



TRANSFORMING BUSINESS
THROUGH **TECHNOLOGY**

G-Cloud

Service Description



Overview

Connectivity Hub

Core has been a leading provider of cloud related service for 10 years, and as a result we have developed a range of services designed to resolve some of the common challenges enterprise customers face in moving to the Cloud.

One of these solutions is Connectivity Hub.

Connectivity Hub is a cloud hosted connection aggregation solution that enables customers with large branch office networks to consume dedicated cloud connections, such as Microsoft ExpressRoute or AWS DirectConnect, without having to install a dedicated connection to each office location.

Instead, these connections are placed into a high availability, single tenancy array, hosted in 2 geographically disparate Tier 1 datacentres, which Core design, deploy and manage on our customers behalf. Offices connect to the Connectivity Hub via a range of options, VPN, MPLS, leased line or other private connection.

The solution provides a number of key benefits which are listed below;

Aggregate expensive Cloud Connections

Running a Microsoft ExpressRoute or AWS DirectConnect to each branch office can become a very expensive undertaking, the cost of the line and the suitable local hardware to connect can have a significant financial impact. Rather than having to price your cloud connectivity on a per location basis, you can simply buy the right volume of connections to cover the overall bandwidth requirements on an enterprise wide basis.

Aggregate other connections to 3rd parties

Most modern enterprises will have dedicated connectivity to partners, service providers and other 3rd parties. Once again, this can become expensive and cumbersome for organisations with a large branch network. Connectivity Hub can be the central point for all 3rd party connections, reducing cost and complexity, as well as improving overall security.

Improve Security

Many customers want dedicated Cloud connections for performance and security. Connectivity Hub is hosted in a secure zone of a tier 1 datacentre, with top flight physical security. The design of Connectivity Hub allows us to minimise the attack surface of your organisation while also employing state of the art, carrier class firewalls to ensure that no unauthorised traffic can breach your perimeter.

Reduce the risk from IoT

Connectivity Hub is designed to support customers who need a secure conduit for data from IoT devices, which by their nature are not always very secure. Connectivity Hub completes deep packet inspection on all unencrypted traffic through the platform and will quarantine any suspicious data or viruses to make sure they don't infect your IoT data lake.

Enable Location Portability

Organisations change their office locations more regularly now than at any time in history, and this can be costly if you are running your own datacentres and backbone network from an office location that you choose to close or relocate.

One of the principles of Cloud Computing is to free up office real estate and remove the challenge to businesses of having to move their own on-premise datacentres as their needs change over time. The same principle is true for Connectivity Hub. Connectivity Hub effectively becomes the backbone network for Organisations that consume cloud services, but as it is not located in your own office environment, there is no cost or downtime associated with any office moves.

Enable Communications Provider Portability

Core is an independent MSP, not linked to any network or telecoms provider. This is important to organisations who may want to change their voice and data connectivity providers with as little friction as possible. A few global communications providers are beginning to explore the potential of Connectivity Hub solutions, primarily as they see it as an opportunity to lock in customers contracts over a longer period.

Maintaining a Connectivity Hub, independent of these providers, means you are always free and able to shop your current bandwidth costs around the marketplace and easily transition between suppliers if you find a better option.

Enable Cloud Portability

Connectivity Hub is cloud agnostic and is compatible with the Direct Connections from all major cloud providers. As your organisational needs change, you may wish to migrate between Cloud Platforms, and Connectivity Hub will support this in a number of ways.

Connectivity Hub can also be used as the data conduit for migrating data from one platform to the other, with no impact on live service or internal networks. Deep Packet Inspection can be employed in this process to ensure that all data is hygiene checked before being deposited in your new cloud platform.

Connectivity as a Service

Connectivity Hub is a Connectivity as a Service solution, where we will provide the initial infrastructure, and ensure that the infrastructure remains in vendor support, up to date in terms of patches and vulnerability mitigations, and provide continuous hardware refresh activities for the duration of the contract. This provides consistent monthly costs for budgetary purposes, and avoids any capital charges for customers where this applies.

Project Delivery

Project Managers are the key drivers of successful migrations, implementations, deployments and transformations. They are the fabric through which effective communications, coordination and collaboration come together to create positive change, and Core's Project Management team have the experience and expertise to lead that change.

