

Colo + Cloud: The ultimate infrastructure supergroup

Combine the strengths of colo and cloud for a truly flexible, cost-smart strategy.

NODE4+



Setting the stage

For many mid-market organisations, the modern IT strategy is becoming more complex. Rising costs, mounting compliance pressure, and limitations around control and visibility are prompting a shift in thinking.

As a result, more businesses are turning to a hybrid approach that blends public cloud, private cloud, and colocation. When planned strategically, this combination delivers the flexibility of cloud, the performance and predictability of on-prem, and the support structure to manage it all effectively.

In this guide, we'll explore how mid-market organisations can evolve their infrastructure strategies by combining the strengths of colocation and cloud supported by Virtual Data Centre (VDC) services, expert managed support, and a platform designed to adapt with your business.

If you're looking for better control, improved cost efficiency, and a future-ready hybrid model, you're in the right place.



Rise of cloud in the Mid-Market

In our latest Mid-Market Report, 70% of organisations said they had either moved the majority of their infrastructure to the cloud or were actively planning to do so. The move was often driven by a clear set of goals: increased agility, lower upfront costs, and access to modern platforms that could support innovation and growth.

The report also puts spotlight on the fact that 42% of mid-market leaders said they struggle to understand and manage their cloud spend, while more than one-third cited compliance challenges when using public cloud platforms. For organisations operating in regulated industries or handling sensitive data, these pressures are only intensifying.

It's led to a shift in thinking. Not away from cloud but beyond cloud as a one-size-fits-all answer.

More IT leaders are now looking at how to extend their cloud strategy with infrastructure options that offer better control, predictable costs, and seamless integration. In short: a more balanced approach that blends cloud with colocation, private infrastructure, and expert support.

Node4's approach to cloud

Build one hybrid compute & network infrastructure

Empower teams to use the right cloud network for their workload, with secure and responsive networks plus seamless interoperability across the hybrid platform

Provide secure platforms in our datacentres

Our UK-based data centres offer cost-effective and integrated colocation and compute platforms, baked into the hybrid network to address cost, complexity and compliance requirements.

Cloud Native tools for centralised management

Use cloud technologies such as Infrastructure as Code, automation and PaaS services to modernise your hybrid operations.

Integrated view for security and compliance

Monitor cross-platform performance, security events, compliance, and performance data with Azure AI-enabled dashboards.

Supporting the solo act: Public cloud + Managed services

Public cloud platforms have given IT teams the ability to quickly deploy new services, scale capacity on demand, and adopt advanced technologies like AI, analytics, and virtual desktops without major upfront investment.

Cloud complexity starts to build up soon after migration. Without dedicated internal cloud expertise, it's easy to lose visibility over usage, security configurations, or costs.

Node4's public cloud managed services are designed to provide mid-market businesses with the support structure they need to get the most from platforms like Microsoft Azure without needing to build a full in-house cloud team. We offer continuous optimisation, proactive cost control, and full lifecycle support across your environment. That includes setup and configuration, monitoring and patching, security hardening, and incident response.

With the right partner, public cloud doesn't have to go alone. It becomes part of a wider infrastructure strategy that's designed around outcomes, not just architecture.

Changing the Record: The Shift to Hybrid Thinking

As we have seen, Cloud has played a transformative role in reshaping IT infrastructure, but it's no longer the only answer for every workload or every business objective.

