The Courtauld: Seamless transition to lower cost cloud provision

The Courtauld works to advance how we see and understand the visual arts, as an internationally renowned centre for the teaching and research of art history and a major public gallery. Founded in 1932, the organisation has been at the forefront of the study of art ever since.

The Courtauld cares for one of the greatest art collections in the UK, displayed at The Courtauld Gallery in Somerset House, central London. Academically, The Courtauld is a specialist university and home to the largest community of art historians and conservators in the UK. It offers a range of degree programmes in the history of art, curating and the conservation of easel and wall paintings.

Cost savings and added reassurance
The Courtauld chose Amazon Web Services (AWS) as its public cloud platform in 2019. The institute’s head of information services, systems and technology, Nicola Bibby, says they picked AWS for the platform’s resilience and they’ve been happy with their choice.

“Resilience was a big issue for us. We wanted everything out of our building and into the cloud. The most pressing reason was our plan to transform our public galleries because while this work has been taking place our teaching staff and students have had to move to a new campus.”
“AWS enabled us to keep learning and research on track even when we had so much physical upheaval going on.”

In January 2021 The Courtauld decided to procure AWS through the OCRE cloud framework (jisc.ac.uk/ocre-cloud-framework). The framework is pre-tendered and EU-compliant. It offers adoption funding and ready-prepared service agreements to make it easier and more attractive for education and research organisations to adopt public cloud, and to boost research and research collaborations. The framework is coordinated by GEANT (geant.org/) and it gives organisations a simple procurement pathway for AWS via Jisc, because GÉANT has appointed us as the UK’s sole AWS reseller under the framework. This led the institute to get in touch.

For The Courtauld, already a user of the AWS cloud platform, procuring AWS through the OCRE cloud framework was a simple way to save more than 10% on the cost of the service.

“We made this decision to save money,” says Nicola. “But buying through the framework means we also benefit from Jisc’s managed AWS core managed service, so we have more formalised support.”

“If we were a new user of AWS, I think the provision of the managed service would offer us extra confidence about making the jump to cloud.”

No downtime
Having decided to use the OCRE cloud framework in late January, The Courtauld’s onboarding took place at the start of February.

“We have a straightforward build anyway, so we just agreed a date and got started. On the day, Jisc moved our account into their own, we gave them permissions to access it and left them to get on with the transfer. We had no downtime and there was no impact on any of our services,” says Nicola.

Maximising the value of their subscription
The AWS procurement is complete and Nicola says she’s looking now at The Courtauld’s telephony and its cyber security posture.

“We’re getting Jisc’s advice on this,” she comments. “We’ve worked together closely over several years and even more so since 2020. Jisc’s services are changing and so are we. We’ve had a meeting of minds and this is helping us get extra value from our subscription.”

To find out how Jisc can support your organisation, please:

Contact:
cloud@jisc.ac.uk

or visit
https://www.jisc.ac.uk/cloud