enabling it to maintain the security of its customers' data.

Following these expansions, Claranet now has operations in the UK, France, Germany, the Netherlands, Portugal, Spain, Italy and Brazil. Through its network of 24 offices and over 1,800 staff, the company is able to serve over 6,500 business customers. The company has recorded £310 million in annualised revenues, with customers including Peugeot, River Island, Unicef, Missguided, ITV, BBC Worldwide and Liverpool Football Club.

During this time, Claranet has also completed a refinancing exercise, providing long-term financing and an incremental committed acquisition facility of £80 million. This, combined with the consistent flow of acquisitions, represents a significant endorsement of Claranet's strategy, ensuring that the company remains ahead of the game.

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

Missguided

Missguided is a 'rapid fashion' multi-channel brand, aimed at the 16-25 female market. Started in 2008 by Nitin Passi, it has enjoyed rapid growth in the UK and has expanded into Australia, France, USA, Germany, and Spain, with turnover in the hundreds of millions.

Speed and agility have been key to this growth, with regular collaborative fashion lines and flash sales meeting demand for the latest trends – often promoted on social media by its brand ambassadors who have potentially millions of followers. These often create rapid and unexpected upsurges in website traffic and orders. Missguided's existing arrangement, using a traditional hosting model from a single data centre, couldn't accommodate the company's ambitious goals.

As an AWS Premier Consulting Partner, Claranet was well-positioned to put in place the flexible and scalable infrastructure that this strategy required. Claranet managed to complete the

migration in just 6 weeks, migrating approximately 170 servers into AWS and moving the whole system onto a completely different architecture.

The new AWS system was able to take every single order as it arose, despite traffic surging to around 45 times normal peak load. There was no need to deploy a queuing system or delay any order processing. It became clear to the Missguided team that the new system could cope with the most extreme spikes in web traffic.

What key vendor and industry accreditations does the nominee hold?

- **AWS Premier Consulting Partner**
- **Microsoft Partner - Gold Hosting**
- **Google Cloud Premier Partner**
- **VMware Premier Partner**
- **Linux Foundation Member**
- **Puppet Labs Partner**
- **Red Hat Partner**
- **ISO 27001:2013**
- **ISO22301:2012**
- **ISO 9001:2015**
- **ITIL (Information Technology Infrastructure Library) certification**
- **Payment Card Industry Data Security accreditation**

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

Gartner:

Claranet has been recognised as a leader in Gartner’s Magic Quadrant for Managed Hybrid Cloud Hosting, Europe 2017, marking the fifth consecutive year the company has attained this accolade. This represents a powerful endorsement of Claranet’s unity of vision and consistency in delivery.

Alongside this, the company has also been named in Gartner’s inaugural Magic Quadrant for Public Cloud Infrastructure Managed Service Providers, Worldwide. This demonstrates the breadth of service Claranet is able to offer as its expertise in cloud hosting continues to grow.

The Sunday Times company rankings:

Claranet was named 93rd in The Sunday Times BDO Profit Track 100 2017, which ranks the top 100 most profitable private businesses in the UK, underlining the organisation’s illustrious status as a leading profit-making business.

In addition to this, Claranet has earned the 170th place in The Sunday Times International Track 200 2017, further demonstrating the company’s strength, influence and expanding global reputation.

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

“Claranet’s dedication to getting skilled people onsite to understand our requirements and ensure the migration process went well was impressive. I've handled a number of these over the years, around 14 at my last count, and this was definitely the slickest data centre move I've ever done. I now have time to focus on wider strategic business projects rather than constantly working out how to support the website during a range launch.

John Allen, CIO, Missguided

“Claranet is very well integrated into our operations. We have regular reviews with senior management of the company, and know that they will be there when we need them and will get

things done. As an expanding business this is vital for us – when opening new stores, we know that we have a trusted partner which can rapidly get everything connected on the ground.”

Suzie Williams, Business Systems Director, Pets at Home

Why nominee should win

- **Rapid growth and evolution over the past year, seeing several high-profile acquisitions and expansion of the company’s global presence**
- **Constantly evolving product and service portfolio, enabling the needs of a growing range of customers to be served, in an increasing number of markets around the world**
- **Presence in Gartner Magic Quadrants and list of accreditations underline Claranet’s commitment to excellence and unity of vision**
- **Highly positive customer feedback, illustrating Claranet’s focus on forming fruitful, long-lasting partnerships**
- **Future-proof: refinancing exercise has ensured Claranet’s growth has adequate capacity to continue**