



**Session:** Cloud as a Utility: Working Seamlessly Across Public & Private Clouds

**When:** 24<sup>th</sup> June 2015, 12:05 - 12:25

**Where:** Employee Experience Theatre

Liam Quinn is IT Director of Richmond Events, pioneers of the one-to-one, pre-scheduled strategic business forums, aiming to match buyers with sellers.

We took a few minutes with him to talk about the challenges and status of Cloud specifically in the events sector, and the importance of SaaS versus IaaS and PaaS.

**So just to kick off, what do you feel are the unique challenges you face in the events sector?**

Our challenges really are two-fold. The first one we have is the fact that there's an **explosion of technology** at the moment within the industry. The challenge lies in trying to work out what is good, helpful technology that's going to **enhance the experience of our attendees**, and filter out the stuff which is really a lot of hype or, good today but maybe not very useful in the future.

In terms of our part in the industry, being a multinational organization, we're **operating events in four different countries** to a consistent and very similar model. So trying to make sure that we have **the right technology in place that can support all four different business models is a challenge.**

**In terms of cloud technology specifically, how do you see the status of it in your sector in 2015? Do you feel it differs from other sectors?**

It's hard to believe we're very different to anyone else, but that may be a naïve way of looking at it. I think **the cloud is impacting the sector in two ways**. First of all, there are many software solutions that are being developed at the moment and being pushed within the marketplace, which are very cloud-based. So the economies of scale are there, and the price per event or price per attendee is very low. These systems are utilizing the cloud model in order for these software solutions to be implemented across every event organizer who wishes to use it.

The second place, which is where we come in and a lot of our foreign competitors, is whereby people are trying to consolidate their internal IT systems in order to provide a much more cost effective base for providing IT support to the business itself.

**Leading on from that, would you therefore say SaaS is more imperative than IaaS or PaaS specifically for the events sector?**

I think from a third-party solution perspective, most of the solutions being used are SaaS. I don't think event organizers want large IT teams, or want to be developing their own software. So there's a lot of software out there. What they want is to consume it in any way they desire, in any location

and that's why they're looking for software solutions available that they can just tap in, log in to, and work for their event. We differ from that slightly in that all our systems are actually bespoke written for ourselves.

You can certainly say that within the industry and the sector, that's where the most interest is and there's a lot of consolidation around these various products where they're trying to offer all the various bits, whether that's ticketing or compass information or managing social media and all the rest, trying to report into one central system.

**What do you feel is your greatest project and what were the factors that made it a success?**

I would say our **first move into the cloud**. So over 12 years ago, we moved from a situation whereby we had our own datacentres. We were running all our own servers, managing them, all the normal stuff. We had two datacentres, one in London and one in New York, two of our biggest offices. And that was becoming a complete nightmare. So overnight, we then moved to a hosted environment, which is like a single datacentre, hosted remotely, managed remotely, desktop as a service as it is called now, and we deployed all our systems by Citrix out to the offices, and 20 remote workers.

**Why was that a success?**

Well, overnight we managed to upgrade all our users, give them a better experience in terms of software they had available. We removed our capex immediately gaining completely new revenue and at the same time, we were able to support users throughout the world.

**Great. Looking forward towards Cloud World Forum in June, what is it about the event that you're looking forward to, and what are you hoping to gain from speaking and attending?**

I'm really looking forward to talking to people that are on their journey through the cloud and looking at starting to implement some more innovations, applications, or even solutions to support their user base. I've looked in towards the other companies that are just as embedded in the cloud as we are. I'm sure there are tricks that we're missing that we haven't even thought about, and not many people are fully utilizing desktop as a service at the moment. And I can't wait to talk to more people about that.

---

Join Liam at the Cloud World Forum at London's Olympia on the 24<sup>th</sup> of June for his session: **Cloud as a Utility: Working Seamlessly Across Public & Private Clouds.**

[Register for your FREE exhibition pass!](#)