

DATA STRATEGY & ARCHITECTURE DESIGN

Service Definition
G-Cloud 15

REPLY

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SERVICE DESCRIPTION

Reply Data Strategy & Architecture Design service designed for G-Cloud 15 helps you transform your data capabilities from fragmented, tactical responses into cohesive, strategically aligned programmes that deliver measurable value. We work alongside your leadership and technical teams to assess where you are today, define where you need to be, and create a practical roadmap to get there. Unlike vendor-led approaches that push specific products, we bring independent, technology-agnostic expertise that prioritises your organisation's unique needs, constraints, and objectives. Through collaborative workshops, rigorous analysis, and proven architectural patterns, we translate complex technical possibilities into actionable strategies that secure funding, build consensus, and set your organisation up for sustainable success in analytics, AI/ML, and operational intelligence.

FEATURES

The features of the Data Strategy & Architecture Design service offering by Glue Reply for G-Cloud 15 are designed to address the diverse needs of organisations seeking to optimise their data management processes and infrastructure. Here are the key features of the offering:

- **Current state assessment evaluating data maturity, technical debt, capability gaps, pain points:** We conduct comprehensive reviews of your existing data landscape, documenting systems, processes, skills, and pain points to establish a clear baseline understanding. This assessment identifies what's working, what's holding you back, and where technical debt is constraining your ability to deliver value.
- **Stakeholder workshops discovering priorities, use cases, constraints across departments building organisational alignment:** We facilitate structured sessions with stakeholders across your organisation to understand competing priorities, uncover high-value use cases, and surface constraints that might otherwise derail delivery. These workshops build shared understanding and ensure your strategy reflects real needs, not just technical possibilities.
- **Target architecture design covering ingestion, storage, transformation, governance, consumption and AI/ML capability layers:** We design comprehensive target architectures that address the full data lifecycle from source systems through to consumption in dashboards, reports, and ML models. Our designs balance technical best practice with practical delivery considerations, providing clear blueprints your teams can build to.
- **Technology selection guidance impartially and objectively comparing Snowflake, BigQuery, Databricks, Synapse, Fabric, EDB Postgres, open-source:** We evaluate technology options against your specific requirements, budget, and constraints without vendor bias or commercial relationships influencing our recommendations. Our comparative analyses consider total cost of ownership, capabilities, skills availability, and strategic fit to guide informed decision-making.
- **Architecture patterns including data lakehouse, medallion, data mesh, hub-and-spoke matching organisational structure:** We recommend proven architectural patterns that align to your organisational structure, team maturity, and use case requirements rather than imposing one-size-fits-all approaches. Whether you need centralised efficiency, federated autonomy, or hybrid models, we match patterns to your context.
- **Roadmap development with phased initiatives, dependencies, effort estimates, quick wins and value realisation timelines:** We create realistic, sequenced delivery roadmaps that balance



quick wins with foundational investments, making dependencies explicit and efforts transparent. Our roadmaps show how capabilities build over time, when value will be realised, and how initiatives interrelate.

- **Business case creation quantifying costs, benefits, risks, ROI, TCO for investment approval and funding:** We develop compelling business cases that translate technical investments into business outcomes, quantifying benefits in terms leadership understands and cares about. Our business cases address costs honestly, acknowledge risks, and demonstrate return on investment to secure funding and executive commitment.
- **Operating model design defining team structures, roles, responsibilities, processes and RACI for sustainable operations:** We design organisational structures and ways of working that enable your data capability to function effectively once the technology is built. This includes defining roles from data engineers to stewards, clarifying decision-making authority, and establishing processes for ongoing operations.
- **Governance framework establishing policies, standards, data classification, retention, access controls and quality expectations:** We create governance frameworks that balance control with enablement, establishing policies that protect sensitive data and ensure compliance without becoming bureaucratic obstacles. Our frameworks cover classification schemes, retention rules, access patterns, and quality thresholds tailored to public sector requirements.
- **Capability assessment identifying skills gaps, training needs, hiring requirements, knowledge transfer strategies for success** We evaluate your team's current capabilities against what's needed to deliver and operate your target architecture, identifying specific skills gaps and recommending targeted training, hiring, or augmentation strategies. This ensures you have the people capability to sustain what we help you build.

These features work together to create a comprehensive strategy that addresses technical, organisational, and capability dimensions of data transformation, ensuring nothing critical is overlooked.

BENEFITS

The value of our strategic approach extends far beyond technical documentation, it transforms how your organisation thinks about, invests in, and extracts value from data.

