**1.0 Introduction**

CAL is a prominent investment bank based in Sri Lanka, renowned for its wide range of integrated investment and capital market solutions. With a client base encompassing financial institutions, corporations, family-run businesses, and high-net-worth individuals, CAL provides comprehensive and tailored services. Since its establishment in 2000, the company has capitalized on its deep expertise in financial markets and a profound understanding of clients’ needs, consistently delivering innovative and personalized solutions. CAL has earned a distinguished reputation as the preferred partner in the financial markets, driven by its commitment to excellence and client satisfaction.

**2.0 Current IT Set up and recommendations**

**2.1 Documentation and Storage**

**CAL is presently adopted Software as a Service (SaaS) model**

CAL, since its inception as a boutique investment bank, has favoured SaaS as its primary solution. This preference arises from its smaller scale, limited client base, and minimal documentation requirements. However, the organisation underwent a significant period of expansion from 2014 to 2019, establishing itself as one of Sri Lanka’s leading investment banks with the asset base of EUR 250 million. In line with this growth, CAL implemented a comprehensive E-Banking program in 2019, resulting in paperless environment and digitalization of all documentations.

**Recommendation - Infrastructure as a Service (IaaS) model**

With IaaS, CAL can outsource their infrastructure needs to cloud service provider, eliminating the need for on-premises hardware and allowing for greater flexibility, scalability and cost effectiveness. It can create following benefits to CAL,

**Customization and Control** - The adaptation of IaaS provides CAL with the advantage of greater flexibility and control over configuring virtual servers, storage, and networking resources. With a diverse client base exceeding 8,000 ranging from institutional clients to family offices, this capability proves invaluable for meeting their unique requirements efficiently.

**Scalability and Resources** - CAL’s dynamic client base and transaction volumes necessitate the ability to scale resources based on demand. For instance busy days like Mondays or after Holidays, the equity market experience high activity. Similarly, auction days generate increased server requirements for trading government securities. The scalability offered by IaaS ensures CAL meets this fluctuating demand effectively.

**Development and Testing** - CAL’s utilization of Auto trading software, including Expert Advisors, demands rigorous backtesting for trading strategies. IaaS allows for the provisioning of virtual machines and other resources, enabling the creation of dedicated development and testing environments. This capability empowers CAL to conduct critical testing and fine-tuning of trading strategies efficiently.

**IT expert and Control** - CAL has significantly bolstered its staffing, experiencing a 200% increase over the past two years. With a skilled IT team in place, the adoption of IaaS becomes advantageous as it offers enhanced control over infrastructure management and maintenance. CAL’s expertise allows for direct management of operating systems, security settings, and application stacks, making it highly desirable for meeting stringent compliance and security requirements specific to the banking industry.

**2.2 Customer Relationship Management**

**Current Practice and Possible Issues**

As a client-driven business, an efficient Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system is of utmost importance for CAL's long-term prospects. Currently, the company relies on an internally developed dashboard and user access system, which requires significant IT administration and maintenance.

With CAL experiencing growing demand and an expanding client base, it is crucial to adopt an enhanced CRM management solution. This upgraded system should facilitate the seamless delivery of portfolio reports, market data, research reports, and account statements to clients. Additionally, given the importance of data security and the potential risks associated with remote access, CAL needs a solution that can effectively address these concerns.

**CRM Recommendation**

By adopting an advanced CRM management system, CAL can streamline its client communication processes, provide timely and accurate information, and enhance overall client satisfaction. The system should offer comprehensive features for managing client portfolios, tracking market trends, generating research reports, and securely delivering account statements.

When selecting the IaaS option for hosting a CRM system, it's essential to consider factors such as scalability, performance, security, integration capabilities, and pricing. The following options can be recommended for CAL as CRM solutions,

* AWS offers a comprehensive set of IaaS solutions, including Amazon Elastic Compute Cloud (EC2), Amazon Simple Storage Service (S3), and Amazon Virtual Private Cloud (VPC). It provides scalability, high availability, and robust security features, making it suitable for hosting CRM systems.
* Azure provides a wide range of IaaS offerings, such as Azure Virtual Machines, Azure Storage, and Azure Virtual Network. With Azure, the company can easily deploy and manage CRM systems, leveraging the platform's scalability, global presence, and integration with Microsoft products like Dynamics 365 CRM.
* If CAL prefers to have a less aggressive option, Salesforce itself offers a platform-as-a-service (PaaS) option called App Cloud, which provides the infrastructure needed to run Salesforce CRM applications. It allows the company to leverage the scalability, security, and integration capabilities of the Salesforce platform for hosting the CRM system.

**2.3 Communications and Meetings**

**SaaS with Microsoft 365**

Currently, CAL is using Microsoft 365. Implementing a cloud-based communication solution enables seamless and efficient internal and external communication for the business. Hence, its recommended to retain the same since there are high costs and complexities associated with maintaining and managing an Exchange server (Skendzic, A. and Kovacic, B, 2012).

**Recommendations**

No change.

Skendzic, A. and Kovacic, B. (2012). Microsoft Office 365 - cloud in business environment. [online] IEEE Xplore. Available at: <https://ieeexplore.ieee.org/abstract/document/6240878>.

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