

CASE STUDY

WYELANDS BANK

Wyelands Bank retains technology partner Blue Chip Cloud to underpin its rapid growth, high levels of personal service and innovation for retail and small business clients alike. The bank's ambitious future plans rely on open architecture and scalability of platform and interface solutions.

“Wyelands Bank had an ambitious growth strategy from the start. What I can say is that Blue Chip has contributed massively to our reach and in fact exceeding our targets. We have had effectively 100% availability on Tier 1 infrastructure, and that is extraordinary in this industry...”

Client history

Wyelands Bank was established in 2016, when British industrial entrepreneur Sanjeev Gupta acquired it. Wyelands Bank, which is managed and operated independently, aims to support the trading ambitions of industrial businesses in the UK and around the world. It is part of the GFG Alliance, an international mining, energy generation, metals and engineering group founded by the Gupta family. GFG also has an extensive financial services and real estate portfolio.



- 14,000 employees
- 30+ countries
- 200 global locations
- US\$31bn net assets

GFG Alliance

Liberty Group

SIMEC

Wyelands Bank

Jahama



Industrial
Manufacturing



Infrastructure,
Resources and
Construction



Financial
Services



Property

Based in Mayfair, London, Wyelands Bank was set up in the UK to help small and medium enterprises (SMEs) by providing working capital for them to trade, grow and create jobs. It has filled a vital gap in capital markets, since other lenders have often found the scale and volume of SME lending unattractive. Wyelands Bank Plc is authorised by the prudential regulation authority and regulated by the financial conduct authority,, it already has some 25,000 retail clients, and retail deposits are set to grow from around £506 million (Q2 2018) to £650 million by Q2 2019. Asset growth is projected to grow from £301 million (Q2 2018) to £ 700 million by Q1 2020.

Since its foundation, the bank has grown very rapidly in both deposits taken and services offered. Stemming from the founder's own experience in setting up and expanding global businesses, and the lack of understanding among service providers and lenders as to what entrepreneurs really required, the bank's approach is to understand each unique business and to tailor lending solutions to each client.

Apart from deposit taking, the main services are Receivable Finance, Inventory Finance, Asset Finance and Supply Chain Finance. Receivable Finance converts outstanding invoices for a single buyer or an entire book into cash, freeing up working capital otherwise tied up in unpaid debts and enabling the business to invest to grow. Inventory Finance releases capital which might otherwise be tied up in stock or other inventory, easing pressures on cash flow. Asset Finance unlocks the cash value in capital assets and is particularly useful for businesses that have money tied up in plant or machinery – which could be used to develop the business, while Supply Chain Finance is a credit facility which helps when suppliers must be paid before revenue has been received from customers who may take longer to pay.



The Challenge

Wyelands Bank needed a technology partner which would match its own speed to market, with an automated, straight-through-processing solution which provides both the bank and its clients with transparency, innovation and responsiveness.

The bank started from scratch, with no legacy business at all. The changeover from the e-invoicing company Tungsten Corp, including obtaining regulatory approvals, took one year. It has links with two deposit-taking platforms, one with Raisin Bank in Germany and the other with Newcastle Building Society in the UK. The early focus has been on building the UK business but through the GFG Alliance, the bank is set to leverage existing relationships with firms in Dubai, Sydney and Singapore.

Blue Chip Cloud was already the technology provider to Tungsten Corp. With the transition to Wyelands Bank, there was a comprehensive technology review in light of the new five-year corporate strategy. The decision was taken to continue with Blue Chip Cloud as the infrastructure provider and to implement ERI Bancaire's OLYMPIC Banking System (OLYMPIC) as a replacement for the previous core banking system.

Pressure was on for these technologies to be in place, ready for the bank's use within a three-month timescale.