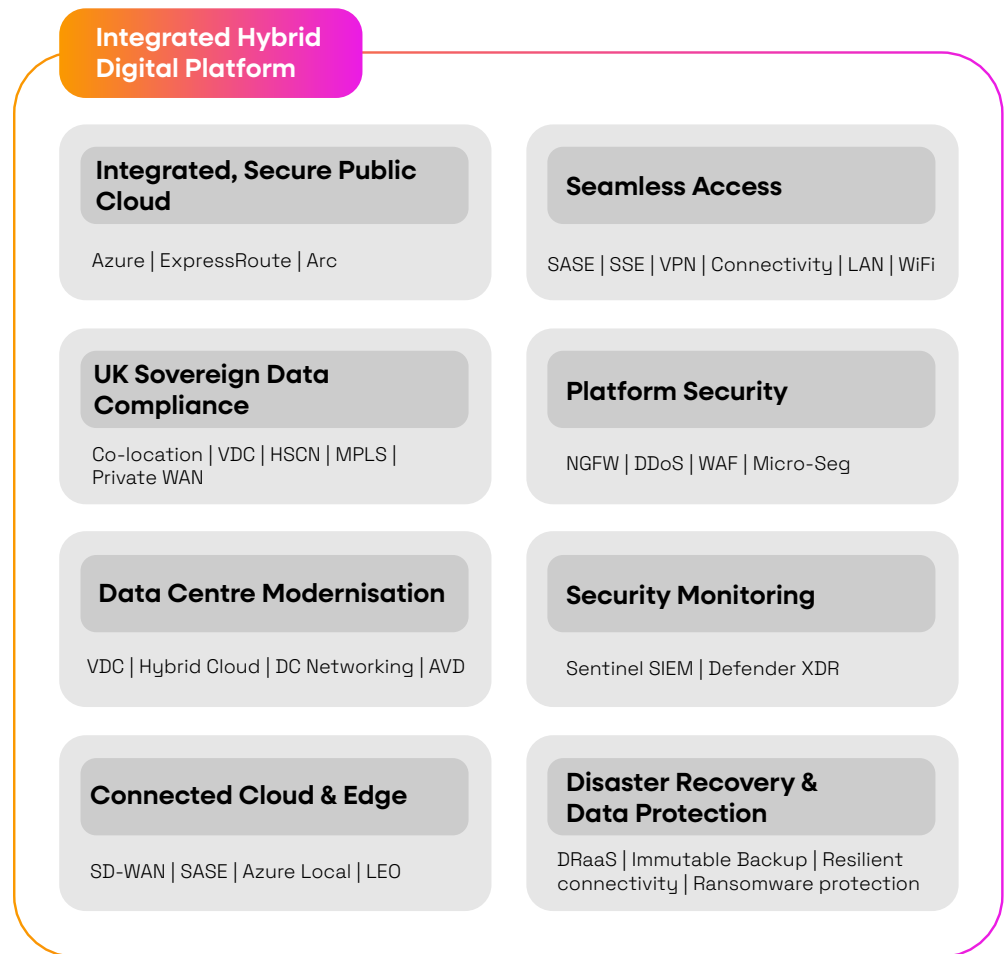
That's where hybrid infrastructure comes into focus.

Rather than anchoring everything in a single environment, hybrid infrastructure allows businesses to combine public cloud, private cloud, and on-premises resources to suit their specific needs. It's a model that gives IT leaders far more freedom to align platforms with the performance, compliance, and cost requirements of each workload.

This shift is especially relevant for organisations who often have a blend of modern applications and legacy systems, tight security policies, and dynamic business demands.

Hybrid infrastructure provides a way to:

- Maximise agility where it's needed, through scalable cloud platforms
- Retain control over sensitive data or high-performance applications
- Balance cost by placing workloads in the most appropriate environment



Colocation Reimagined: Control, Compliance, and Cloud Connectivity

Colocation allows businesses to place their own hardware in secure, purpose-built facilities while leveraging shared power, cooling, connectivity, and physical security. But its real value comes when it's integrated into a wider hybrid architecture.

Key use cases include:

- Preserving ROI on existing infrastructure: Businesses that have already invested in hardware or Oracle appliances can continue using them without having to forklift everything into the cloud.
- Reducing risk in cloud transitions: Colocation acts as the next step for organisations modernising gradually or migrating selectively.
- Enhancing compliance and data sovereignty: With UK-based colocation facilities, Node4 supports organisations with sector-specific requirements around data residency and physical security.

And unlike traditional setups, Node4 colocation is tightly integrated with our wider hybrid cloud and networking services offering low-latency connectivity to public cloud, private cloud, and VDC platforms, and support from experts who understand the regulatory landscape.

Case Study:

Motorpoint



The benefits of colocation are clearly demonstrated in our work with Motorpoint, the UK's leading independent car retailer. As their business grew, Motorpoint needed a scalable, resilient infrastructure that could support rapid digital transformation without compromising cost or control.

By relocating their infrastructure into Node4's Data Centre, Motorpoint gained high availability, a purpose-built facility with ISO-accredited security, and direct integration with cloud services via our high-speed backbone. The solution gave them a future-ready foundation that could grow with the business without unnecessary complexity or cost.