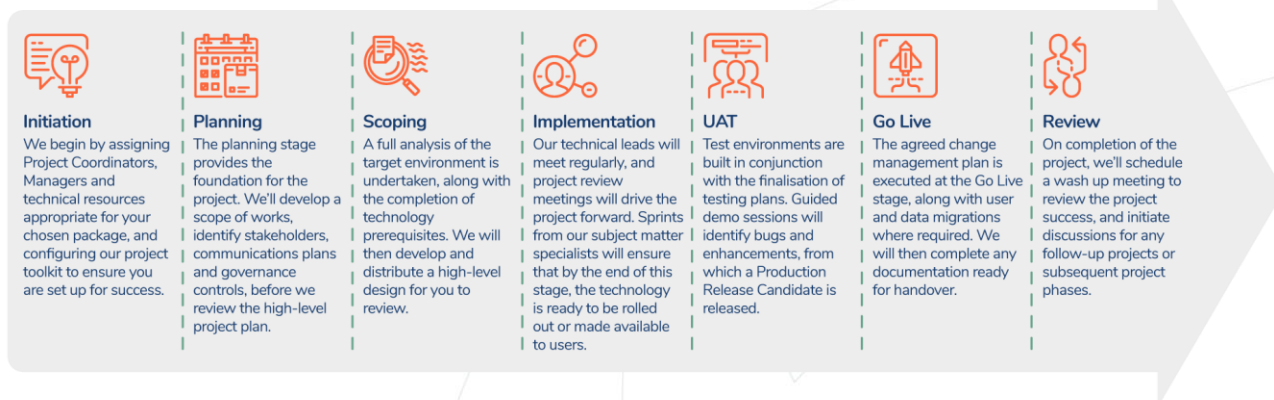
Delivering innovative, business transformation through technology and solutions can often create complex challenges. Effective planning, coordination and communication are key factors in any successful project, and our Project Management services have been developed to drive that success for you, so you can do focus on what you do best.

Whether we are managing small projects or complete programs, our experienced project managers and coordinators bring their extensive knowledge, skills, and tried and tested methodologies to the team, ensuring your project is delivered on time, within budget, and to specification.

For a true professional services engagement, we have a tried and tested approach that we have developed over 30 years to ensure we deliver consistent high value outcomes. Our approach is rooted in the Agile development method; and leverages rapid low-code development techniques to provide working automation solutions up to 78% faster* than conventional development methods.

How our Project Management works

Regardless of which Project Management package you choose, our team will deliver your project with the passion, energy, and expertise our customers have come to recognise as Core's professional and responsive culture.



Project Management by Core – Benefits

- Core's Project Management team are experienced in driving positive change through technology
- Our project methodology combines the stringent coordination of PRINCE2 with the fluidity of Agile practices
- Our Project Management team works with specialists across the technology spectrum every day, and understand the challenges associated within each function; and
- With three levels of Project Management to choose from, you can be sure Core can deliver the level of management your project requires.

Our packages

- Project Coordination

Project Coordination provides a basic level of governance designed for short term engagements, to ensure clear communications and successful management of project risk. Our coordination approach provides the minimum set of controls necessary to achieve a successful implementation across the project.

- Project Management

Our dedicated Project Manager will collaboratively lead the planning and production of the project deliverables, whilst reporting regularly to key stakeholders on the project health, scope, schedule and the status of key risks, issues, dependencies and decisions.

- Custom Project Management

Designed to support programs of work, and projects that are large, complex, high risk, contain multiple streams, or are conducted in regulated industries. Custom Project Management extends our standard project management offering with additional controls to manage risks and a more robust communications framework.

Technical Information

The Web Hosting service is normally hosted upon Microsoft's Azure Infrastructure as a Service platform, based in Microsoft's Azure datacentres in the UK. It makes use of the "Virtual Machine" and "Networking" services of the platform.

- ISO/IEC 27001:2005
- SSAE 16/ISAE 3402 (Service Organization Control [SOC] 1, SOC 2, SOC 3)
- FISMA
- PCI data security standard

All administration is carried out with separate, user identifiable accounts to ensure clarity of auditing and access is provided using "Least Privilege" principles.

Availability

Below are further details regarding the major components within the solution. The following link summarises these and other details; <https://azure.microsoft.com/en-us/support/legal/sla/summary/>

- For all Virtual Machines that have two or more instances deployed in the same Availability Set, the solution will have external connectivity at least 99.95% of the time.
- For Cloud Services, when two or more role instances (Virtual Machines) are deployed in the same domains, the Internet facing roles will have external connectivity at least 99.95% of the time.
- Each VPN Gateway is guaranteed to have 99.9% availability
- Azure CDN is deployed to provide cached versions of the website in a global network of endpoints in multiple geographic regions and availability zones, that further increase the service availability metric.
- DNS queries will receive a valid response from at least one of our Azure Traffic Manager name server clusters at least 99.99% of the time.

From a Recovery Time Objective (RTO) and Recovery Point Objective (RPO) we look at the different layers of the solution. For the current deployment of the solution, the following metrics apply;

- Recovery Point Objective is 60 minutes
- Return to Operations time is estimated at 10 minutes for a worst case scenario. Content Delivery Network will provide a wide range of web functions for users even if the web hosting platform is offline.
- The overall availability of the platform is stated as the time taken for the platform to be visible back to the internet in general. Individual computers, dependent on their physical location and network setup may not achieve the stated RTO and Core do not take this as a failure of the platform as we do not control the internet and services between Azure and the client.
- RPO and RTO can be enhanced once the software components of the website have been upgraded to newer versions.

