

 CASE STUDY

## 24/7 MANAGED BCDR SERVICE WITH MICROSOFT AZURE

### Meritum give Fidelis peace of mind with Cloud BCDR service

#### BACKGROUND

In 2015 Fidelis Insurance was the second largest insurance start-up in the City. Since then it has grown exponentially, taking on 30 new members of staff during the coronavirus lockdown period alone.

Commenting on the company's strengths Head of Infrastructure Ash Bailey said: "We're small and lean but we punch above some larger and more established companies."

"We had an IT strategy that was already geared up for remote working, which meant that all our team could be working from home within 24 hours when lockdown began. Other organisations in the space took a couple of weeks to get home working set up."

With several proprietary applications supporting risk analysis and premium modelling, Fidelis prides itself on its agility to turn things round quickly and respond instantly to global events, brokers' requirements, and market conditions.

Running virtual machines across 2 data centres, Fidelis were looking to capitalize on their Azure environment by replicating their servers into the Cloud for Disaster Recovery purposes.

But they were having problems.

Here Ash describes the challenges they were experiencing – and how Meritum Cloud's approach is helping the organisation breathe a collective sigh of relief.

#### STATISTICS

##### Fidelis Insurance:

- Established in London 2015
- Specialist insurance underwriters
- 160 staff in 2020
- Offices in London, Bermuda and Dublin
- Operating in aviation, marine, energy, property, governmental, fine art and specie sectors

##### Meritum Cloud Disaster Recovery

- 24/7 Managed Azure BCDR with 15 min. SLA
- Virtual machine replication across 2 data centres, spanning all locations
- 24/7 support service including alerts, monitoring and escalation protocols
- Regular failover production testing into Azure
- Azure Back-up service for critical infra servers
- Recovery objectives met within tolerances



*“Meritum are our trusted DR and Azure advisor. They usually spot any issues first through their 24/7 monitoring, and that additional monitoring service gives us extra resilience.”*

## PROBLEM

“After a Disaster Recovery test didn’t go to plan and adversely affected our production environment, we realized that we needed the support of a knowledgeable and capable DR partner.”

“We couldn’t risk putting our business in jeopardy any further and given our experience the general sentiment about our DR system was rock-bottom.”

“While back-ups and DR are not very exciting, they are the most important things. If you don’t get them right it doesn’t matter what else you do all day long.”

“With a 5-strong in-house IT team we don’t have the capacity to keep abreast of all the latest set-ups and procedures in Azure. It made a lot of sense to bring on-board an MSP who could take this out of our hands.”

## WHY MERITUM CLOUD

“If I get a company in to talk to me about their product it’s obvious fairly quickly if they’re just trying to sell it or if they know what they’re talking about. As a techy at heart I need a good amount of technical detail ahead of any sales pitch.”

“The way Meritum put themselves across and answered my questions, it soon became apparent that they knew a lot more about Azure and our DR requirements than we did!”

## FIRST STEPS

“While I liked what they were saying I wanted to give Meritum an opportunity to demonstrate their technical ability.”

“We invited them to carry out a survey of our DR system and Azure environment and tell us what we needed to fix. The list they put together was shockingly large and to a level of detail that I didn’t even know existed.”

“It was a much better demo than an hour-long slide show.”

## SCOPE AND SOLUTION

“The substantial remediation work was necessary before we could get into proper Disaster Recovery testing.”

“Meritum’s thorough approach introduced more robust back-ups of the virtualised machines in Azure, and 24/7 monitoring and support of system performance.”

“Meritum have set up all the correct processes, procedures, SLAs and escalation protocols required, and have provided us with the Pager Duty tools that trigger alert emails, texts and phone calls when there is a problem.”

“We now receive reports on Alerts and Recovery Time and Point Objectives as part of the monthly service review.”

“Once the on-boarding work completed we began to plan for a full Disaster Recovery test. Since it’s our preference to carry out testing in a production environment we chose the quietest time of the year to do it, which is August.”

“We failed over different parts of the system into Azure and back again into on-prem while users were still accessing it, to be sure we were testing with real load.”

## RESULTS AND BENEFITS

“Our final failover test of our main SQL servers into Azure and back again was the real clincher. But everything was perfect.”

“We have quite a broad set of recovery tolerances depending on the time of year.”

“For example, our business follows a predictable pat-

tern, with the renewals period between October and February being our busiest time. We would struggle to tolerate an hour’s outage due to system failure then.”

“However in August when most of the market is on holiday we can tolerate an outage of up to 3 days if necessary.”

