

Service Definition

Test Management Services for Cloud

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1. Introduction to Farsight Consulting

Farsight Consulting is a SME consultancy that was incorporated in 2010.

We have a number of highly skilled and experienced consultants, many of whom have worked or are currently working in the UK Public Sector. We also have a number of private sector clients and engagements which enables us to bring together ideas and good practice from across multiple sectors and a number of different industries.

Our business model allows us to provide high quality services at reasonable prices and adapt quickly and agilely to client requests. We are proud to say that every engagement has been successful and we would be happy to introduce you to any of our clients.

We have set out below a selection of organisations that we have worked with. Most of the organisations are very happy to share their knowledge and experience – and we have found this open and collaborative approach to be extremely beneficial for our clients as it typically reduces the costs of engagements and speeds up delivery.



We would be very happy to arrange discussions with any of our clients to provide feedback on our services, and also to compare ideas and practical experiences where that might be helpful.

We have two aspects to our business that G-Cloud clients have found useful:

Firstly, we have built up a considerable body of work in the Public Sector and developed a detailed understanding and good working relationships with a large number of departments. We have a 100% re-engagement rate from existing clients and most of our work comes from repeat clients and client recommendations.

Secondly, we have worked very closely with suppliers to help them improve the way in which they engage and operate within the public sector and to improve the services they provide. This includes a number of the key larger suppliers into government. We also work closely with SMEs; and through a number of our G-Cloud engagements we have been able to help a number of SMEs deliver quality services into public sector organisations. This aspect of our work is increasing as both suppliers and buyers become more familiar with the G-Cloud and the additional diversity that SMEs can provide.

Because of our relationships with suppliers we have often been asked to provide corrective advice and assistance to get things back on track when key initiatives have stalled.

Our independent status and the fact that we focus solely on consultancy (rather than providing solutions) allows both public sector organisations and suppliers to feel confident that we have their best interests at heart and treat their information in the strictest confidence.

We design our work specifically to ensure our clients achieve their goals. We pride ourselves on providing easy to understand and accessible products and deliverables. Our work is outcome focused and supported by high quality thinking and precise delivery.

We would be delighted to discuss the challenges facing your organisation and excited to see how we could help. If you think we could be of service, please contact us on:

info@farsightconsulting.co.uk | www.farsightconsulting.co.uk.

2. Test Management Services for Cloud

2.1 Overview

This service is suited for organisations who need to plan how to approach testing as part of the introduction of new services and solutions. This could be part of a wider transformation programme, or a targeted improvement project focused on one particular area.

The service focuses on supporting organisations by developing a strategy, plan and approach for testing. It can then move on to managing the delivery of the test plan.

Use of this service can help to reduce risk, ensure that the organisation maximises benefit from its investment in testing and ensure enablers are appropriately equipped (in terms of software, people and technology).

Farsight's Test Management for Cloud Service supports the changes being introduced by your organisation, whether this involves service redesign, the introduction of new products and services, organisational transformation or a move to new software or hosting.

The service is flexible and can be adapted to suit your needs, whatever stage your project is at. We can deliver both:

- **strategic test management** - developing a test strategy and ensuring compliance with test management best practice, and
- **operational test management** - developing and implementing a test plan for a specific service or product in line with the overarching test strategy.

We can help you ensure that the whole of your business is ready for change. We analyse a range of factors, such as business engagement, business processes at each stage in the customer or user journey, and the delivery of desired outcomes and benefits to ensure that we are solving the right problems. This can have more of an impact than just testing software and ensures that testing is fully integrated with the aims and objectives of the project.

The Test Management Service is tailored to the specific needs of the client, but might include:

- Within an Agile project - designing, planning and management of iterative testing
- Within a Waterfall project - designing, planning and managing a standalone test phase
- Developing a full test strategy for your organisation, in line with agile / waterfall principles, good practice and rigorous test methodologies
- Identifying what needs to be tested e.g. by developing acceptance criteria
- Developing a test approach and plan
- Developing defect triage, assessment and management processes

- Ensuring readiness for testing (availability of test environments and test data, suitably trained testers, robust processes, etc)
- Writing test scripts (SIT, UAT, etc)
- Overseeing the execution of testing
- Summarising test results and explaining what they mean
- Linking test results into other areas of project management – RAID management, highlight reporting, assessing business readiness, etc.
- Identifying what needs to be done as a result of defects found in testing to address any material issues and taking a step back to ensure any larger and non technical issues are resolved
- Replanning future test phases to ensure dependencies related to defects are considered (working with the development team)

A typical engagement might include the following:

