

Northdoor Managed Services: Cloud

Drawing on three decades of experience in complex infrastructure solutions for leading financial services organisations, Northdoor's Managed Services offerings enable our clients to focus more on their core business and less on the underlying technology. For all requirements – from full out-tasking of IT operations, to providing service-desk support for a single technology platform – Northdoor's expert IT services professionals help clients to keep mission-critical systems available and performing optimally at all times.

For all but the largest enterprises, investing in in-house support capabilities for all deployed technologies is likely to be economically unviable – and a distraction from the core business. It is also difficult to find and retain appropriately skilled technical staff, particularly where vital components may only require a handful of man days of administration each year.

As Microsoft's cloud offering reaches maturity, more businesses are relying on Microsoft Azure as an open, flexible, enterprise-grade cloud computing platform. With both Infrastructure-as-a-Service (IaaS) and Platform-as-a-Service (PaaS) offerings, Azure can help organisations to increase the capacity, flexibility and responsiveness of their IT infrastructure while reducing capital and operational costs.

However, choosing the most appropriate platform for each IT service you run, building hybrid cloud environments that can serve unknown future needs economically, planning and executing the resulting transformation projects, and maintaining the future services in an optimised way may stretch your existing internal skills and capabilities beyond their limits.

Northdoor provides packaged, value-added services to help you plan and justify your Microsoft Azure cloud strategy, define and execute migration projects, and build a coherent hybrid-cloud management capability to help ensure ongoing success. Crucially, Northdoor's services enable you to get started quickly and choose only the services you need.

Northdoor's managed services are grouped under two brands: **ManageLine** and **ServiceLine**.

ManageLine offers proactive monitoring and full administration covering all aspects of support, assistance and best-practice advice. This helps ensure that the supported systems always remain operational and in optimal condition.

ServiceLine provides an external ITIL-compliant IT service desk that responds to technical queries and service requests for covered systems. Onsite assistance can also be provided to supplement in-house staff, to execute specialist support tasks or as an emergency reaction to an IT incident.

Both ManageLine and ServiceLine are backed by rigorous, client-defined service-level agreements (SLAs) and key performance indicators (KPIs). Northdoor tracks and manages all activity and provides detailed reporting back to clients on a regular basis.

Service offering 1: Cloud Foundation

Azure Starter Kit

Northdoor's Azure Starter Kit is designed to help you drive the highest possible value from the adoption of cloud services.

The Azure Starter Kit combines:

- Workshops to help you build your cloud vision and strategy
- Advice from experienced cloud architects around solution design
- Azure credits to get you up and running quickly
- A proof of concept to see it all working in action
- A practical plan to bring you to a production environment sooner

Using the Northdoor Azure Starter Kit can help you kick-start your creation of a hybrid data centre spanning both on-premises and cloud resources, enabling you to expand compute and storage capacity on demand – seamlessly. By uniting the limitless scalability and favourable economics of the public cloud with your existing infrastructure investments, you can create a hybrid infrastructure able to cope with whatever the future may hold.

We can also show you how business continuity offerings in the Azure cloud can extend and improve your existing approaches to protecting data and services, giving you global resilience at a tiny fraction of the cost of building out your own multi-centre DR capabilities. This service can be arranged as a separate workshop and proof of concept.

Networking

Northdoor's Networking service helps get you started with a secure, fast and reliable connection to Microsoft Azure. Whether you choose VPN (virtual private network) or ExpressRoute (a direct, private connection that completely bypasses the public Internet), the Northdoor team can help you set up the right connection between the Azure cloud and your on-premises or colocation environment. As part of this exercise, we will help you determine the most appropriate balance between security, reliability, bandwidth, latency and cost.

Active Directory and identity services

Northdoor's Active Directory (AD) service for Azure enables you to establish secure, single sign-on access to both on-premises and cloud-hosted applications. By extending your existing AD domains to the Azure AD service, we can help you create a single environment for the consistent management of security and access rights across all your applications.

Azure AD also offers enhancements over on-premises AD, including built-in security controls that flag up potential vulnerabilities and unusual patterns of access attempts. The cloud-based solution simplifies the administration of authentication and access policies, and provides security reports with recommendations to combat external security threats.

Working with Northdoor to adopt Azure AD can also improve mobility for your users. The solution works across multiple platforms – including Windows, Mac OS X, iOS and Android – to provide consistent and secure access to corporate applications regardless of device or location. Azure AD also includes self-service features such as password reset and group-membership management, helping to improve user satisfaction while cutting helpdesk workloads.