2016

Sanjeev Gupta acquires Wyelands Bank



2017

The GFG Alliance establishes Wyelands Capital



2018

GFG Alliance acquires shares in fintech Demica, purchases Transworld Insurance Corporation and enters into agreement to purchase Diamond Bank UK plc

Darrin Brent, IT Director at Wyelands, said several factors contributed to that decision. "Tungsten were using Blue Chip. We undertook our own research on other possible providers, but we knew the company and were happy with the service. One important consideration was that we didn't want any of the larger players, we wanted a personal service from a firm that was not too big, and not too small, that would go on this rapid growth journey with us. Another consideration was that we wanted minimum disruption during a very quick turnaround. You very quickly get a feel for who works well."

The Solution

Blue Chip Cloud has been able to provide Wyelands with solutions that fit the open architecture of the core banking system. With a rapidly growing firm, there are constantly new business needs required, others require specialist applications/services which Blue Chip is able to combine under the Blue Chip Cloud service. Together these meet the key criteria of simplicity, speed to market and automation. Wyelands' aims to have its internal systems providing a high degree of automation, eliminating human input error and streamlining services for clients.

Darrin Brent commented: "No one system can do everything, but equally you have to be careful not to end up with a number of different solutions. Some systems integrate better than others. We focus on speed and STP. We took six months to define our initial business strategy but then we want to move quickly. It was helpful that everything was new – there were no legacy issues. Blue Chip we able to step in immediately."

Another quality for Wyelands in outsourcing was transparency. The bank's team can directly call Blue Chip service delivery managers, and each manager knows their clients in depth. They know the solutions in place and are constantly in touch. "You want honesty and openness. Something may not go right, but you still need to know about it – that is absolutely essential," notes Darrin. "Having a high level of expertise, that personal contact gives us comfort and confidence."

"In more than 20 years in the industry I have not come across this level of service. It is impressive, and we will be with Blue Chip for as long as they can grow with us..."

The bank has ambitious growth plans for the next few years; Scalability and on demand will be critical to that expansion and may include new as well as existing solution such as HPD's Lendscape.

Security, including cyber-security, remains a priority for the bank through all its systems. With the increasing incidents of cyber attacks and breaches, the bank is constantly on the lookout for vulnerabilities in its systems, which is actively monitored by Blue Chip Cloud. Regular full IT audits include stringent standards and controls, and it is essential to have a technology partner aware of not just present but future risks.

The bank has full disaster recovery plans including remote working capabilities which mitigate against a variety of risks. It is important that a solutions provider invests adequately in updated and robust security systems and infrastructure. Blue Chip has focused on this aspect of their service, so clients have daily, weekly and monthly information at their fingertips.



Windows, Linux and IBM i are the operating systems on the cloud-based infrastructure, managed round the clock by Blue Chip. The Bedford-based services provider adds further assurance with the DDOS-mitigation service and IPS firewalls actively protecting the internet connections from malicious traffic.

A huge Citrix environment has been established by Wyelands Bank, which has the primary advantage of enabling employees to work from home. This technology empowers workers use applications in remote sessions

Customer and financial data are well looked after, as Blue Chip takes care of hosting in their Tier IV and Tier III data centres, which offer exceptional levels of security and resiliency. Production and test environments can be set up in under 48 hours, with an additional advantage of managed back-ups and strong external connectivity to various providers. Blue Chip also supply UK-based customer service, giving a much-missed personal touch. With these technology advantages, Wyelands Bank was open in three months.



“Blue Chip is already widely recognised as a highly secure home for global financial data, handling a substantial amount of the UK’s banking traffic. Recent investments in our Tier IV design data centre ensure we can rapidly establish environments for the most sensitive of information.”

– CISO Tim Stringer, Blue Chip

Key Advantages For The Client



Future Capacity

With international expansion likely in the next year, Wyelands Bank will be looking to scale up its capabilities and capacity to a 24/7 model, working alongside trusted expert solutions providers. It will entail building a far larger international network and will impact how services are provided.

“We have seen incredible growth so far and there is no doubt that we would not be as successful as we have been without our IT partners. That is down to the coverage and the speed and delivery of systems and products,” said Darrin Brent. “The engagement is second to none, best in class. So we regard these providers like family. We understand them, and they understand us. We expect them to grow with us. So much business is coming in – a lot of it simply from referrals. We have a positive view on the UK economy, where we are clearly filling a gap. We are excited about the future.”