<i>Strategic Business Case for Cloud Security Portfolio Management</i>	This helps an organisation answer questions such as: how much this will cost and over what period; what are the key cost and funding options; what are the benefits; what is our financial position, how do we live within our means, what is the right investment choice for us?
<i>Mobilisation</i>	At the outset, we will work with you to determine the most appropriate testing methodology. We will assess the scale, complexity and risks of the business and ICT change; the timescales and resources available / required for testing; the outcomes you are working towards; and what needs to be tested. This will help us determine the approach that best suits the organisation's needs and culture.
<i>Gathering information</i>	We will take stock of what has been done so far in articulating the test approach; identifying the testing required; and any testing that has already been completed. We work to ensure that any testing completed and future testing that has been identified will meet the needs of the business. We will adapt to the needs of the business to ensure your testing strategy and plan delivers the required outcomes at the right time.
<i>Developing the Test Strategy and agreeing our Approach</i>	We will outline a suggested Test Strategy, Approach and High Level Plan describing, in outline, what the testing should aim to achieve, the business justification for doing so; the overall approach to be taken and the plan for the next stage of the testing. This will consider the different cycles of testing (e.g. Functional, Unit Tests, SIT, UAT, OAT, etc)
<i>We will agree this with the relevant project executive or governance board.</i>	As part of this, we will tailor our role depending on your needs and existing capabilities. We can provide a complete end-to-end service, leading on all aspects of testing management. Additionally, we can provide specific, individual services e.g. working alongside a client's own team, adding our experience and skills to theirs, and building in a degree of independence where that is appropriate. We will incorporate skills transfer and client learning into our approach wherever possible.
<i>Test Planning</i>	<p>Having agreed the Test Strategy, Approach and high level Plan, the next stage will be to plan testing in more detail.</p> <p>We will then discuss with you how to establish the testing team. We could</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Manage your internal resources on your behalf Manage resources you procure Procure resource for you A blended approach of the above

Test Preparation

During this stage, we can support activities such as:

- Agreeing acceptance criteria, etc.
- Writing test scripts
- Identifying what test data is needed and working up a way of obtaining this including, where appropriate, developing dummy data
- Identifying what testers need to do, developing training and briefing them
- Ensuring defect management processes, tools and feedback loops are in place
- Liaising with your suppliers to ensure environments are ready, configured and tested.

Managing Delivery

We can manage the delivery of testing products and tasks by allocating work appropriately; ensuring team members and suppliers are clear as to what is to be produced and what is the expected effort, cost and timescales; and ensuring delivery of products remains within agreed tolerance. As part of this service, we would manage risks and issues around testing and provide monitoring reports as agreed.

Managing Closure

We will ensure the effective closure of testing phases. This covers ensuring acceptance into live, test service de-commissioning, follow on actions identified and the project itself formally evaluated.

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3. Our Approach & Methodology

Including Onboarding, Offboarding & Implementation

Our Engagement Approach

Farsight likes to take a simple approach to engaging with clients and potential clients. It breaks down into 4 linked phases.



Prior to formal engagement

Before any formal engagement takes place we like to meet with our potential clients to develop an understanding of what they are trying to achieve and how we could help. We find that this allows us to add value from the outset and ensure that expectations are clear.

Often, at this stage, we have found that we are able to make suggestions regarding the approach that reduces costs and decreases the effort involved.

We can put together a proposal that sets out our understanding of the client's aims and objectives and the services they'd like us to provide. This often lines up nicely with the G-Cloud clarification process.

This is done at no charge to the client.

Formal engagement and start-up

At the outset of the engagement we agree the scope of the work, based on the proposal which may have been revised iteratively during the prior stage.

This then forms the basis of the engagement and the formal commercial terms and call-off contract is put in place.

We usually hold a 'kick-off' meeting with the client and key stakeholders to ensure everyone is clear on the plan and their roles and responsibilities within that plan.

During the engagement

We usually work closely with the client, so that they are kept informed of our progress and can get as involved as they want to with our work.

The extent to which this occurs obviously depends on the nature of the engagement. We are comfortable working autonomously or being integrated into an existing team. We attempt to ensure that knowledge and skills transfer occurs naturally throughout the engagement.

We hold regular catch-up meetings with the client (and any key stakeholders) and provide regular progress reports. At these meetings, if anything unexpected has arisen, the client can refocus and reprioritise effort if necessary.

Due to our flexible resourcing approach this can sometimes include briefly pausing the engagement (e.g. if the client needs time to consider emerging analysis) during which time the engagement can be 'frozen' and no costs incurred until everyone is ready to continue.

At the end of the engagement

If the object of the engagement is to produce a specific product (e.g. a strategy document) this is presented to the client for sign off.

