

CASE STUDY

eValue innovates rapidly with The Bunker's platform as a service

eValue communicates investment risk through state-of-the-art financial planning software. Powered by its stochastic economic scenario generator (ESG) forecasting model, the company's solutions are used by some 250,000 consumers, 15,000 investors

and financial advisors, and 80% of the UK's Financial Services companies. As a long-term client of The Bunker, it recently upgraded to Platform as a Service (PaaS) to speed its application development and time to market.

THE CHALLENGE

Originally established as a line of business within a professional services firm, eValue first engaged The Bunker when its parent company outsourced its IT infrastructure. With clients such as financial institutions mandating stringent due diligence, eValue needed a specialist-outsourcing partner able to assure the highest levels of security, availability and compliance.

The Bunker built a bespoke Platform as a Service (PaaS) environment for eValue that included a shared web application layer, and full disaster recovery (DR) and backup across two sites, together with dedicated application and database servers to support corporate clients – all monitored 24x7x365 from The Bunker's Security Operations Centre (SOC).

Now an independent company, eValue is experiencing greater demand for its products. Recent changes in the UK pensions market mean consumers have the option to not only purchase an annuity but also to drawdown a certain amount each year, or take the whole amount as a lump sum. eValue needs to innovate with new products catering for this '3 in 1' choice, while increasing its capacity to deliver a mixture of product and bespoke solutions in a cost-effective way.

"WE WERE LOOKING FOR A COMPANY THAT COULD HOST OUR APPLICATION, BUT EQUALLY WOULD HAVE THE SKILLS NECESSARY TO KNOW HOW TO DEAL WITH DATA, DISASTER RECOVERY AND FAILOVER. WE'D BUILT A FANTASTIC DR SITE WITH THE BUNKER THAT MIRRORED OUR PRODUCTION ENVIRONMENT. HOWEVER, WE WANTED TO MAKE BETTER USE OF BOTH SETS OF HOSTING BY USING VIRTUAL MACHINES TO CREATE A 'LIVE LIVE' ENVIRONMENT THAT'S EASY TO MANAGE, MAKES DEPLOYMENTS FASTER AND GETS MAXIMUM USE OF OUR SERVERS."

- Richard Barker
Operations Director, eValue



OUR HIGHLY SECURE AND HIGH AVAILABILITY SOLUTION

PRODUCTS & SERVICES

- Open Source PaaS environment with backup, Disaster Recovery (DR), and automatic failover between sites
- Flexible and secure resource with ability to switch seamlessly from test and development to production
- Data centre facilities accredited to ISO 27001 and housed in ex-military bunkers

eValue has migrated to The Bunker's PaaS to provide it with a faster and more cost-effective model for application development and delivery. The solution is built on The Bunker's Open Source private cloud platform, powered by OpenNebula. The infrastructure is housed in The Bunker's fully owned UK data centres with partitioned redundant power delivering 100% uptime.

The Bunker maintains and supports eValue's applications by adding new infrastructure as needed, monitoring systems to assure maximum performance, installing security patches and ensuring specialists are always available to assist the development team. In addition, there are weekly and monthly sessions to explore opportunities to enhance and maximise on the company's investment in PaaS.

Crucially, The Bunker's roots in Open Source, Information Security and ISO 27001 accredited, ex-military facilities provide eValue's customers with the assurance they need concerning the confidentiality, availability and integrity of their applications and data.

"A LOT OF OUR CLIENTS ARE MAJOR FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS AND TO SATISFY THEM, YOU HAVE TO BE ON THE BALL WITH SECURITY AND HOSTING. DATA LOSS IS NOT AN OPTION. DURING THE DUE DILIGENCE PROCESS WE WILL BE ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT HOW OUR HOST ENVIRONMENT WORKS. WITH ISO27001, ALL THOSE QUESTIONS DISAPPEAR. IT'S ALSO FANTASTIC TO BE ABLE TO SAY OUR DATA CENTRES ARE EX-MILITARY FACILITIES, AS THIS KNOCKS ANY QUESTIONS ABOUT PHYSICAL SECURITY ON THE HEAD.

THE OTHER IMPORTANT FACTOR IS THE STRENGTH OF THE RELATIONSHIP. WORKING WITH THE BUNKER IS LIKE HAVING A THIRD TEAM THAT'S ALWAYS AVAILABLE. WE'RE ABLE TO RELY ON THE NECESSARY EXPERTISE ON BOTH SIDES AND HAVE EXCELLENT SHARED TECHNICAL SESSIONS DURING WHICH WE COME UP WITH GREAT SOLUTIONS."

- Richard Barker
Operations Director, eValue

RESULTS & BENEFITS DELIVERED

- Seamless portability of applications between test & development and production ensures rapid time to market for eValue's products and bespoke solutions
- Optimised use of application hosting and DR environments that enables Agile code development with the flexibility, scalability and cost efficiency of utility computing
- PaaS environment is secure and fully compliant, with data sovereignty assured

Operating across two sites with clustered databases and full orchestration capability, The Bunker's PaaS environment enables eValue to rapidly spin up new versions and instances of its applications, drop its code into production and quickly deliver new services and functionality to customers.

Meanwhile, the fact it is a PaaS solution means the technical team at eValue can focus solely on developing, running and managing its applications without the associated complexities of maintaining the underlying infrastructure. It has adopted an aggressive 8-week release window that allows it to move new code seamlessly from test and development into production, so that clients and end users benefit from continuous improvements to the user interface (UI).

Furthermore, eValue is able to deliver special projects for clients that require a particular type of configuration or solution component – whether it's a specific type of database server or an environment in which the application and hosting are run separately to meet compliance mandates. PaaS enables eValue to offer this level of flexibility to its end customers, while ensuring a future-ready, secure, compliant and highly scalable platform for business growth in an ever-evolving pensions market.

THE BUNKER PROTOCOL™

The Bunker Protocol™ is an all-encompassing methodology that secures against risk and ensures the most secure IT delivery in the UK.

The Bunker Protocol™ incorporates Physical, Human and Digital security capability and processes and wraps them with a governance and standards layer that ensures that client data and clients systems are continually secure against threats to confidentiality, integrity and availability.

THEIR VERDICT

“SECURITY, MINIMAL DOWNTIME AND RELIABILITY ARE THE KEY CAPABILITIES THAT THE BUNKER BRINGS AND THESE PROVIDE A SOLUTION THAT WORKS FOR CLIENTS, THE BUNKER AND US. OUR CLIENTS RUN LOTS OF PENETRATION TESTS, WHICH WE ENCOURAGE, AND WE ALWAYS PASS WITH FLYING COLOURS. WE'VE ALSO BEEN ABLE TO MOVE FROM A PRODUCTION SITE AND DR SITE TO A 'LIVE LIVE' MODEL THAT COINCIDED WITH OUR GROWTH AND THE USE OF OUR SYSTEMS. WE CAN WORK ON AN AGILE BASIS TO DEVELOP AND MOVE SOLUTIONS INTO PRODUCTION, WHILE OUR CLIENTS STILL GET FANTASTIC FAILOVER, IT'S SO GOOD THAT WE'RE REALLY EXCITED ABOUT IT.”

- Richard Barker,
Operations Director, eValue

THIS IS ULTRA SECURE

- Physical** Military Grade data centres
- Human** All employees are fully background checked and our culture starts and ends with security
- Digital** We build and integrate systems in-house, Ultra Secure, from the source code up