



## How has your business and sector fared in 2014?

Jason Connolly, Next Generation IT

**The use of technology in businesses has matured with the vast majority of organisations depending on computing to operate, including traditional systems such as email, shared file storage and numerous business applications.**

We have now moved into a new phase of rapid change with many disruptive technologies, such as cloud computing as well as the convergence of mobile technology with traditional business computing, and these are quickly changing the way we use technology in our daily working lives. This is giving rise to step changes in the way the technology sector operates, opening many opportunities for innovative businesses nimble enough to adapt quickly. But equally there is a great deal of consolidation in the sector, as larger players soak up successful start up businesses.

Next Generation IT has had another stellar year with key new clients coming on board, as well as growth within many of our existing clients. In addition we have seen a surge in demand for our locally provided cloud system 'NGIT Office Anywhere', which has more than doubled in size in the last year.

**What is your view of the current Guernsey business environment?**

It's been a mixed year for the Guernsey business environment. Some of our clients have started to expand into new territories and businesses streams, whereas other local business are still feeling the effects of the global downturn with a glut of mergers and acquisitions.

**What is your view about the state of 'Guernsey plc' alongside its competitors on the global stage?**

As a smaller jurisdiction, Guernsey has the capability to react quickly, and has more control over its regulatory and legal environment to create a competitive business platform. Guernsey differentiates itself through providing personalised service and responsiveness. But we are under attack from other nations keen to protect their own tax interests and increasing competition from other offshore jurisdictions.

**What do you think are the key issues facing Guernsey over the coming 18-month period?**

Guernsey will need to find the balance of essential regulation and competitiveness, whilst also forging links with other jurisdictions to build strength and exploit new business opportunities.

**Is your business seeking ways of expanding its markets or diversifying in the near future?**

Like Guernsey plc we are always innovating. Our Office Anywhere service is a complete IT system, hosted and maintained by NGIT in a local datacentre, which entirely replaces an organisation's computer room and servers. The concept of paying monthly for IT is proving to be popular, and we have extended this to provide fixed price support and also renting PCs, laptops and other IT equipment to our clients.

We are continuing to develop the Office Anywhere suite of services, including hosted email and document management, email archiving, online backup and virtual disaster recovery.

We have further diversified our business providing disaster recovery suites at NGIT and also a number of serviced offices, which are proving ideal for start-up businesses.

**Do you see any threats on the horizon?**

A concern for many island businesses is competition from abroad, and like the finance industry, there are plenty of other businesses out there that would like a slice of the IT pie. We focus entirely on the Channel Islands to ensure that we provide a consistently high level of service, responsiveness and quality advice.

**If you had the 'power' is there one thing that you would change/do with regard to local legislation/policy to enable your business to further flourish?**

A major disadvantage to businesses, and a limiting factor for the adoption of cloud-based systems is the cost of on-island private circuit connections (leased lines). Generally on-premise servers are connected to PCs in the office via gigabit links (1,000Mb/s). The costs of similar high-speed private circuits from the office to the datacentre are prohibitive for many businesses. CICRA is currently reviewing this, but if we could increase the speed of the current 10Mb/s circuits to gigabit speed (at the same price), this would be a game changer, and would cost the telcos very little. This would enable local businesses to move onto local cloud systems, saving money and scarce resources whilst improving productivity and service levels.

**Where do you hope to see your business this time next year?**

We are currently 18 staff, which is a good size for a local IT business and we wouldn't want to lose the excitement and fun of being a small company. We hope to continue the growth in our business by using technology to enable us to be more efficient and do more with the same core team we have built up.