Service offering 2: Consulting Services

Cloud Readiness Assessment

Moving computing and storage workloads to the cloud is a proven way to reduce costs and increase flexibility. However, not all workloads are ideally suited to the cloud, and a number of constraints – technical, commercial and legal – may require some systems to remain on-premises. Determining which workloads fall into which category and generating a valid business case for cloud migration can be difficult.

Backed by more than 25 years of experience in helping businesses design, deploy and run the right infrastructure for their needs, Northdoor offers a comprehensive Cloud Readiness Assessment service that delivers a clear and actionable set of next steps. The service uses a simple traffic-light system to highlight the areas most suitable for migration, reveals the potential cost benefits, and generates a roadmap with recommendations.

The Northdoor Cloud Readiness Assessment helps you:

- Assess the likely cost benefits of moving systems to the cloud
- Move on-premises solutions to cloud or hybrid environments
- Design reliable, cost-effective backup and DR solutions in the cloud
- Achieve the much greater flexibility and cost-effectiveness in the cloud
- Simplify the existing architecture and legacy application code

Cloud Strategy and Roadmap

Northdoor consulting services are designed to help you determine the right strategy for moving to the cloud. We build a high-level technical understanding of the IT environment, including application architecture, number and type of servers, number and location of data centres, intra-site and external connectivity, monitoring and reporting arrangements, licensing requirements, current cloud workloads (if any), and in-house expertise on cloud technologies.

Once your cloud strategy is defined, we work with you to create a roadmap based on a visual representation of your application portfolio. We determine the optimal platform – internal or external – for each application and set timelines for any services to be migrated to the cloud.

A key element in the cloud strategy and roadmap exercises is Northdoor's TCO and ROI analysis service, designed to reveal the costs and benefits of the applications in your portfolio. Our understanding of the different pricing options on Azure – and of the true operational and personnel costs of moving to the cloud – allows you to make valid comparisons between owned on-premises infrastructure and rented cloud capacity. This helps ensure that your future hybrid infrastructure offers the best value for your needs.

Migration and Transformation

Northdoor has a long track record of success in planning and executing migration projects. We can help you to move existing application stacks to the Azure cloud, whether that involves physical-to-virtual or virtual-to-virtual migration. Moving to a SaaS offering may also allow you to get out of the software development game and focus instead on your core business, entrusting maintenance and the creation of new functionality to the external provider.



Service offering 3: Managed Services

Moving to the cloud demands additional skills and disciplines beyond the essentials of system monitoring and remediation – most notably, effective resource utilisation and spend governance.

Building on our proven managed service capability, Northdoor can manage your Azure cloud operations efficiently and effectively, combining our extensive knowledge and experience with our purpose-built toolset. We can also keep your cloud capacity – and expenditure – in line with your business requirements over time, and help you understand the impact of growth or new functionality on your costs.

Equally applicable to cloud, on-premises and hybrid cloud environments, Northdoor's managed services offering covers the full IT cycle:

Advisory Services

- Migration assessment and gap analysis to identify your optimal route to the cloud
- Customisation of solutions to meet your current and future needs around backup and recovery, including advanced site recovery services
- Secure Start security evaluation to bring true managed security to the cloud

Implementation and Transition

- From an initial workshop, apply best practices to manage the implementation and transition of your services
- Establish controls around expenditure and authority to avoid nasty surprises down the line
- Define and document a service catalogue to enable the rapid build, test and deployment of system images
- Create the defined cloud infrastructure, test it, and migrate your services in a controlled manner

Infrastructure Management

- Microsoft is responsible for the smooth and reliable operation of Azure; Northdoor adds value through the ongoing management of database, operating system and network layers
- Custom monitoring can be added for most applications – if the application can write to a log file, then we can capture and respond to the output
- Service catalogue management, alerting, patching and upgrades to ensure integrity and availability
- Northdoor's custom monitoring tools integrate directly with our 24x7 service desk facility

Governance

- Northdoor helps you understand how much you are spending and on what
- Ensure control over spend by automatically deactivating non-essential services
- Northdoor provides statistical reporting and advice, with trend analysis to help predict future usage and costs

Security and Compliance

- Existing security policies must also be applied to the cloud: Northdoor helps you enforce policies and monitor compliance through process and evidence
- Northdoor's Security Management as a Service builds on Microsoft's security data and analysis to perform more intelligent and effective threat detection, reducing risk and simplifying security audits

Service Delivery Management

- Cloud services are highly automated, but businesses also need human management: Northdoor provides Service Delivery Managers (SDMs) to co-ordinate services and guide clients
- Tasked with continual service improvement and investigating new possibilities on behalf of clients, SDMs help deliver ongoing improvements in the cloud experience

Take the next step

To find out more about Northdoor Managed Services, visit <https://www.northdoor.co.uk/solutions/managed-services>