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Thanks to Node4, we can now set up the IT for new branches within minutes. **Motorpoint team**

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Virtual Data Centre: The Engine of Your Hybrid Platform

For organisations that want the performance and predictability of on-prem with the flexibility and automation of cloud, Node4's Virtual Data Centre (VDC) is an ideal next step.

VDC is a fully managed Infrastructure-as-a-Service (IaaS) platform hosted in Node4's own UK-based, Tier 3-aligned data centres. Built on industry-standard virtualisation and designed with security, scalability, and simplicity in mind, VDC allows businesses to run their infrastructure in a modern, cloud-like environment without the cost volatility or lock-in associated with hyperscale providers.

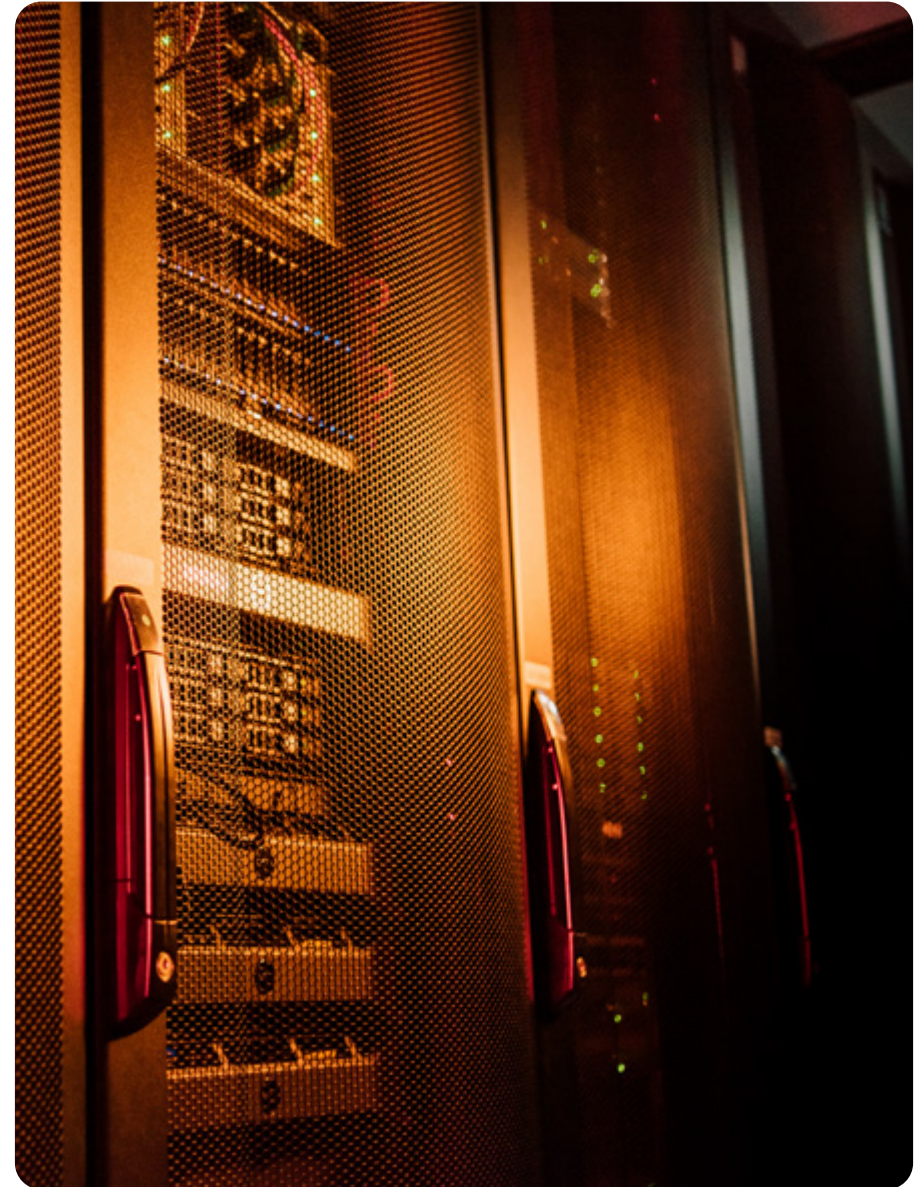
It's not just virtual machines in a data centre, it's a full platform with built-in:

- **Security by design:** ISO 27001, 27017 and 27018 certified, with firewalling, DDoS protection, and ransomware-protected backups included as standard.
- **Cost-predictable consumption:** Pay only for what you use, with finance-friendly billing and no hidden micro-charges.
- **Geo-resilient availability:** Delivered across three UK regions for true disaster recovery and business continuity.
- **Automation and self-service:** Provision, scale, and configure workloads on demand, with full control via a centralised management portal.

