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Blueprint Gaming and Viadex: Customer Case Study

Viadex brings another dimension to IT, for Blueprint Gaming; adding in-depth market knowledge and global capabilities.

blueprint GAMING™

"Viadex expands our thinking. That's not an easy ask, since our team are all dedicated IT professionals with their fingers firmly on the pulse of innovation, new technologies, and more efficient ways of doing things.

Despite that, Viadex are always able to take us one step further. Their insight and depth of knowledge across all spheres of technology are impressive. They keep us in the best shape possible across our entire estate".

– Adam Shepherd, Head of Infrastructure, Blueprint Gaming

Meet Blueprint Gaming

Blueprint Gaming is a leading UK-based game studio that has been pioneering fresh ideas, and delighting millions of users in the online gaming industry, for over 10 years. In addition to its core expertise in creating exciting slot games for the global online and mobile markets, the company also makes its games available through more than 100,000 land-based gaming terminals across the UK, Germany and Italy.

As well as its original content – established firm favourites for games players around the world – Blueprint Gaming have developed successful slots based on a broad range of third-party brands.

The company's ever-growing portfolio of successful slot titles is unrivalled in the range of game styles on offer. They range from interactive feature-rich bonus games and innovative free spins, to easy play core player-focused games.

High-energy creativity vibrates everywhere in Blueprint Gaming's premises. Given that this is core to what the organisation does, a huge weight of responsibility sits on the IT infrastructure. It also sits on the shoulders of those charged with making sure it performs continuously, with the absolute minimum downtime, deploying the acknowledged best-in-class solution for every aspect of technical operations.

Backing up an already brilliant team:
It's what you know, who you know, and where you go

The IT team at Blueprint Gaming have a well-informed view, at any stage, of where they want to go next in terms of technology solutions, and what they need to get them there. "We tend to be prescriptive about what we want", says Adam Shepherd, Head of Infrastructure at Blueprint Gaming.

"We design our own solutions and create a shopping list of what we need. Viadex add another dimension; taking our specifications and then showing how we can achieve what we want, faster, better and with cutting edge solutions we sometimes weren't even aware were on the market.

We're a global organisation but we just don't have the level of in-depth, technical, panoramic vision, combined with on the ground expertise in certain territories, that Viadex never have any problem in supplying".

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The challenge: Global reach for technical, operational, and commercial issues

Adam has been with Blueprint Gaming since 2008. He's a seasoned gaming IT professional, well accustomed to specifying datacentre infrastructure, sourcing the equipment and software, and driving through to the implementation phases of any particular project.

As the pace of company growth accelerates, however, it often makes sense to assign relatively straightforward projects to third-party specialists. Adam made the decision to do just that. He then had to find a capable partner to provide the service.

"We heard about the reputation Viadex had in the gaming industry. It was not just a close fit for us in terms of their type of client; it was also impressive to hear how many clients they had that had broadly similar needs to our own".

As Adam explains, Blueprint Gaming's growth strategy is supported by constant evolution of its datacentre estate; new ones opening, others closing. The stage for these developments is worldwide. This means there is always a need to deal with the logistics issues thrown up by different countries.

"In addition to its industry familiarity and pedigree, on the technology side of things, Viadex has specific expertise in compliance, customs, and import and export regulations across diverse territories", says Adam.

The Viadex Solution: Continuous improvement, rapid implementation, accelerated innovation

Demonstrating value

"It seemed that Viadex were almost the go-to technology services provider for gaming organisations. So, we engaged Viadex to expedite the infrastructure requirements for new stacks we were deploying in the UK and Mainland Europe".

At the outset of these datacentre projects, the Blueprint team supplied Viadex with a 'wish list' in anticipation that they would go about the task swiftly, and efficiently, and everything could then move on after that. Viadex took an alternative view, immediately recognising areas in which the Viadex team could add value, rather than simply ticking off the items and tasks on the specification.

The Viadex Way

The technical advantage: "I thought it would just be a case of procuring in line with the spec, but Viadex had other ideas", says Adam. Viadex evaluated the specifications and proposed areas of fine tuning to the environments. Suggestions covered enterprise switching, specific technologies for virtualisation, and improvements to the plans for storage. Other Viadex initiatives have encompassed hypervisors, firewalls, load balancers, and database servers.