Managed Services

Core Technology Systems will provide the client with access to a Service Desk solution and 2nd and 3rd line support and escalations.

The Service Desk is structured and managed based upon the ITIL framework. The key tasks of ownership, recording, monitoring, tracking and communication are managed using our service desk management system.

Core will triage the ticket and assess whether the issue is caused by the hosted infrastructure, which Core will remediate.

Once the issue is resolved, Core will respond to the ticket originator with an update on the cause of the issue, action taken and resolved status.

Service Levels

Service Level Description	SLA	Further Details
Connectivity Hub **	99.95%	For Connectivity Hub availability of less than 99.95% in any Service Month. Core will provide a credit equal to the Daily Charges for one average Service Day. The term "average Service Day" in this Service Level Agreement means the total of all Daily Charges in the Service Month that the applicable SLA standard was not met, divided by 30.
Response and Resolution Timeframe	Severity 1 Incident Response Time: 1 hour Resolution Time: 4 hours	6% of the Daily Charges for the Service Month in which the incident occurred if Company does not respond to and resolve 100% of the Severity 1 Incidents within the Resolution time within a Service Month
Response and Resolution Timeframe	Severity 2 Incident Response Time: 4 Hours Resolution Time: 8 hours	4% of the Daily Charges for the Service Month in which the incident occurred if Company does not respond to and resolve 100% of the Severity 2 Incidents within the Resolution time within a Service Month
Response and Resolution Timeframe	Severity 3 Incident Response Time: 8 Hours Resolution Time: 1 week	2% of the Daily Charges for the Service Month in which the incident occurred if Company does not respond to and resolve 100% of the Severity 3 Incidents within the Resolution time within a Service Month

Service Desk Core Hours

Users can log incidents and service requests during the Service Desk Operational hours;

Standard Operational Days - Monday – Friday 9.00am – 5.30pm (excluding bank holidays)

Out of hours (requires additional fees) - Outside of Monday – Friday 9.00am – 5.30pm (including UK Public Holidays)

Out of Hours

For out of Hours calls, the following Service Levels apply;

Service Level Description SLA

Response and Resolution Timeframe Severity 1 ONLY.

Incident response Time: 60 Mins

Resolution Time: 360 Mins*

*please note that this is a target SLA, resolution of P1 incidents may have dependencies on the customer and their incumbent suppliers which are outside of the scope of Core's influence.

Second & Third Line Support

Provided by Core Technology Systems, the role of the second / third line analysts is to assess the data provided by the client first line, including any attempts to resolve the ticket, with a view to providing more technical expertise to resolve the call.

The second / third line analyst will engage directly with the affected users or systems using standard remote tools where appropriate to resolve more complex issues relating to the incident. In the event that the issue relates to the underlying infrastructure of the solution, Core will investigate, remediate and report back to the requestor.

Closure Responsibilities

Before closing any incidents, the Core Service Desk will endeavour to contact the user or the customers' current IT services providers service desk to gain a verbal sign-off that the incident has been resolved to the user's satisfaction.

Once the client user has confirmed to Core Technology Systems that the call is resolved, the call will be closed via the Core service desk.

The originator of the ticket will receive an automatic closure e-mail containing details of the call resolution. Core will also contact the customers' current IT services providers service desk to advise on call closure with details for their closure criteria.

Core's standard closure rules will apply, which require completion of resolution details and other pertinent information.

Core also operates a process where if no response is received from the user after 3 attempts over a period of 3 different days (dependent on SLA), then the ticket will be deemed no longer an issue, and will be closed.

Major Incident Management

Core Technology Systems will follow the standard Major Incident Management (MIM) procedure outlined by the customer and following the agreed SLA's outlined above.

Security Incident Management

Core will treat security incidents in the same way as major incidents are handled. Due to the nature of security incidents there may be occasions where through monitoring the solution a breach or incident needs to be raised to the relevant customer MIM Manager and for Core to receive guidance on how the customer wishes the incident to be handled.

Core will raise the issue with the relevant personnel along with resolution options for the customer.

Problem Management

A problem can be identified from a variety of sources, including:

- Suspicion or detection of an unknown cause of one or more incidents.
- Following a major incident to ensure a Major Incident does not re-occur and Major Incident actions are tracked
- Recurring incidents
- Automated detection of an issue through monitoring and management of infrastructure
- Notification from a vendor that a problem exists. E.g. an update from Microsoft which is known to have caused compatibility issues.
- Analysis of incident records as part of Proactive Problem Management.

In any circumstance a problem record will be raised.

