Pulsant
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Tax Automation reduces costs and meets security and compliance requirements

Based in Reading, Berkshire, Tax Automation is a tax software company founded in 2001.

Challenge

Tax Automation wanted to streamline the delivery and accessibility of its two flagship solutions — VAT Controller and Capital Assets Database — by moving to a software-as-a-service (SaaS) model. This required a move away from on-premise hosting, while meeting compliance and data sovereignty requirements for Tax Automation's blue-chip clients, including BAE Systems and Whitbread.

Pulsant solution

Pulsant migrated Tax Automation's software and applications to its Enterprise Cloud solution, with no disruption to service delivery. Hosted in one of its enterprise-class datacentres, Pulsant keeps the company's data secure and available.

Results

Tax Automation moved to an operating expenditure model, saving on infrastructure costs and using a software-as-a-service approach to deliver its high performing, resilient solutions to clients. Using Pulsant's secure hosting infrastructure, Tax Automation can provide customers with complete peace of mind that their data is safe and compliance requirements are met.

Client:
Tax Automation

Pulsant solution:
Managed hosting; Pulsant Enterprise Cloud

Outcomes:
Improved service; enhanced security

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Tax Automation partners with Pulsant to reduce costs and improve service delivery

Founded in 2001, Tax Automation is a software development and consulting company that specialises in working with large corporate tax departments. Its clients include Royal Mail, Whitbread and BAE Systems and the company delivers software and services covering tax compliance and reporting, from packaged software through to bespoke applications.

Today, the company offers two main applications: VAT Controller, an MTD (making tax digital) compliant web-based application that addresses the full lifecycle of VAT returns with full audit trails; and the Capital Assets Database, which manages the capital taxes on large property portfolios and currently takes care of commercial property in the region of £30 billion in value

Streamlining services and reducing costs

In 2009 Tax Automation developed its VAT Controller software with the key requirement of making client access as straightforward as possible. This included ensuring clients could use the software without being reliant on their own infrastructure to do so.

To allow our strategy for VAT Controller to be successful, we needed a hosting partner because we didn't want to host it in-house and be responsible for maintaining the infrastructure," explained Nigel Rainer, Technical Director, Tax Automation.

Tax Automation investigated a number of vendors before selecting Pulsant due to a combination of factors including its drive to support local businesses, price and compliance. In addition, Pulsant owns and operates a network of UK enterprise-class datacentres, which made the company the ideal choice to meet Tax Automation's requirements for redundancy.

"Many of our clients based in industries such as financial services and defence have specific requirements when it comes to the location of their data. Pulsant's network of UK datacentres ensures that the data is hosted within the country and the fact we can take our clients to the physical location, if needed, is an added benefit."
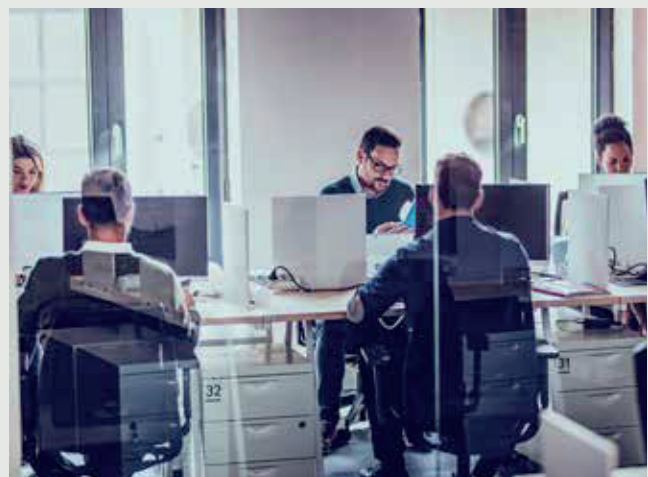
Scalable, reliable Pulsant Enterprise Cloud

Initially VAT Controller was hosted on dedicated servers in one of Pulsant's datacentres, with failover to another of its datacentres in the event of unplanned downtime. With the development of Pulsant Enterprise Cloud, a combination of private cloud and managed hosting, Tax Automation worked with Pulsant to migrate to this hosting model because it features the best hardware, robust cloud delivery and proven management software.

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Nigel Rainer, Technical Director, Tax Automation

In the next phase of the relationship, Tax Automation worked with the Pulsant team to find the best way to host its Capital Assets Database software and make it quicker and easier to access for clients, without hosting the infrastructure on its own site. The Capital Assets Database is a client-server application, which necessitated the need for a more robust hosting solution. The software is accessed through a user interface, in this case Citrix, and not just a web browser. As a result, Pulsant needed to ensure a smooth integration between the hosted server and user interface.

Rainer and his team worked with Pulsant to devise the most appropriate solution to meet requirements. Again, Pulsant Enterprise Cloud was selected as the preferred hosting option and solutions architects designed a solution using Citrix as the delivery method.

Ensuring availability and peace of mind

VAT Controller and the Capital Assets Database are now both hosted on Pulsant's Enterprise Cloud infrastructure, located in one of the company's datacentres, with backups located in another Pulsant datacentre to ensure resilience. The two datacentres, part of Pulsant's network of 10 UK-based sites, are both ISO27001 accredited and feature 24/7 security.

This is a more cost-effective option for Tax Automation as there is no need for the software company to invest in its own hardware for hosting the applications. The IT team also has complete peace of mind that the applications are secure and resilient, and always available to clients.

"Working with Pulsant also gives us, as a small business, a boost when it comes to information security," said Rainer.

"As our clients are large, often multi-national corporates, there are parts of their information security policies that would stretch our capabilities too far, but with Pulsant as a partner, we can meet those compliance requirements and deliver peace of mind and assurance to our clients that their data is secure."

Pulsant Enterprise Cloud also delivers true scalability; Tax Automation can quickly and easily scale up or add a server if needed just by getting in touch with the Pulsant team.

Moving forward, Pulsant is working with the Tax Automation team on designing and delivering a refresh of its current services.

"Pulsant is an extension of our IT team and really complements the skills we have in-house, not just when it comes to hosting, but also in terms of information security and compliance. I can sleep at night knowing we have hosting experts looking after our applications and keeping them secure," concludes Rainer.

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Nigel Rainer, Technical Director, Tax Automation

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