We can also produce an engagement summary report setting out the results of our work. The content of this varies depending on the engagement but could include a summary of progress over time, key risks and issues that we have discovered (both historically and going forward), lessons learned, etc. We can also include suggestions for future work and next steps.

We try to ensure that knowledge transfer occurs throughout the engagement so that our clients are empowered rather than managed – but at the end of the engagement we can review what's happened and how we've done things so that the client team is in a stronger position to deal with things in the future.

Our High Level Methodology

We have designed a flexible, high-level approach for engagements that has proven to be simple to manage, effective, transparent and efficient. It also allows us to flex our resources and easily refocus them to solve any specific issues that we identify during the engagement.

We broadly follow 5 steps across an engagement, these are set out below using analysis as an example.



Throughout the analysis process the customer is kept completely informed and can refocus the analysis based on emerging findings - ensuring the best results and avoiding wasted effort.

We have applied this method to a variety of different engagements and have refined this approach over a number of years, working closely with our clients. So we are confident that the approach works across different industries and for many different aspects of an organisation. We place a great deal of emphasis on joint planning and joint working where possible and practical as this ensures that any issues are recognised and acted on immediately and there are no surprises.

This doesn't mean that we cannot work on our own – we are happy to work autonomously, whilst ensuring we remain focused on meeting your needs.

4. Looking after your data (backup, restore, etc)

We do not often need to hold client data as most clients prefer to keep things on their systems. If we do need to hold client data we ensure it is secure and we will agree up front with the client any specifics around handling and processing data. We will also agree in advance any specific processes to clear down and hand back data at the end of an engagement.

5. Resource Options and Pricing

The services Farsight provides can be sourced in two ways:

1. **Purchased on an ad-hoc basis** – for example x resources for x days.
2. **As a fixed price ‘work package’** – where we agree a package of resources to deliver a specific product or outcome by a specific date.

We have found that offering **Work Packages can greatly assist with budget management and better shares the risk between the client and Farsight** – effectively allowing the client to pass some of the risk of delay onto Farsight. We can offer the fixed price work packages because of our flexible approach and ability to re-profile our resources internally. We believe this demonstrates the confidence we have in our people and our abilities to get things done on time and to budget.

Often clients combine the two sourcing approaches, choosing ad-hoc support to get started and moving to a fixed price work package when they are clearer about what they need.

Under either approach, at all times the client remains in control of the engagement and (within reason) can reprioritise and refocus effort immediately (without penalty). This approach has resulted in lower costs, greater value and better outcomes for our clients.

For further information about our services, our people and the way we work, including examples of how we have worked with public sector organisations please visit our website [here](#).

For specific day rates broken down by skills and experience, please refer to our SFIA rate card which you will find under our G-Cloud listing.

6. Terminating a Contract

At the outset of the engagement we will agree with you any specific aspects involved in terminating a contract (early). We are flexible about how we support you and understand that things might change. We would recommend a short close down period to hand things over and to pass on knowledge of the work as well as finishing off any in-flight work, but this is completely negotiable.

7. After-Sales Support

Once the work has started, our after-sales approach includes:

- Catching up with senior stakeholders regularly – to work together on quality delivery; planning; and addressing any issues (don't worry, we will not be upselling!)
- Helping to identify and address patterns/systemic issues you might not otherwise be sighted on – through retrospectives, strategy workshops etc. Our senior team have lots of experience and are always available.
- Building capability – we've helped clients plan how to recruit their own teams, and sat on their interview panels; we've played a key role in constructing and maturing clans, networks and communities of practice across multiple organisations; we helped clients design and set up service desk functions.
- Leaving things in a good place – e.g. by introducing performance analysis and dashboards for in-house teams.
- Training, mentoring and coaching – this includes helping in-house product owners, service owners and SROs build agile skills; showing service desk teams how to manage backlogs, triage and prioritise tickets; and instructing people on specific skills on business cases and benefits-modelling.
- Flexing resource to fit around clients' internal plans – with some clients we've taken people off projects when internal decisions took time, so that they didn't pay when they didn't need us; or we have dropped resourcing down to part-time while in-house teams are getting up to speed.
- Working alongside clients to develop lasting internal expertise and approaches – for example, our team have worked with some of our clients' in-house specialists to develop their own frameworks, approaches and tools.
- Maintaining relationships after we've left, to help spread good practice – for example, we recently helped one of our previous clients demonstrate our digital dashboards, to a team at another government department.