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“Applications and users are more distributed than ever, and that makes it really challenging to connect, secure and manage everything. That's exactly why we've brought cloud, network, and security into one unified platform to solve that fragmentation for our customers.”
Glenn Akester, Technology & Innovation Director Connectivity.

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When Does VDC Make Sense?

VDC is ideal when:

- You need cloud-like scalability but want to avoid unpredictable public cloud bills
- Your workloads require UK data sovereignty or greater operational control
- You want a cost-effective alternative to hyperscalers, but still need a high-performance, fully managed environment
- You're looking to reduce the burden on internal teams through 24x7x365 managed services, covering patching, security, monitoring, and more.

“If you don't execute cloud properly, the costs can spiral. It's a consumption model that's hard to control. For many workloads, the business case for modernisation just isn't there, especially on-prem. That's why our VDC platform is so relevant. It's cost-competitive, compatible with legacy environments, and easy to move into.” **Andrew Slater, Technology & Innovation Director Cloud**

Case Study:

Together for Mental Wellbeing



When Together for Mental Wellbeing, a leading UK mental health charity, needed to modernise its infrastructure, scalability and control were top priorities. They wanted to replace their ageing on-prem environment with something future-ready, secure, and able to support a more agile, hybrid workforce.

By moving to Node4's Virtual Data Centre platform, they achieved:

- A secure, scalable hosting environment that met their needs for data privacy and operational flexibility
- Improved performance across core services, even during high-demand periods
- Confidence that their systems were protected, resilient, and backed by 24x7x365 UK-based support

“We've significantly reduced complexity and improved reliability across the board. Node4's VDC has enabled us to futureproof our environment without overstretching our internal IT resources. **IT Manager, Together for Mental Wellbeing**

Creating Your Hybrid Infrastructure Supergroup

Whether workloads live in Azure, run on dedicated servers in our data centres, or operate within your own virtual environments in VDC, our platform ensures:

- High-performance, secure networking via SD-WAN, SASE, MPLS and ExpressRoute
- Centralised visibility and control, using Microsoft Azure Arc and AI-powered dashboards
- Integrated security operations with Sentinel SIEM and Defender XDR
- Platform-level governance to help meet compliance and data sovereignty requirements

Our single pane of glass approach gives IT teams the visibility they need to manage environments efficiently, respond to incidents quickly, and stay ahead of performance issues without the need to juggle multiple tools or vendors.

COLOCATION

Node4's state of the art Data Centres are located in Northampton, Derby and Leeds.

Ideal for:

- Oracle Dedicated Servers
- Hardware Appliances
- Undepreciated Hardware
- Networking and Comms

VDC

Node4's VMware based IaaS service available on a PAYG, "no-contract" model across 2 UK regions.

Ideal for:

- Cost Savings
- VMware Lift & Shift
- UK Sovereign IaaS
- Disaster Recovery

AZURE LOCAL

Azure integrated solution which can be deployed on-premise or as a Private Cloud service in the data centre.

Ideal for:

- Private Cloud
- Edge Modern Apps
- Running Azure Services
- High Performance

AZURE

Microsoft's Azure Public cloud platform available globally across 60+ regions.

Ideal for:

- App Modernisation
- Global Reach
- Azure Virtual Desktop
- Modern Data Services

Ready to take on the cloud stage?

This guide has shown how colocation can give you control without the overhead, how Virtual Data Centre (VDC) provides cloud-like flexibility with predictable costs, and how Node4's integrated platform brings it all together with the performance, visibility, and security your business needs.

At Node4, we help you bring together a strategy that's resilient, scalable, and aligned to your goals. Whether you're looking to reduce risk, improve cost control, or accelerate innovation, we're here to help you design and run a hybrid infrastructure that works today and evolves for tomorrow.

Ready to explore what's possible?

Let's talk about how Node4 can help you build your own infrastructure supergroup tailored to your business, backed by our expertise.

With a number of funding options available to help you with the move, including a quick, expert-led assessment that's tailored to your setup, we'll help you find the right mix of hosting, usage and cost to get your infrastructure in tune.

**Get in touch with our
cloud specialists today.**

