NTT DATA

Putting you at the center on day one of your deployment

How do you find the right data center partner?

Tim Stone
Senior Director, Service Delivery, Global Data Centers Americas, NTT
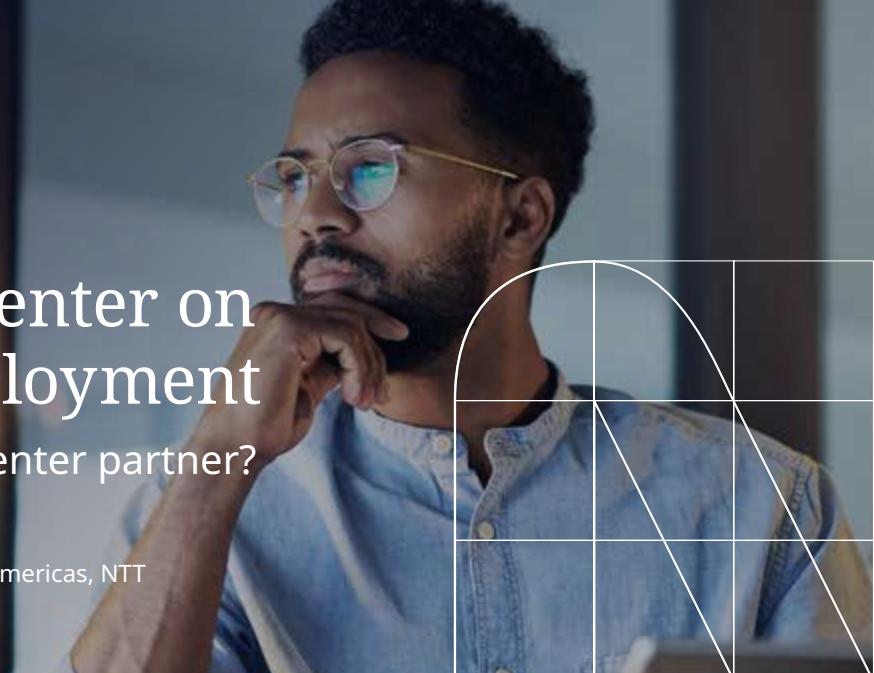
There are dozens of resources and articles to help you find the right data center partner. However, few address the ins and outs of day one of your deployment. What happens? Who can help you get set up quickly? Where does your equipment get dropped off?

That's just the beginning. With any new deployment, there are bound to be loads of questions and things to consider. We want to help ensure that your next deployment goes as smoothly as possible, so we'd like to offer you some ideas to think about before you get started.

Do you have a design in mind for your deployment, or are you starting from scratch?

Some data center clients have a plan in place. They know exactly what they need and a good data center partner can accommodate those specifications. If they're not flexible enough to adapt to your needs, you should consider looking elsewhere.

But what happens when you don't know what you need? You have two options: employing a third party 'integrator' or finding a data center with in-house teams who can help you optimize your design and fit out for a given space.

Using an integrator is a popular choice, but they come with their own complications (and we'll go into those in just a bit). An in-house team, however, has specific experience within the facility and can offer unique insight to help clients maximize their infrastructure's performance.

Also, in-house teams, like those you'll find here, help clients prevent costly surprises and set-backs. For instance, if a client's fit out includes things like high density power cabinets; containment solutions to manage airflow to accommodate 'cityscape' cabinet rows; or structured cabling design and implementations, an in-house team can work closely with that client to engineer a solution to ensure that every part of their infrastructure works seamlessly within the existing environment.

Where's my stuff?

Getting a client's equipment where it needs to be is often where many data centers and third party integrators drop the ball.

It's somewhat understandable when you think about it. No matter how good or dedicated a provider or third party integrator may be, they are still separate entities and they add unnecessary layers of communication — increasing the likelihood of complications. There's often no direct line of communication between third-parties and internal teams like shipping and receiving, security, critical facilities operations, IT and engineering.

For example, try as they might, an integrator can't be present at the data center loading dock for every shipment 100 percent of the time. If there is no one to accept a shipment or verify who it's for, vital pieces of client equipment may get turned away — causing the client a frustrating and costly delay.

By contrast, a data center with an in-house deployment team has direct relationships with other in-house teams like those mentioned above and may be critical for a successful deployment. They're there to ensure your data center fitout proceeds without a hitch so you can get started right away.

Is my move in easy and secure?

The security of your equipment and the privacy of your particular fit out are a major priority. Your provider must make sure that only the right people have access to your equipment — from the loading dock to the cage or vault.

This requires employing the latest [badging, biometrics and other multifactor security measures](#) to

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A data center partner should provide a **dedicated client success team** to ensure that you hit the ground running with everything you need.

ensure everyone who enters the facility is who they say they are. This again, however, is an instance where utilizing third party integrators may cause delays on day one.

