



Partner: IA Cubed
Website: <https://iacubed.com>
Partner Size: 10 employees
Country or Region: Scotland
Industry: Information technology

Partner Profile

Based in Glasgow, IT solutions provider IA Cubed is the first Microsoft Partner Network Cloud Champion in Scotland. Expert in Microsoft Office 365, IA Cubed has helped 160 customers move to the cloud.

Software and Services

- Microsoft Office 365

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Leading the way to the cloud in Scotland through consultative Office 365 sales

“We wanted to move from maintaining the status quo to selling Office 365 as a holistic business solution with ongoing cost savings.”

Vivien McKee, Chief Executive Officer and Owner, IA Cubed

IA Cubed is a leading light in cloud computing sales in Scotland, thanks to owner Vivien McKee’s insight into effectively selling Microsoft Office 365 to business leaders outside of IT. The company’s consultative approach—which has garnered it a 200 percent increase in Office 365 revenue—initiated a strategic relationship with Microsoft and other partners. The average deal size for IA Cubed has increased by 700 percent in two years; today, the company is closing deals of 10,000 seats.

IA Cubed began operations five years ago with a visionary approach to selling Microsoft Office 365 that is winning the company accolades in the United Kingdom and abroad—not to mention an impressive increase in revenue. Three years ago, IA Cubed sold 500 seats of Office 365, the following year it sold 3,000, and in 2014 that number jumped by 500 percent to more than 14,000 seats.

“We have 160 new Office 365 customers, and we’re winning deals with online giants,” says Vivien McKee, Chief Executive Officer and Owner of IA Cubed. “All our new deals this year are corporate account wins, and we are working with customers who have between 1,000 and 10,000 seats. Our average deal size has increased by 700

percent. Our business has grown by 200 percent, and we are expecting 400 percent over the next year.”

How did a company with only 10 employees achieve all this in three years? Careful strategic planning played a part, but it was the gutsy adherence to McKee’s vision about how to sell cloud services that really made the difference.

Don’t be afraid to embrace the cloud

Initially, IA Cubed provided managed services for small and midsize business (SMB) customers. Then, as the hardware that supported the customers’ Microsoft Exchange and SharePoint implementations neared its end of life, IA Cubed took the

opportunity to introduce them to the long-term cost-effectiveness of evergreen, cloud-based technology.

"We knew that there would be a dip in our managed services revenue as we introduced customers to Office 365," says McKee. "However, we wanted to move from maintaining the status quo to selling Office 365 as a holistic business solution with ongoing cost savings. We migrated more than 60 percent of our existing customers to Office 365, while building up our cloud expertise. It was a risk, but we emerged well-equipped to win enterprise customers. We have 160 new customers and are winning deals with online giants."

Take a consultative approach to sales

McKee hired Margaret Totten as the Business Development Director at IA Cubed because Totten shared McKee's vision of a consultative sales approach. IA Cubed begins its sales discussions with high-level enterprise social, communication, and collaboration messages for the prospective customers' chief marketing or chief financial officers.

"Viv and I come from a marketing and business intelligence background," adds Totten. "We brought Office 365 into several large customers whose business leaders championed the product. One customer has grown from 160 users to more than 1,300."

IA Cubed offers a free, half-day Cloud Discovery Workshop. "Our close rates for each workshop average around 30 percent of participants," says Totten. Next, IA Cubed enters into two weeks of close consultation with each customer. "We bring in our technical resources who are fantastic at educating the customer while building an

Office 365 technology road map to meet that customer's needs," says McKee.

IA Cubed focuses its marketing efforts on speaking in person at public events that are either hosted by Microsoft or at local venues such as the Aberdeen Business Breakfast and Chamber of Commerce. The company has invested in digital marketing, too. It created an innovative "XPired" campaign that enlightens the SMB market about the imminent demise of the Windows XP operating system; it ran the campaign through Twitter and Facebook. IA Cubed also uses LinkedIn Sales Navigator to target customers for direct marketing.

Forge productive partnerships

The company's success with corporate accounts prompted Microsoft to invite IA Cubed to be a consultative sales member (P-Seller) of the Microsoft Partner Network. IA Cubed then hired a Partner Alliance Manager and began to speak at Microsoft public events.

"We asked the Scottish Microsoft account managers to take us to see their clients, and we started to close those deals," says Totten. "After that, business came our way by word of mouth. Our relationship with Microsoft has contributed to hundreds of thousands of pounds in our sales revenue growth."

Microsoft is just one element of a strategic business plan to cultivate partnerships with companies that add to IA Cubed's areas of expertise so that it can deliver a holistic solution to customers. When IA Cubed saw market opportunities around the synergy between Office 365 and Microsoft Dynamics CRM Online, it began working with partner C2 Software, an expert in

Microsoft Dynamics CRM solutions. It works with another partner, Carpool Digital, for Microsoft SharePoint Online projects. "We choose to work with partners instead of increasing our head count," says Totten. "We share the profits with each partner and make sure the customer gets the best solution possible."

Finish your Office 365 engagements with employee adoption

IA Cubed begins most Office 365 engagements with projects such as establishing hybrid scenarios and enabling single sign-on and identity management. It helps customers optimize their Office 365 adoption through innovative SharePoint Online solutions and Yammer enterprise social network projects and by working with other partners.

"Usage and getting customers to enjoy the technology is vital to our ongoing success," says Totten. "We include our employee adoption program for all customers," says Totten. "We embed our materials in their Office 365 solutions and Yammer networks to bring our training and adoption processes to 'champions' who then take the story to the rest of the company. Nothing makes us happier than seeing Office 365 in the hands of our customers and watching them transform their business!"