- **Secure executive approval with business cases demonstrating tangible ROI, value and outcomes:** Our business cases speak the language of leadership, translating technical investments into measurable business value that secures funding and ongoing commitment. We help you demonstrate return on investment in terms that resonate with finance teams and elected officials.
- **Avoid costly mistakes through independent, vendor-agnostic advice free from commercial bias influencing recommendations:** Our recommendations are driven solely by your needs and best technical fit, not vendor relationships, margins, or implementation preferences. This independence saves you from expensive wrong turns and technology lock-in that constrains future choices.
- **Align technology investments to actual business priorities ensuring relevance, adoption and measurable impact delivered:** By starting with use cases and organisational priorities rather than technology capabilities, we ensure investments directly support outcomes that matter



to your organisation. This alignment drives adoption because solutions address real problems people care about solving.

- **Clear direction ending fragmented initiatives, ad-hoc tool purchases, duplicated efforts and wasting of resources:** Our strategies provide unified direction that stops departments buying overlapping tools, teams duplicating work, and initiatives pulling in conflicting directions. This coordination eliminates waste and multiplies the impact of your collective data investments.
- **Build organisational consensus through inclusive workshops giving stakeholders voice and ownership in direction chosen:** By involving stakeholders across your organisation in shaping the strategy, we build buy-in and shared ownership that smooths implementation and reduces resistance to change. People support what they help create.
- **Enable self-service analytics, AI/ML and operational intelligence with architecture supporting diverse consumption patterns** Our target architectures are designed to support the full spectrum of data consumption from self-service dashboards to real-time operational monitoring to AI/ML model training. This versatility maximises the value you extract from data investments across different use cases.
- **Address skills gaps proactively through training plans and recruitment strategy:** By identifying capability gaps early in strategy development, we give you time to develop internal skills, hire strategically, or plan for augmentation before these gaps become delivery blockers. This proactive approach prevents post-implementation operational failures.
- **Future-proof decisions considering scalability, emerging technologies and industry direction ensuring 5-10 year viability:** We design for the long term, ensuring architectural choices can accommodate growth in data volumes, users, and use cases while remaining adaptable to emerging technologies like generative AI. This futureproofing protects your investment and avoids premature obsolescence.
- **Break down departmental silos enabling collaboration across functions, shared understanding and enterprise data strategy alignment:** Our strategies explicitly address organisational boundaries, creating shared data products, common definitions, and collaborative processes that break down silos. This cross-functional alignment enables insights and efficiencies impossible within departmental walls.
- **Accelerate delivery with proven patterns and case study-based architectures, reducing unnecessary work and trials:** Rather than experimenting from scratch, you benefit from patterns we've proven across multiple public sector organisations, avoiding false starts and reducing time to value. Our experience becomes your accelerator, shortening your path from strategy to delivery.

Together, these benefits transform data strategy from a theoretical exercise into a practical catalyst for organisational change, ensuring your investment delivers lasting value.



ONBOARDING

We will hit the ground running from day one. Our structured onboarding process eliminates the confusion and slow starts that plague consulting engagements, ensuring we're delivering value within weeks, not months.

What We Do:

- **Intensive Kickoff Workshop:** Bring together your executive sponsor, technical leads, and key stakeholders to establish crystal-clear objectives, success metrics, and non-negotiable delivery milestones with complete alignment across all parties.
- **Immediate Communication Infrastructure:** Establish dedicated channels (Slack/Teams), weekly governance meetings with executive visibility, and escalation paths ensuring blockers get resolved in hours, not weeks.
- **Rapid Discovery:** Interview stakeholders, review existing systems, identify data sources, document constraints, and surface risks that could derail delivery before they become problems.
- **Concrete Delivery Plan:** Deliver a sequenced plan showing exactly what gets built when, what resources are required, what decisions need making, and what risks could impact timelines. No theoretical documents, just actionable roadmaps.
- **Quick Wins Identification:** Identify and deliver tangible outputs early that demonstrate immediate value and build organisational confidence in our approach and your investment.
- **Access Secured:** Obtain all necessary system access, credentials, environments, and documentation during the first week, because access delays are the single biggest cause of timeline delays.

Our onboarding doesn't end until we've delivered our first tangible output, proving our team is productive and your investment is already generating returns. You'll know within the first month whether we're the right partner. We move fast, communicate clearly, and deliver evidence of progress.



OFFBOARDING

We do not always believe in traditional "handover" periods where knowledge gets dumped on your team at the end. Instead, we work with you throughout the engagement, training your staff while the work is ongoing and creating experts along the way. Our approach ensures your team is not inheriting unfamiliar solutions but has been building and operating them alongside us from the start. However, if your plan is to have us "do it for you", we will generate documentation on the way, as part of any decision we make.