8. Benefits of Working with Farsight

Here are some of the ways in which our clients say they have benefited from our services. We can provide further details about these benefits upon request, and some are included in the case studies on our website:

Cost reduction

- Reduced start-up and operating costs of systems
- Reduced development and configuration costs
- Reduced change costs
- Reduced management costs
- Reduced consultancy costs

Improved Efficiency and Responsiveness

- Quicker and higher quality response to business needs
- Improved ability to assess and introduce new services to transform the business
- Improved ability to respond to changes
- Greater flexibility in relation to services
- Better quality services for end-users
- More control over the services they use
- Reduced time and effort to deliver

Greater Understanding of what's possible

- Opportunities to leverage existing assets and services
- Opportunities to leverage new services – such as cloud services
- Opportunities to share services across departments and organisations
- Opportunities to combine data sources, enhance cross-organisational knowledge and to streamline service delivery

Reduced Risk

- Greater understanding of the service offerings
- Greater understanding of how services fit together
- Greater understanding of the risks involved (and how to manage risk)

Transformed Organisation Operations

- A clear plan to transform the ICT capabilities of the organisation
- An operational model that is set-up to manage cloud services (taking into account the changes required to service management)

9. Other Services available via G-Cloud

Farsight Consulting provides a suite of services that help our clients improve the way they operate.

Currently we have over 35 services available on the Digital Marketplace. If you would like to discuss which of our services might be most suitable to meet your needs please do not hesitate to get in touch.

Our services are designed to make things straightforward and to enable organisations to gain access to wider and deeper expertise when it's needed without the on-going costs involved in developing and maintaining that capacity in-house.

We often work closely with existing client teams, adding our expertise to theirs and effecting knowledge transfer whilst delivering for the client.

For more information about our other services please use the Digital Marketplace, take a look at our website (there is a specific section on government cloud services) or just get in touch and we'll be happy to talk things through and suggest options for your consideration.

10. Examples of Our Work

Introduction

Our work to date has predominantly been UK Public Sector-based and we have extensive experience in working at all levels within government departments. We augment this experience with ideas and knowledge from the private sector to ensure we provide rounded and future-proof advice and guidance to all our clients.

We have considerable experience in supporting organisations 'join up' and share business functions, information and technology using Cloud technologies – and we have led a number of significant organisational transformations which have been enabled by the use of Cloud computing.

We also work closely with suppliers into government to help them define their service offerings and to improve the benefit government gets from their services.

Some Feedback from our Clients

"Farsight guided us expertly through a complex landscape of information and technology. They worked closely with us and our suppliers, helped us understand our options and provided the Management Board with specific recommendations that we could then take forward."

IT Director, UK Supreme Court



"Farsight helped us to make sense of the complex information and technology landscape. In particular, they gave us the insight and confidence necessary to tackle the security concerns in sharing information between Youth Offending Teams and the National Offender Management Service."

Director, Youth Justice Board



"I am impressed with the way Farsight uses its knowledge and experience. They are great to work with and their work ethic inspires the team."

Lead Account Manager, Ministry of Justice



"Farsight provided us with the knowledge, skills and confidence to transform our business."

Director, Criminal Justice Reform



Example Engagements

We have set out some examples of our work in the table below. We have selected certain examples to provide further insight into the particular service; we have also provided some other examples to show the breadth of our experience. We hope this is useful – if you have any questions or would like further information about any of the examples please let us know.

Defect Management | software development company

Farsight was asked to develop and deliver a Defect Management process for a new technology startup. The startup is delivering business critical systems in sensitive areas such as public protection, personal information and health and wellbeing – so quality testing is essential to ensure the robustness and accuracy of the service. We put processes and tools in place to manage defects raised by both users and internal testers and ensured clear channels of communication between project partners, customers, suppliers, developers and key stakeholders.

*UAT quality assurance |
community rehabilitation
company*

This CRC was provided with an alpha release of a new system by a supplier for some of their users to test. Farsight worked with them to help them define processes for this. We also provided guidance and feedback to their (non-technical) users when creating and updating their defect reports and feature requests, supporting the triage, assessment and allocation of defects back to the supplier. Our support enabled their non-technical staff to play a key role in the testing process (which was very helpful as they understood the business very well) and to communicate effectively with the supplier's technical team.

*Test Management | UK
software provider*

Farsight was commissioned mid-way through the development and implementation of an innovative Case Management System and asked to enhance / redesign their testing strategy and to then manage the delivery of the test plan. We also supported the client when recruiting additional test resources – helping them to incorporate a blended team approach across internal testers, external testers and business analysts. We then managed the testing for the client, managing their testers as part of the blended team. While working with them, we identified requirements for significant further testing and incorporated them into a revised test strategy. We remain engaged in delivering the test plan that we developed and are also now working with them to enable them to build up their own in-house test capability and to undertake knowledge transfer to their resources.