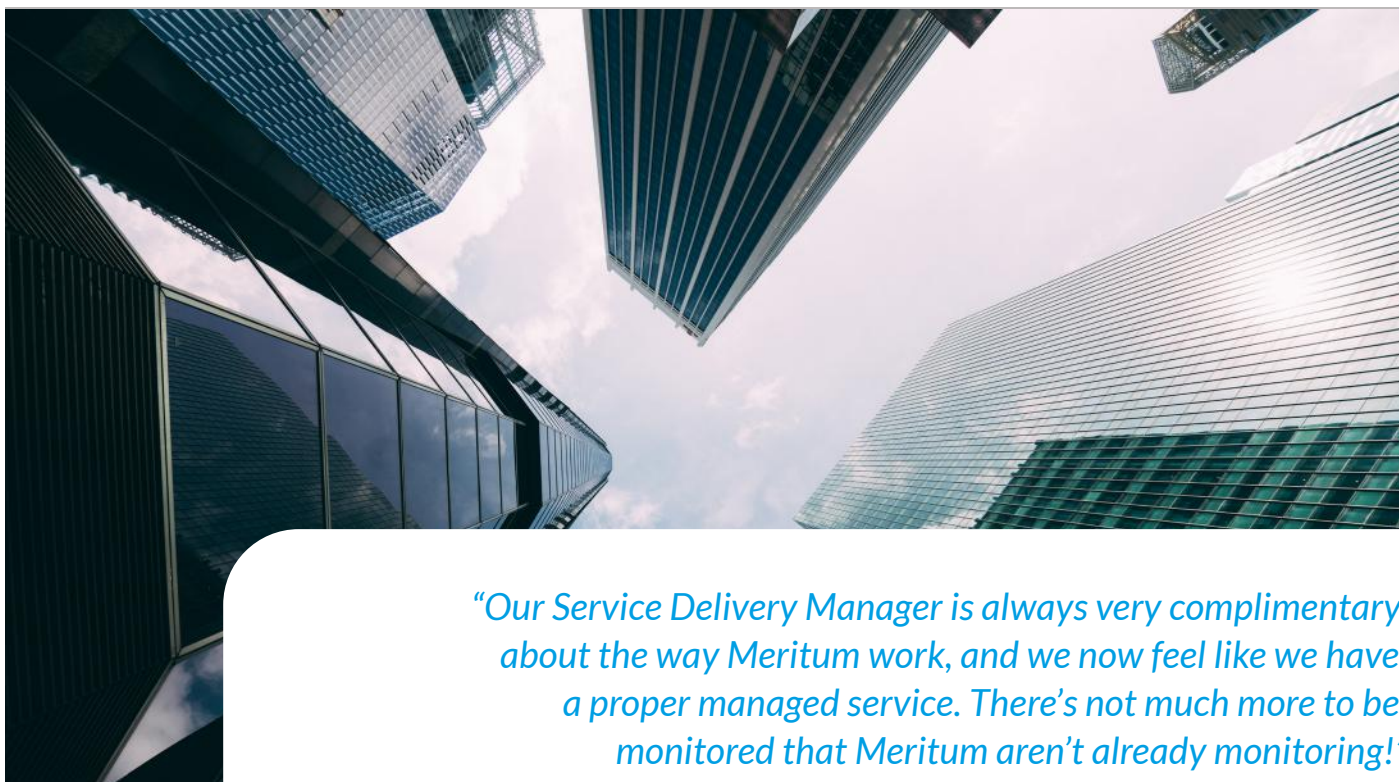
“The tests clearly demonstrated effective failovers well within our tolerances.”

“We have increased visibility of system stability and performance, and we now have a streamlined Azure set-up with all the right connectivity in place.”

“Meritum are our trusted DR and Azure advisor. They usually spot any issues first through their 24/7 monitoring, and that additional monitoring service gives us extra resilience.”

“In their on-going service they usually spot any issues first through their 24/7 monitoring, and that additional monitoring service gives us extra resilience.”

“It’s a dream that we can just forget about our DR and know that it’s being handled. Everyone at Fidelis is 100% happy with what Meritum have delivered. They are invaluable.”



*“Our Service Delivery Manager is always very complimentary about the way Meritum work, and we now feel like we have a proper managed service. There’s not much more to be monitored that Meritum aren’t already monitoring!”*



*“Meritum have set up all the correct processes, procedures, SLAs and escalation protocols required, and have provided us with the Pager Duty tools that trigger alert emails, texts and phone calls when there is a problem.”*



## RECOMMENDATION

“Meritum have the ability to demonstrate what they say they can do. They are a bunch of guys who all know what they’re talking about rather than one clever guy and a load of salesmen!”

“Our service delivery manager is always very complimentary about the way Meritum work, and we now feel like we have a proper managed service. There’s not much more to be monitored that Meritum aren’t already monitoring!”

“I would definitely recommend their attention to detail.”

## NEW POSSIBILITIES

“Meritum’s expertise in the Azure space has rekindled my interest in flexibly scaling our on-prem computer power into the Cloud.”

“It is now highly possible to leverage Cloud responsiveness to give us more computer power as and when we require it in order to turn things round even faster.”

“I’ve always wanted to try this but never had the time or the support from a knowledgeable provider to do it.”

“Now I know that if anyone’s going to help Fidelis achieve it it’s Meritum.”

## MERITUM CLOUD’S VIEW

“It’s very satisfying to help a client understand much better the technology they’ve taken on and how to get the best out of it.”

“Like Meritum, Fidelis is a small organisation creating a big impact. There was a lot of remediation and on-boarding work to carry out to improve the reliability and resilience of their set-up, but they can now relax with a de-risked DR service and one less headache for their IT management!”

“We look forward to continuing to support Fidelis into the future.”

Shaun Ritchie, CTO Meritum Cloud