What We Do:

- **Continuous Knowledge Building (Throughout Engagement):** Your team works directly with our engineers from week one: pair programming, collaborative design, joint troubleshooting. So they understand not just what was built but why, developing expertise incrementally rather than through rushed final handover sessions.
- **Structured Transition Plan:** Formalise the knowledge transfer that's been happening continuously, identifying any remaining gaps in credentials, documentation, or procedures requiring explicit handover with clear ownership assignments.
- **Validated Competency Demonstrations:** Ensure your team independently executes key operational tasks (e.g. deploying changes, responding to incidents, onboarding new data sources, etc.) under our observation and coaching, proving they are genuinely ready for independent operations.
- **Production-Ready Documentation:** Deliver architectural decision records explaining design choices, operational runbooks covering daily operations, incident response procedures with real examples, and video walkthroughs of complex tasks for ongoing reference and future team onboarding.
- **Active Hypercare Period:** Proactively monitor for issues, conduct weekly check-ins reviewing operational metrics, and provide rapid response to problems during the critical transition to fully independent operations.
- **90-Day Post-Delivery Review:** Schedule a structured review assessing what is working, what needs adjustment, and what additional support might prevent future issues, ensuring long-term sustainability and addressing any emerging challenges.

Your success operating our deliverables determines whether we get repeat business and referrals. We have zero interest in building solutions that collapse after we leave. By training your staff throughout delivery rather than at the end, we ensure you're genuinely independent and confident, with deep expertise to maintain and evolve what we've built for years to come.

Access to Data

Following formal offboarding, all data, code, documentation, and intellectual property developed during the engagement transfers entirely to your ownership with appropriate licensing. We retain no copies of your production data, credentials, or proprietary information beyond what's legally required for contract compliance and professional indemnity purposes. Any sample data or anonymised examples used in training materials are sanitised to remove sensitive information. If you require our support post-engagement through separate maintenance contracts or ad-hoc consulting, we will request fresh access grants rather than assuming continued access rights. Your data sovereignty and security remain paramount. Our engagement ends cleanly with your full control over all assets and access.



SECURITY

Personnel Security

As a Specialist Cloud Service, the capability being offered is not limited to specific Impact levels (as it is not infrastructure, software or a platform) and can be used, subject to personal Security Clearance levels. Reply consultants are mostly Security Cleared (SC), some have higher-level Developed Vetting (DV) clearances. We also have a pool of NPPV3 Consultants for Policing work. The majority of our work for both public and private sector clients is at IL2 but we work in the Official, Secret and Top-Secret domains. Our hard and soft information security processes have been designed and approved by independent CESG CLAS accredited consultants.

Information Security

We are ISO27001, Cyber Essentials certified and our Quality Assurance processes are based upon and compliant with our ISO 9001 accreditation. Our Information Security processes are directly guided by our ISO27001 accreditation. We shall adhere to local information and other security policies and will apply local Security Operating Procedures (SyOPs) as may exist. If such do not exist we shall apply our own SyOPs.

Physical Security

The Main Reply Office (London, UK) is a Police Accredited Secure Facility (PASF) with access controls for each point of entry. All Laptops/Phones must be stored securely overnight. When working on a client-site our consultants adhere to client security policies.



TRAINING & KNOWLEDGE TRANSFER

We transfer knowledge continuously throughout delivery because cramming everything into final handover sessions doesn't work and we refuse to set you up for failure. From week one, your team members work directly alongside our engineers (e.g. pair programming on pipeline code, collaborating on dashboard designs, participating in architecture decisions) so they understand not just what was built but why specific approaches were chosen and how to extend them. We run weekly "lunch and learn" sessions covering specific technical topics, tools, and patterns we're using, building your team's capability incrementally rather than overwhelming them at the end. Every two weeks, we conduct show-and-tell sessions where we demonstrate progress and your team asks questions, tries features, and provides feedback. We create role-specific training:

- Technical deep dives for your data engineers covering orchestration platforms, transformation logic, and infrastructure-as-code
- Operational training for support teams covering monitoring dashboards, alert response, and troubleshooting procedures
- User training for business analysts covering BI tools, report building, and data interpretation
- Executive briefings for leadership covering governance frameworks, strategic capabilities, and ROI realisation

All training includes hands-on exercises using your actual data and real use cases, not generic examples that do not translate to your context. We provide comprehensive documentation: architecture diagrams showing system components and interactions, code repositories with detailed README files and inline comments, video recordings of training sessions and complex procedures, searchable knowledge base answering common questions. Most critically, we validate knowledge transfer has worked. Your team must successfully complete practical assessments demonstrating they can maintain, troubleshoot, and extend solutions before we consider training complete. We measure success by your team's independence, not hours of training delivered.



ORDERING AND INVOICING PROCESS

To begin the process, please contact glue.frameworks@reply.com with details of your organisation, role and high-level requirements.

Our Framework Manager will connect you to our experts and from here we will organise an introductory discussion to go into more detail and shape a proposed engagement that suits your needs.

