

northdoor casebook



Major insurer ensures Microsoft SQL Server reliability with Northdoor

By engaging Northdoor under a ManageLine contract, a major London-based insurer gained a fully managed support service for its 15 business-critical Microsoft SQL Server databases. The Northdoor service – which provides 12 hours of coverage daily from Monday to Friday – provides access to a deep pool of technical skills and eliminates gaps in support previously caused by DBA holidays or sickness.

About this client

This Northdoor client comprises two risk-bearing entities: a London market reinsurance company and a syndicate at Lloyd's. Both are part of a larger, US-owned group. The London operation has three underwriting teams and achieves annual premiums of approximately £500m, on a GAAP basis.

The Challenge

Following the departure of its existing database administrator (DBA), and as part of a strategic alignment of IT resources, the company decided to outsource the day-to-day management of its Microsoft SQL Server databases. The company has some 15 databases supporting core insurance underwriting systems; these are the heart of the business, so ensuring good performance and high availability is critical. The challenge was to find a cost-effective partner capable of reliably managing these databases.

Managed support

Northdoor's solution:

- o delivers proactive monitoring and management 52 weeks a year
- o provides a deeper pool of technical skills than available in-house
- o eliminates potential gaps in support coverage

“The ManageLine contract gave us the cover we needed at a similar cost to maintaining our former in-house resource. The added benefit is that we are no longer reliant on a single person.”

IT Director



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IT Director



The Northdoor Solution

The company's IT Director says: *“When our existing DBA for SQL Server left the company, there was a clear opportunity to increase the coverage and access a deeper pool of skills by engaging an external partner. We have a long-standing relationship with Northdoor, and the ManageLine contract gave us the cover we needed at a similar cost to maintaining our former in-house resource. The added benefit is that we are no longer reliant on a single person, but now have a team looking after the databases 52 weeks a year.”*

The ManageLine service provides support from 7:30am to 7:30pm, five days a week, with Northdoor taking full responsibility for day-to-day maintenance and optimisation.

With the ManageLine service in place, the insurance company no longer has any concerns about lack of cover for its SQL databases. Northdoor proactively identifies and resolves issues before they impact on production systems, ensuring high reliability and excellent performance.

Rapid and professional

As part of the ManageLine contract, Northdoor provides a formalised monthly report on its activities, including strategic recommendations for the future. Most of the support is carried out remotely, with occasional onsite visits when required.

“It's a bonus that Northdoor are based in the City; this means a rapid response capability and no additional expenses to pay,” says the IT Director. *“The professionalism of the consultants is excellent, and Northdoor is now one of our preferred service providers.”*

Northdoor runs the SQL Server landscape to agreed service levels, tweaking performance as appropriate, applying security patches and ensuring full availability during working hours.

“We are very happy with the ManageLine service from Northdoor, which gives us uninterrupted access to excellent technical skills for our SQL Server landscape,” says the IT Director. *“The service is transparent and proactive, so we can focus on other issues internally, safe in the knowledge that Northdoor is managing the databases to the required level.”*

Ensuring full SQL support

The Northdoor team delivers:

- full-service coverage for SQL databases
- monthly reporting and recommendations
- expert team at similar cost to a single in-house DBA

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IT Director

To know more and do more, contact Northdoor

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