CLOUD INDUSTRY FORUM®

Cloud Industry Forum

Self Certification

CIF CERTIFIED®
www.cloudindustryforum.org

Background

The Cloud Industry Forum (CIF) is an independent trade membership body representing Cloud Service Providers (CSPs) and affiliates, which aims to:

- Champion and advocate the adoption of Cloud Services by businesses and individuals.

- Raise industry standards and bring greater transparency and trust to doing business in the Cloud with its Code of Practice for CSPs.

- Give end users the tools and information required in order to make informed business decisions about adoption of the Cloud.

In August 2013, CIF surveyed 250 UK-based organisations of which 68% reported their intention to increase their investment in Cloud computing. The survey did, however, identify two primary concerns:

- A lack of transparency, as it is often difficult to obtain consistent and comparable information about solutions from potential suppliers to aid in the decision-making process.

- A lack of trust, as many organisations struggle to understand the capability and reliability of CSPs without an unbiased basis of review and comparison.

The CIF Code of Practice clearly addresses these two concerns as CSPs who have self-certified against it have proven:

- A level of transparency for publicly available information, proposals and commercial terms.

- A demonstration of capability through their management systems and resources including data protection and continuity of operations.

- Accountability by demonstrating their conformance with the code and agreeing to a binding complaint resolution procedure for customers.

Bringing greater transparency and trust to doing business in the Cloud with its Code of Practice for CSPs

Benefits

In short the CIF self-certification mark is a "trust mark" for buying and selling Cloud Services, *helping end users to identify trustworthy and capable Cloud suppliers*.

CSPs benefit from:

● Winning additional business through their credibility especially with large customers by having a CIF Code of Practice self-certification mark.

● Improved business delivery as the audit process helps identify capability gaps that can easily be remedied through standard business process improvement.

● The opportunity to secure independent validation that their products or services meet recognised quality standards.

CSP clients benefit from:

● An increase in trust through assurance the organisation meets the code requirements.

● More choice from quality providers as CSPs have demonstrated appropriate management processes and level of openness, transparency and accountability.

● Access to industry information and guidance through the CIF website and comfort that the CIF self-certified company has appropriate business practices.

● Clarity on how complaints can be raised, dealt with and escalated should there be any concerns.

Effort and costs

The effort required from a CSP depends on the maturity of the organisation's management systems. Although all applications have to be completed within six months of registration, some have completed the process in as little as three weeks.

With annual fees ranging from £200 for organisations with a turnover of less that £250,000, to £3,500 for organisations with a turnover of over £25m, CIF self-certification is open to all CSPs.

To assist with the application process, a handholding service is offered at no extra charge.

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