We invoice for both fixed price and time and materials engagements one month in arrears. For fixed price engagements, this takes place upon completion of the deliverable(s), or in stages, if the size of the engagement is greater than £40,000 excluding VAT.

Payment terms are 30 days net of receipt of invoice.



CUSTOMER RESPONSIBILITIES

We deliver exceptional results, but we cannot succeed alone. While we bring expertise, tools, and delivery capability, certain contributions from your organisation are essential to ensure we are building solutions that meet your needs and can be sustained after our engagement. However, we recognise that organisations often engage us precisely because some of these capabilities are missing and we will be there filling those gaps.

What we need from you:

- **Access and Environment Provisioning:** We need access to relevant systems, data sources, and environments to understand your landscape and build appropriate solutions. We understand access can take time due to security procedures and approvals. We will work with you to navigate these processes and can begin with limited access while fuller permissions are secured. If production-like environments don't exist, we can help you establish them as part of our engagement.
- **Stakeholder Identification and Availability:** Help us identify the right people to speak with: subject matter experts who understand your data, processes, and business needs. We know everyone is busy, so we will be flexible with scheduling and efficient with their time. If key knowledge exists only in people's heads rather than documentation, that's fine. We will capture and document it as part of our work.
- **Decision-Making and Governance:** We need someone with authority to make decisions on direction, scope, and trade-offs when choices arise. This doesn't require daily involvement. Typically, weekly or fortnightly governance meetings are sufficient. If decision-making processes are unclear or complex, we can help you establish appropriate governance structures as part of the engagement. Also, if authority figures are missing (C-levels, heads of department, technical leads) we can provide experienced leadership to fill those gaps in order to drive decision-making and maintain momentum until permanent appointments are made or internal capability is established.
- **Representative Data and Use Cases:** Access to realistic data and actual business scenarios helps us build solutions that work for your real-world needs, not theoretical examples. We understand data may be messy, incomplete, or sensitive. We will work within those constraints, help you improve quality where needed, and ensure appropriate security controls. If you are unsure what data to provide, we'll guide you through that discovery.
- **Engagement in Knowledge Transfer:** Your team's participation in training and knowledge building activities is crucial for sustainability after we leave. We understand competing priorities and will design training that's practical, relevant, and respectful of time constraints. If you lack technical staff to receive handover, we can discuss options including extended support arrangements, recruiting assistance, or phased capability building.
- **Honest Conversation About Constraints:** Tell us early about limitations, challenges, or concerns: technical constraints, budget pressures, political sensitivities, data quality issues everyone knows about. Early honesty allows us to plan appropriately and propose realistic solutions. Late surprises create problems, but we would rather know about difficulties upfront than discover them mid-delivery.

We're Here to Help: We recognise that many organisations engage consultants precisely because they lack some of these capabilities internally. Limited technical expertise, no spare capacity for project work,



unclear governance, poor documentation. That is completely normal and exactly why we exist. Where you have gaps, we will work with you to fill them, whether that's establishing governance frameworks, creating documentation that does not exist, building technical capability in your team, or providing extended support while you recruit permanent staff. Our goal is your success, and we will adapt our approach to your reality rather than expecting you to meet some idealised client profile. The key is open communication about what you can provide, what you need help with, and what constraints we are working within. Together, we will figure out how to make it work.



ABOUT REPLY

Reply is a company that specialises in Consulting, Systems Integration and Digital Services with a focus on the conception, design and implementation of solutions based on the new communication channels and digital media.

Reply partners with key industrial groups in defining and developing business models made possible by the new technological and communication paradigms such as Artificial Intelligence, Big Data, Cloud Computing, Digital Communication, the Internet of Things and Mobile and Social Networking. In so doing, it aims to optimise and integrate processes, applications and devices.

Reply's offer is aimed at fostering the success of its customers through the introduction of innovation along the whole economic digital chain. Given its knowledge of specific solutions and due to a consolidated experience, Reply addresses the main core issues of the various industrial sectors.

Through its network of specialist companies, Reply supports some of Europe's leading industrial groups in Telco & Media, Industry & Services, Banks & Insurance, and Public Administration to define and develop business models, suited to the new paradigms of Artificial Intelligence, Big Data, Cloud Computing, Digital Media and the Internet of Things.

We make innovation happen.

We started with a small team and a purpose: to help the digital revolution happen. Today, we are a team of more than 14,600 people in 16 different countries but we still have the same DNA, made up of agile, vertical task forces and an inner passion for innovation.

We are a decentralised network of specialised companies.

Among Replyers, you will find passionate geeks, visionary strategists, and creative minds, each with sharp skills in a specific business, who cooperate together and never stop learning from each other.

Make forward, act sustainably.

We know a sustainable future is possible and technology can be a strong asset to reach it. As leaders in digital transformation, we push for change and operate in full accordance with the highest ethical standards and with respect for the rights of future generations