



# Innovative capital project management company reduces overhead, revolutionises client servicing with Google Apps and the Google Visualisation API

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## AT A GLANCE

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### What they wanted to do:

- Provide a flexible and mobile way of working to its staff and add value to customers by providing better tools for faster decision-making

### What they did:

- Moved the business to the cloud and implemented Google Apps and integrated Google Visualisation with its in-house data analysis system

### What they accomplished:

- Improved client services and managed over a billion pounds worth of business with the help of Google Visualisation, cut corporate risk and overheads while mobilising the workforce
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## Business

Controlled Projects is a young, dynamic capital project management company operating across the UK and Europe. Having started trading in 2005, the company now employs close to 20 people. It handles portfolios with budgets in excess of £900 million for major infrastructure clients including airports, motorways, power stations and large enterprises.

## Challenge

Dealing with billion pound contracts means big risks are involved for both the project management company and its clients. As such, clients need to know they can trust the services and be sure they have the best people, with the best skills and the best tools in the industry, available to them at all times.

When Controlled Projects started out, its IT infrastructure relied upon a large server estate. “We couldn’t deliver the best possible value for money for our clients with such high IT overheads,” says Ed Laccohee, Director, Controlled Projects. “In addition, we had to look at our risk rating and business continuity strategy, as a lot is at stake to our business with the kinds of projects we are dealing with. Downtime is not an option for our clients.”

To make the business a success, Controlled Projects required a complete overhaul of its working practices. Employees needed to become more mobile and less tied to one location. Most importantly, the company had to find a way to provide its clients with the relevant data they needed to assist decision-making.

Laccohee continues, “Some of our portfolios are worth £900 million or more. This means we need to be available for our clients at all times. With any project, having the right information at the right time is critical. Decisions often need to be made quickly, and failure is not an option with so much money on the line.”

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## Solution

To address these challenges, Controlled Projects decided to move its entire IT infrastructure to the cloud to become more flexible, resilient and client-focused whilst reducing its total cost of IT ownership. As part of this, the company implemented Google Apps Premier Edition and other Google Application Programming Interfaces (APIs), including the Google Visualisation API.

The back-office team at Controlled Projects uses Google Docs for running the day-to-day business, such as putting together presentations, budgeting and resource distribution, while Google Calendar is used company-wide to coordinate project work. The front office uses Google Docs, Google Mail (both included in Google Apps) and the Google Visualisation API to present data to clients.

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## ABOUT GOOGLE APPS

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Google Apps offers simple, powerful communication and collaboration tools for enterprises of any size in business, education, or government – all hosted by Google to streamline setup, minimise maintenance and reduce IT costs. With Google Mail, Google Calendar, and integrated IM, users can stay connected and work together with ease, even in private domains. And, using Google Docs, which include word processing, spreadsheet and presentation tools, they can share files and collaborate in real-time, keeping versions organised and available wherever and whenever users work.

For more information, visit  
[www.google.co.uk/a](http://www.google.co.uk/a)

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## ABOUT THE GOOGLE VISUALISATION API

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The Google Visualisation API lets you access multiple sources of structured data that you can display, choosing from a large selection of visualisations. Google Visualisation API enables you to expose your own data, stored on any data-store that is connected to the web, as a Visualisation compliant datasource, enabling the creation of reports and dashboards. The Google Visualisation API also provides a platform that can be used to create, share and reuse visualisations written by the developer community at large.

For more information, visit  
<http://code.google.com/apis/visualisation>

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“We changed our entire set of working practices,” says Laccohee. “It wasn’t easy to get people to work differently, but the transition took place gradually and has proved a great success. In the beginning some people had trouble with the idea that in order to do business, one did not need to be in the same room with the other person.”

Controlled Projects chose Google Apps because of its ease of use and functionality. It also integrated Google Visualisation – an API that helps users create, share and use visual displays of data – with its own internal system to create a new way of producing and presenting “intelligent management” for its clients.

“I can safely say that we could not live without Google Visualisation,” Laccohee continues. “It has given us the power to present our clients with data on their business they were never able to see before – even with industry-specific software solutions. Google Visualisation takes our data and turns it into easy to understand dashboards that make it possible to accelerate the decision-making process.”

### Benefits

Since moving to Google, Controlled Projects has seen substantial savings in terms of time and money, and great efficiency benefits.

“We have so far saved the cost of two full-time employees (around £50,000) and between £60,000 and £100,000 in licence fees,” says Laccohee. “Having been able to get rid of Microsoft Exchange has also cut our overheads considerably. Another benefit of the cloud is that it has also cut our organisational risk considerably as we are now completely mobile and are not dependent on a physical office location.”

“Google Visualisation has proved hugely popular with our clients. The way we present our data is very refreshing to them, as our industry is on the whole very traditional. We have a real competitive advantage in the way we present data about their business that they have never been able to see before. It enables them to make real-time decisions – decisions on which project success depends. Data that previously took weeks to collect and analyse can now be dealt with in real-time.”

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As an innovative company, Controlled Projects is always on the lookout for new things to try. As Laccohee explains, “We are planning to launch satellite services for our website and are using a Google API tool that investigates traffic and demographic patterns to plan our website. It’s a great planning tool that will let us build a website specifically tailored to the needs of our current and prospective customers.”

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