"It was Viadex who introduced us to the idea of moving over to all flash storage, which has proved to be a huge cost saver in our datacentres, while also future-proofing the infrastructure".

Technical benefits to Blueprint Gaming have included:

- Enhanced systems and procedures
- Streamlined storage solutions; improved performance; minimised downtime; fast issue resolution
- Accelerating innovation in computing, storage, and networking.

The operational advantage: The complexity of geographic expansion for a gaming organisation often creates a barrier to growth aspirations. It can slow down the pace of rollout, and stretch out time-to-revenue. Timing is critical to success in such a competitive market, but so is a detailed understanding of the rules that pertain in each country, around importing technical equipment. "Viadex brought skills in this area we simply don't have", says Adam.

In terms of global logistics and an integrated approach to datacentre rollout, the key benefits to Blueprint Gaming have included:

Operational benefits to Blueprint Gaming have included:

- Consolidation of global vendor solutions together with supply, logistics, and Importer of Record services
- Timely deployment of enhanced storage and compute.

The commercial advantage: While best in breed solutions are under evaluation, and the complexities of global project shipments are being unravelled, Viadex also sets about ensuring the best commercial deal for Blueprint Gaming.

The Viadex commercial team can achieve pricing that clients find impossible to replicate, primarily due to the federated knowledge and multi-vendor management skills Viadex can bring to bear in negotiations.

"We discovered that on top of its IT insights and capabilities, and its operational and global logistics expertise, Viadex could also swing in and negotiate favourable terms on our behalf", says Adam.

Commercial benefits to Blueprint Gaming have included:

- Simplified global procurement. Efficient pricing models across multiple territories
- Tactical and strategic support to ensure cutting edge technology
- An integrated partnership where teams work and succeed together.

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The result: Forward together

"Viadex are an integrated part of our team now. We're open and honest in our discussions about how to handle projects and it's great for me to know that Viadex only ever have our best interests at heart", says Adam.

The Viadex team work regularly and closely with Blueprint Gaming's specialists across finance, IT, and project management, always on hand with bespoke solutions that correlate with the company's goals, and the way they work.

"They are also proactive, making suggestions that add true business value and which they're always able to implement in lighting quick time. Their agility gives our business the agility it needs to move forward fast."

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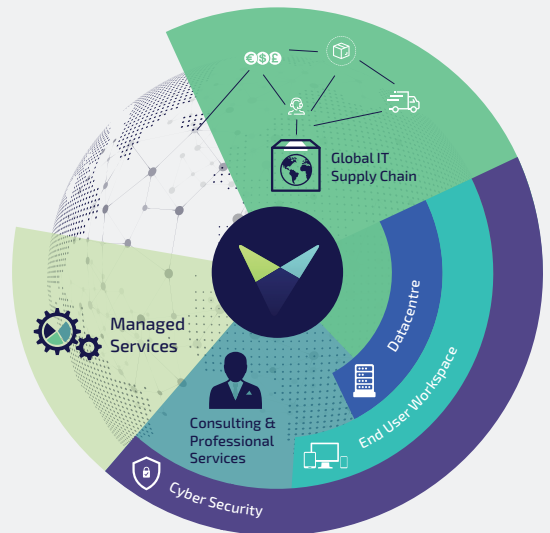- Adam Shepherd, Head of Infrastructure, Blueprint Gaming

About Viadex

Experience: Viadex work with best-in-class global partners to deliver tried and tested approaches and engagement models, following a robust framework approach to ensure justifiable outcomes and reduce project risks.

Direction: In an increasingly competitive environment, a 'one size fits all' approach to IT rarely addresses your objectives: reducing risk, reducing costs or improving efficiencies.

Precision: Our structured methodology analyses your current mode of operation (CMO) to best define the scope of the IT solution, aligned to the needs of the business now and into the future.

Focus: Viadex provide tactical and strategic IT direction to help focus on your current and future business goals and long-term strategy.

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