Whether the client's own employees or contractors will be doing the actual work of moving in, the data center provider needs ample time for proper vetting and accreditation. That means they need a list of every single person who'll be entering the facility well before the actual day.

With both deployment teams and security staff in-house, it's a fairly simple matter of running the list through normal company channels and processes. But if, for example, a provider employs a third party security contractor (as many do) and the client engages a third party deployment integrator, the risk of costly miscommunication or error across disconnected layers becomes far more likely.

In the unlikely event an in-house team encounters a snag with a client's move in and deployment, they have a direct

line to internal facilities or security teams to address the issue quickly and efficiently. Even if the client needs to make necessary last-minute staffing or deployment changes, a simple conversation between colleagues can expedite the process and avoid delays.

How do I get connected?

Connectivity is perhaps the most important and most complex challenge when moving into a data center. It goes without saying that you need to make absolutely certain you understand how the provider will facilitate your networking and connectivity needs from the start.

We offer clients several connectivity options and services, and dedicated fitout and client success teams can provide guidance on what may work best for your deployment.

For example, your fitout team will land fiber exactly where it needs to go to ensure you have access to your public cloud provider of choice — either through direct cloud on-ramps or Megaport (or similar) services.

Our facilities are also carrier-neutral, so in some cases, a client may choose to bring their own dark fiber into the facility via a contractor and third party provider.

Your fitout team will work directly with your provider and contractor to connect your dedicated fiber from the street to your individual deployment. Essentially, we provide clients with the flexibility and expertise to make sure that clients get connected in whatever manner works best for their activities and goals.

> **"** It's critical to understand the **total cost of fitout**, not just an itemized list of separate charges.

How much will this fitout cost me?

Of course, success depends on exemplary service. That said, cost absolutely matters. A data center with a dedicated in-house fitout team may be able to offer a flat-fee with all the trimmings included (depending on need and individual requirements).

That means one bill from one provider. If a client chooses to use a third party integrator, often there are multiple layers of mark-up baked into your final cost. For example, a third party contractor actually doing the physical work of moving in may mark-up labor and material costs. The integrator will also mark-up those costs while adding a project management fee for good measure. The provider often adds another 10 percent on top of that. In contrast, our fitout team is not a profit center. We consider them to be 'value add' services. Any potential mark-ups our clients experience are intended to cover minimal internal costs and thoroughly communicated. That's why it's critical to understand the total cost of fitout, not just an itemized list of separate charges.

But what if I like my integrator?

Putting clients at the center, to us, means providing them with the flexibility and the means to operate how they need to operate. So, we will absolutely work with third party integrators. Our goal is to ensure that your fitout goes smoothly and that costs are transparent — whether you employ a third party integrator or utilize our dedicated in-house teams. If you trust your integrator and they have a deep understanding of how you and your infrastructure works, by all means, keep working with them. In-house teams are best for most fitout scenarios, but they should work with your integrator in the same manner they would if they were working with you directly.

It's almost time to move in. What now?

This might seem trivial — until you find yourself struggling to connect to wi-fi on move-in day. There are also more pressing issues like when auto-reporting begins, and what you can expect throughout the life of the partnership.

A data center partner should provide a dedicated client success team to ensure that you hit the ground running with everything you need — from security badges to access to points-of-contact for remote-hands-and-eyes.

A good client success team enables you to focus on your mission-critical goals and not the mundane details of moving in.

Putting your success at the center from day one

Sometimes, clients want to plug in the servers and get up and running as soon as they're in the door. Your dedicated team can help with that goal and plan for it in advance to ensure your needs are met.

In other cases, you might want to sign and start on day one but keep your deployment cold, but ready for future use. When that happens, dependability and predictability are key concerns. Missing a deployment date can have immediate business consequences, and if your data center flubs your move in and fitout you should be looking for a new partner.

What about the future?

Even at the fitout stage, you probably have a rough idea of how your deployment may need to scale in the future. Whether you anticipate rapid growth or need to hedge against a potential contraction, your fitout and move in must accommodate both exigencies to be effective. If your business is fortunate enough to be the former, you need to know that your provider has processes and standards in place to ensure you can scale with confidence.

This is why, once again, having a bespoke, integrated solution team is critical to success. If your enterprise needs another cage or vault, you'll work with the same deployment and customer success teams who facilitated your move in and fitout. They will know your infrastructure and your business, and they will have been tracking and monitoring your requirements over time. With a team that understands your needs and how your infrastructure operates, there's no starting from scratch. Plus, they're more likely to identify and proactively remediate potential problems.

You likely have a battery of questions in store for potential providers — from cost to ongoing optimization to redundancy and more. With so much to consider, it's sometimes easy to lose sight of the day-to-day launch and operation of your deployment. Hopefully, we've given you some things to consider so that your next fitout is on-time, on budget and runs as smoothly as possible.