Once a problem has been identified then an assessment of the problem will be undertaken, and the problem will be allocated to the most relevant technical resource(s). These resources will then work to resolve the problem before it becomes an issue.

Once any change or fix has been implemented and confirmation has been received that this has been successful, the Problem record can be closed.

The engineer responsible for the problem will ensure that all relevant records are updated (KMS, Solution record), once this is completed the record can be closed. A Problem report will be generated within 5 working days of a fix being implemented. As the overall platform isn't exclusive to Core and relies on various 3rd parties, Core can only provide a target resolution on a best endeavours basis.

Service Management

Monthly review meetings will be arranged between Core Technology Systems and the client in order to review the performance of the service being delivered, and to discuss any issues that arise.

Based on the feedback from these discussions, changes may be made to any aspects of the service in order to improve the service or its delivery.

If any of these changes result in changes to the system being supported, then the change control processes shall be followed.

Should any of these changes result in potential changes to the contract then these elements shall be discussed further in order to determine the best outcome for both parties.

Monthly service delivery reports shall be produced from with the Support and monitoring systems. The report will cover all open tickets and their current statuses, up time and SLA compliance of the system, any additional reports from the web hosting platform system as requested by the client.

Pricing

Due to the sheer number of variables, it is impossible to provide detailed pricing for every potential deployment of Connectivity Hub.

Connectivity Hub solutions typically range from **£10,000 to £100,000 per month**, depending on the following factors;

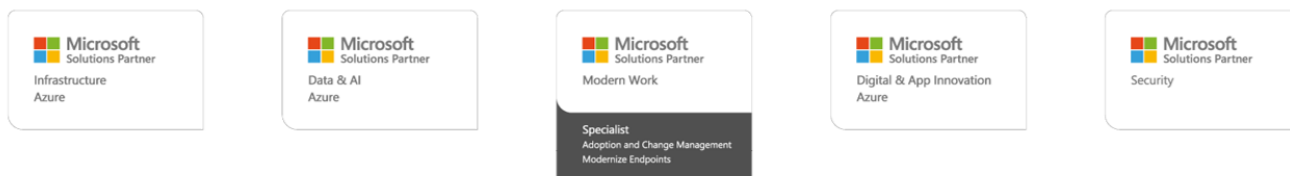
- Number of users
- Number of branch offices
- Connection medium from branch offices to Connectivity Hub
- Connections from Connectivity Hub to Cloud Environments
- Connections from connectivity Hub to 3rd parties
- Number of VPN connections required
- Bandwidth requirement for all connections

Core will engage with a customer on a pre-sales basis, with no obligation to purchase, to assess your requirements and provide initial estimates of the monthly costs of delivering this Connectivity as a Service solution.

About Core

We have a long and distinguished record of supporting organisations with cloud first strategies, implementing successful, efficient, and safe migrations to the Cloud, driving value, productivity and security.

As a Microsoft Solutions Partner with more than three decades of experience delivering Microsoft solutions, we understand how to unleash potential and unlock value for our customers who have invested in Microsoft technology. We help improve the transition from E3 to E5 licensing, enabling enhanced security and mobility capabilities for our customers, without the need for third-party solutions.



Your organisation deserves reliable, trustworthy, and responsive expert IT support so you can focus on what you do best. With our 35-year history, your business is in capable and experienced hands. In 2001, Core deployed the first installation of SharePoint in the UK and have continued to deliver and support Microsoft products and solutions, leading businesses to superior levels of productivity, security, and growth. From the early operating systems and intranet solutions to the advanced productivity and security tools that organisations adopt to seek efficiencies, Microsoft solutions now touch tens of millions of lives daily; and Core helps to optimise solutions for your desired outcomes.

Core is a Microsoft Advanced Partner and has been delivering Microsoft solutions for nearly three decades; transforming, enabling, and securing our customers with the evolution of Microsoft business technologies across the UK. Our focused expertise and experience, along with our long-standing relationship with Microsoft, means that when our customers invest in world-class transformation products, they are delivered by our team of leading experts, and managed personally, with competence.



Customers

We put our customers first, taking responsibility for our actions.



One Core

We recruit, develop, and retain the best talent in a supportive environment to best serve our customers.



Responsiveness

We are flexible, approachable, and responsive to our customers' needs.



Expertise

We are professional and constantly strive to achieve excellence for our customers, peers, and partners.

Core works in a spirit of partnership. We find that this helps us achieve the best outcomes for our customers, which supports our target of building long term, positive and trusting relationships with our customers. This includes offering as much value as possible and finding new way to maximise on your investment. We are proud to be:

- Winner of CRN MSP of the Year 2023. 2023 and 2024 Best Company to Work For (sub £100m) – CRN
- Cyber Essentials Plus and ISO 27001 Certified.



WINNER
CSP of the Year

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