7 CONSIDERATIONS WHEN SELECTING A DATA CENTER PROVIDER IN CHICAGO

This whitepaper provides an in-depth look at key considerations to keep in mind when selecting a data center provider in Chicago. It looks at how a data center provider with a global footprint can offer you access to comprehensive data solutions, and help you meet your data needs today and in the future. This can be used as a checklist for evaluating a data center provider against competitors.

Executive Overview

Chicago is the biggest connectivity hub in the Midwest. Its vast array of carriers, excellent fiber availability and robust internet exchanges have contributed to this. The major draw for large enterprise companies—especially financial content, media and cloud—is the ability to increase connectivity and to reduce latency. In the crowded market of data center providers, selecting the right provider can be tough.

You need to find a data solution provider who can meet your current data needs and who can grow with you to accommodate any future needs and industry advances. This white paper provides an indepth look at key considerations to keep in mind when selecting a data center provider in Chicago. From connectivity to compliance to customer service, these 7 key considerations offer a checklist for evaluating potential data center providers.

Availability & Scalability

Data center space in Chicago is currently in high demand, mostly driven by the rise in e-commerce and global finance organizations, and many data providers no longer have the space to expand their data centers in downtown Chicago. Before you select a data center provider, be sure to inquire about how much availability they have and what their plans are for future growth.

Scalability is key when it comes to finding the right data center provider. When reviewing data centers, look for facilities which can meet your current and future data needs. As your business grows, you want a data center to grow with you. As we've seen over the past five years, the demand for more services and goods online has meant an enormous increase in data throughput, and this is only expected to increase in the coming years. What is your current data demand by your consumers or interest groups, and how might that increase in the future? When looking for a data center partner, focus on providers who have scalable resources and services, such as colocation, disaster recovery and software progammable connectivity.

Interconnection Ecosystem

Selecting a data center facility with robust built-in connectivity makes the front-end selection process easier. With on-net carriers, peering exchanges and SDNs, it is likely you will not require carrier hotel access – but at QTS you will have the option. QTS Chicago is a carrier-neutral data center that provides access to a thriving ecosystem of dozens of telecommunications partners, exchanges and software defined networks (SDNs). It also offers one of the few in-house AWS Direct Connect nodes in the region.

Modern data centers offer software programmable connectivity that is quick to deploy and cost effective. With QTS Switchboard, customers order and self-provision virtual connections to AWS, Azure and Google clouds in minutes. This proprietary connectivity platform also enables multi-site customers to connect between all of our U.S. based data centers.

Here are some unique highlights built-in our Chicago facility that enable fast, secure, and cost-effective connectivity:

- AWS Direct Connect in house
- On-demand access to AWS, Azure and Google Cloud Platform via QTS Switchboard
- On-demand access to all major clouds via Megaport, PacketFabric and Telia Carrier
- Closest proximity to 350 Cermak carrier hotel with <.5ms RT latency
- Diverse fiber entrances connect to diverse Meet-Me-Rooms with multiple carrier network's point of presence throughout
- Dark, Lit, IP and Interconnection services
- Highly redundant design eliminates single points of failure
- Multiple internet service options
- Self-service ordering of cross connects

Flexibility and Customization

Your business is unique and it deserves a custom solution to meet your individual data needs. Today's consumers of data—whether they be medical patients, online shoppers or daytime stock traders—expect immediate access and personalized service. This means your IT solution needs to be as flexible and customizable as possible—off the rack isn't cutting it anymore.

First, consider what you need from your data center provider. It may be a secure environment for dev/test, redundancy for disaster preparedness, or to meet certain industry compliance standards. You want to partner with a data center provider who can offer you the ability to customize your data center environment as well as add on key supporting services, such as managed storage and backup. Whatever you decide, keep in mind that data solution needs are growing in complexity. Find a data center provider who is on the cutting edge and ready to think creatively to help you solve your IT needs.

