

Datum Connect Series Making Co-location Work

Volume 1 – Investigating the options



Making the move to co-location

When an organisation considers outsourcing its data centre provision for the first time, it is not unusual for IT and the broader management team to



have concerns about how the relationship will work, and whether the new solution will cause more issues than it solves.

This series of guides is intended to help new clients understand how Datum and our Datum Connect community of partners can ease the transition and ensure that the move effectively supports the business going forward.

The rationale for outsourcing the data centre

Building, maintaining and managing an in-house data centre is resource heavy, in terms of both CapEx and IT. As organisations draw on increasing compute power and demand more resilient connectivity and flexible capacity, data centre provision becomes ever more complex and more costly.

For many organisations, there comes a point when it is no longer justifiable to invest the risk and effort required to build and subsequently maintain an in-house facility. Often the consideration to outsource is triggered by change —perhaps a merger or acquisition, perhaps an office move, perhaps growth putting pressure on office space, perhaps a reallocation of costs. Any of these can create a reassessment of existing arrangements but for many, the move is an uncomfortable leap into the unknown.

Note: The key difference between outsourcing to a wholesale data centre model vs co-location, is that in wholesale, a tenant leases a dedicated, fully-built data centre space, whilst in co-location, a client leases a smaller chunk of space within a managed data centre, usually within a cabinet or rack or within a dedicated cage.

Working out what matters

All data centres are the same, aren't they? On the surface it can appear that every data centre has a standard offering – security, resilience, connectivity and cooling. However, whilst those are the key elements, they are neither the whole story nor the real story as each can differ significantly in execution.



Data centre certification

In 2015, the Data Centre Alliance, the industry body for UK data centres, launched a Certification scheme to help buyers see their way through the selection process.

Recognising that buyers do not all share the same priorities or goals, the certificate aims to help organisations select based on fit-for-purpose relating to business role, environmental impact, management culture and reliability.

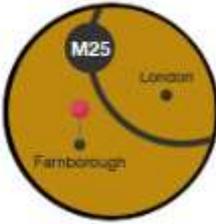
Additionally, the independently audited certification identifies not just a data centre's resilience class but also the physical security of the site, its strategy for energy efficiency and the operational professionalism that lies behind and reinforces the stated aims. This added layer of attention provides a better view into whether the selected co-location provider is a suitable long term partner for your business.

6 selection filters

When reviewing the fit between your requirement and the service offered by the data centre, 6 filters are generally employed.

1. Location

Many organisations feel more comfortable with a data centre on their doorstep, but in reality, once you are installed and up and running, the presence of remote hands services largely removes the need to travel to the data centre. Consider more the implications of the site. Does the location lay the facility open to higher levels of threat from malicious intent or accidental damage? Datum's controlled secure park location significantly reduces the risks to your IT infrastructure.



2. Resilience

If your business cannot tolerate downtime, evaluate what level of resilience is built-in to the data centre design, structure and processes. Datum has been designed to keep your IT running. With a fully 2N power infrastructure and rigid maintenance processes and checks, Datum offers 100% uptime SLA and the data hall is certified to DCA Class 3.



3. Security

How secure is secure? Consider the data centre site, access controls and operational diligence. Datum offers multi-level access controls within the secure government-grade Cody Technology Park and is the provider of choice for clients where security is critical. Certifications include DCA Class 3, ISO27001 and PSI DSS compliant.



4. Power

How energy efficient is the operation? Data centres are major consumers of energy which can be a concern for the board and stakeholders from the perspective of environmental impact and running costs. Datum has environmentally intelligent adiabatic cooling, is signed up to the EU Code of Conduct for Data Centres and has ISO 50001 Energy Management.



5. Connectivity

A real choice of connectivity providers and carriers helps you select the best mix of services and switch as your business demands. Carrier neutral, Datum offers clients a wide choice of connectivity as well as access to a mix of cloud providers and platforms to support private, public and hybrid cloud strategies.

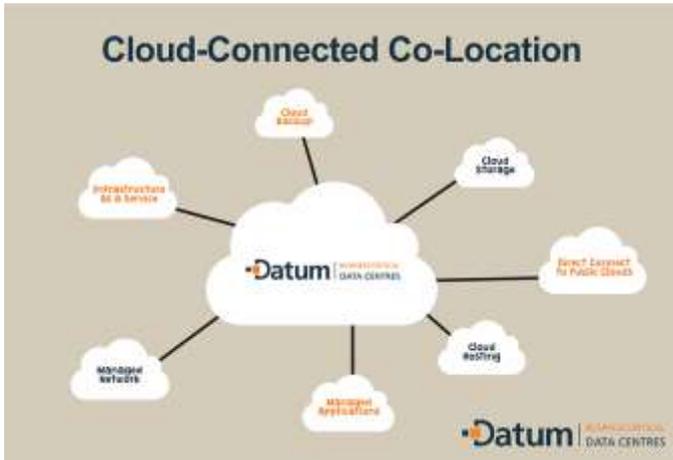


6. Services

What services are available to support you? If something goes wrong, do you know who to speak to? Some providers operate in the same way as a property company, with revenue based simply on leased space – others such as Datum offer fully serviced co-location. Our business model relies on retaining satisfied clients, which means we are on hand when you need information and assistance. Dedicated client support, proactive reporting and remote hands engineering services are all integral elements of the Datum package.



And there's more...



Data centre providers who offer a **supporting ecosystem** of specialist service providers, available where relevant via direct connections, can ensure their clients have the support they need for transition, operation and growth. On the same lines as carrier neutrality, Datum does not build in these additional supporting services but works with clients to find the best fit. We take time to understand what additional services are needed and actively assist by directly connecting clients to the **Datum Connect ecosystem** of migration services, network, managed service, cloud and connectivity providers and platforms.

The key to success

The key to success lies in the ability to build a trusted relationship with a co-location provider who will work with you to support your business, now and in the future.

Co-location checklist

Below is a suggested checklist of items to consider against your requirements, giving each item a '1' for Yes or a '0' for No and allocating an Importance factor against each line to compare providers.

Item	Available/Meets Requirements (Yes=1, No=0)	Importance 1-10 Low to High	Totals
<i>Example item</i>	1	5	5
Location			
Redundant Power greater than N+2			
Security			
Efficient Cooling			
Green policy and accreditation			
Choice of connectivity providers			
Client Service and reporting			
High Power Density			
Maintenance and testing			
Options for single racks, enclosed cage or suites			
Ease of access and parking			
Workspace and onsite amenities			
Loading and storage			
Metered Power			
Engineering services			
Management and monitoring tools (DCIM)			
Capacity for expansion			
Service provider ecosystem/ supporting services			
Totals			

New to co-location or looking for a better way of working?
Take a look at the other guides in the Datum Connect Series;

Other titles include:

Understanding what is needed

Budgeting and running costs

Planning the move

Moving day

Keeping the lights on

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