

Global Solutions Company Gains Cloud Certification

Independently recognised and credible third party certification builds trust



 UNIT4
BUSINESS SOFTWARE

UNIT4

UNIT4 is a global business software company that creates, delivers and supports adaptable software and services worldwide, to help dynamic organisations manage their business needs effectively. It strives to set the global standard for business solutions that help organisations embrace change - simply, quickly and cost effectively.

It has a broad portfolio of solutions that address different markets, requirements, technologies and types of organisation; the UNIT4 group incorporates a number of the world's leading change-embracing software brands, including Agresso and CODA.

Certification

The CIF Self Certification process enables Cloud Service Providers to demonstrate transparency, accountability and capability to end users in a manner that enables the potential customer to make an informed decision about what the vendor offers. The use of the CIF Certification Mark on a vendor's website serves two clear purposes: it makes a public declaration of professional and commercial intent on the part of the cloud service provider and it provides a visual mark of recognition that engenders confidence in the end user that the organisation is open and professional in its commercial activities.

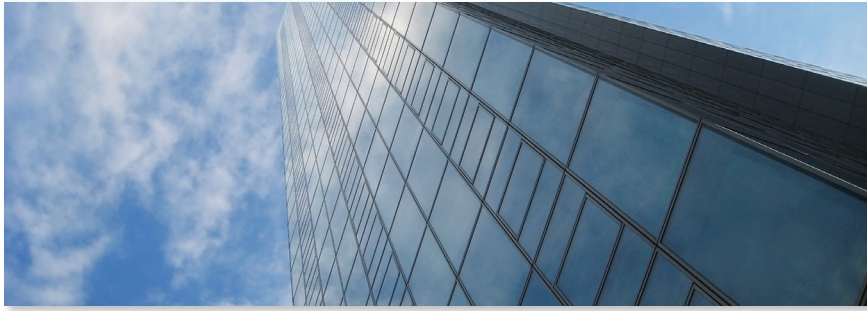


Founder member

UNIT4 has been at the forefront of cloud computing for many years. It became a majority investor in FinancialForce.com, the cloud applications company, in 2008 and more recently announced VITA Cloud Angel™ and Coda Cloud Rebel™, cloud-based deployments of its flagship Agresso Business World ERP and Coda Financials software. The company's newest offering, Shared Journey, is a cloud-based deployment option designed for organisations looking to set up a shared services operation that is quick to establish, easy to grow and responsive to change.

Anwen Robinson, Managing Director of UNIT4 Business Software Ltd commented: "CIF membership provides us with additional market credibility. UNIT4 has, for several hundred organisations, successfully installed multi-tenant cloud solutions and a growing number on hybrid, virtualised cloud computing models that are reaping substantial cost savings. Rapidly changing companies in particular are seeking technology options that meet their own unique business requirements."

"CIF requires its members to demonstrate ethical and transparent delivery of hosted and cloud services. This means that commercial and public sector organisations, that are often under pressure to deliver flexible modern systems through cloud computing, can mitigate risk and make rational, informed decisions about the likely trading relationship they can expect with prospective vendors," she added.



“overall the process took no more than a few months from beginning to end”

About the Cloud Industry Forum (CIF)

The Cloud Industry Forum (CIF) was established in direct response to the evolving supply models for the delivery of software and IT services that has expanded well beyond the traditional on-premise method to one that now embraces hosted and/or, pay-as-you-use Cloud solutions.

CIF's purpose is twofold: To drive a common and public level of transparency about the capability, substance and best practices of online Service Providers (SaaS, PaaS, IaaS, Web hosting providers etc) through a process of Self Certification to a Code of Practice. Second, this Code of Practice, and the use of the related Certification Mark on participant's web sites, will provide comfort and promote trust to business and individuals wishing to leverage the commercial, financial and agile operations capabilities that the Cloud based and hosted solutions can offer. CIF will ensure the integrity and governance of the Self Certification process through regular random audits as well as investigate complaints from parties that challenge any specific participants Self Certification status.

Certification process

UNIT4 began the process of certification in June 2011. Initially focusing on the scope of the accreditation process itself, the company established a dedicated project management team.

Anwen Robinson continued: “For us the fact we have been through a number of audits in previous years was of benefit. We had a good record of our business processes, management systems and documentation, so the need to create a host of new paperwork was mitigated,”

“To put this into context it took our audit team only three weeks to deliver the necessary documentation for the accreditation process. Furthermore, we did not need a team of technical experts to do it. From a management perspective this was critical to completing the CIF certification.”

The benefits

The Cloud Industry Forum Certification has been developed to enable participating vendors to promote online confidence and trust in their brand to the end user community. By adopting a set of certifiable criteria, the Cloud Service Provider enables the end user to have a transparent view of the vendors business and the type of services and service levels they can expect from them.

End users identify three barriers to adoption of Cloud solutions of which two are technical (relating to data security in the cloud and portability of data) and are the subject of significant technical developments and attempts to achieve standards.

Anwen Robinson, Managing Director of UNIT4 Business Software Ltd' added: “The third barrier relates to the issue of trust. In a market of online delivery models with many new vendors, how does a potential customer get comfort that the company with which they wish to work will provide a secure, stable, and effective solution within a framework that enables them to keep control of their data throughout the contract and after it expires? This issue is at the heart of the case for a Cloud Service Provider Code of Practice and its certification process,”

Put simply, the process itself enables professional cloud service providers to demonstrate with clarity their ethics, practices and processes through an independently recognised and credible third party in order to build trust by association with prospective customers. This is why we are delighted to be part of the first wave of accreditations.”



The Cloud Industry Forum

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