Security & Compliance

Considering the number of high profile data breaches in the last few years, it's no wonder many businesses are concerned with data security. Ask potential data center providers what penetration and intrusion testing and protocols are in place. When it comes to security, consider how the data center provider handles not just logical security but also physical security. Do they have a perimeter fence? How many points of entry are there? Do they use 2-factor biometric authentication? How many security guards do they employ?

Compliance will be another important point to take into consideration. Look to see if they have compliance standards for SOC, PCI, HITRUST, etc. When it comes to compliance, think of it not as just a checklist to go through but as a means to test how serious your data center provider is about compliance. Do they have a team and resources dedicated to compliance solutions? Are they outsourcing their compliance to

another company? It's important to have confidence in your data center provider. At the end of the day, you want to know that they are doing everything possible to ensure that your data is safe and compliant.
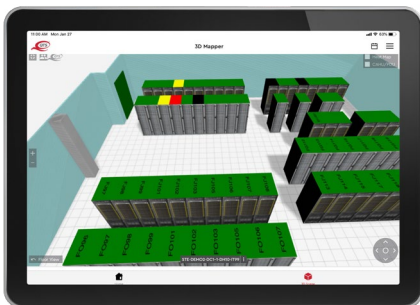
Efficiency of Design & Sustainability

When it comes to evaluating data center providers, cost is forefront in the minds of most IT decision makers. You need to weigh everything that will affect your bottom line, such as taxes, utilities and energy costs. All of these can have a major impact on where you house your data. Look for providers that are constantly leveraging innovative efficient design and building methodologies, as these can help save you money in the long run.

According to Electricity Local, the commercial power cost in Chicago is nearly 60% less than the national average. In addition to those savings, many Chicago data centers benefit from free cooling thanks to favorable regional temperatures and climate. Make sure your data center provider is making use of these and other capabilities.

Efficiency of design and sustainability show that a data center provider is innovative, and when it comes to your data solutions, you want a provider who is on the cutting edge of evolving technologies.

Self-service Customer Platform

Every customer receives access to our award-winning self-service digital platform, SDP. Comprised of a suite of digital and visualization apps, SDP provides 20/20 vision into the most crucial areas of your environment with pre-emptive insights and intelligent predictions for efficiencies and optimization.

SDP enables real-time orchestration of your colocation environment from any device. Here are some benefits of our real-time digital platform:

- Gain visibility and access to critical environmental data
- Get oversight and control of deployments; self-service Badge Holder, Visitor and Compliance reports
- Self-provision to AWS, Azure and Google clouds and between QTS data centers in minutes
- Interact with a live, 3D digital model of your deployment that tells you where there may be issues

And, SDP is fully integrated with our smart family of remote products:

SmartCam – intelligent, AI-based vision system that informs you as people enter your space

SmartCart – remotely configure, test and troubleshoot racked servers and network devices

Environmental Sensors – rack-level visibility of temperature and relative humidity data

Customer Service

Many people tend to think of good customer service as just a nice bonus when it comes to their data center provider, but in fact, it is one of the most important considerations you should make. Nowadays, your data solutions can make or break your business and you can't afford to place those solutions in the hands of people who aren't as fully committed to your success as you are.

Evaluating a potential data center provider's customer service can be tricky, but here are a few ways to determine how they stack up against the competition.

- Check to see how they measure their success. Hint: a high Net Promoter Score is a great way to measure customer service as it's an industry wide metric that measures the satisfaction level of current customers.
- Ask the data center provider to if they have

onsite personnel or if they outsource to another location—onsite personnel is preferred.

- Request testimonials and references from current customers.

Now, you have a good framework on which to evaluate data center providers in Chicago. Whether it's custom data solutions or non-data considerations such as convenience of accessing the data center and parking, these seven areas provide a basis from which to select a data center provider who can meet your current data needs and anticipate future needs, such as QTS.

Chicago is known for innovation. From the first mail order business in the U.S., to the debut of the world's first Ferris wheel, to QTS' custom data solutions, the Windy City will always be home to world-class services. For businesses located in Chicago, it makes sense to look nearby for data solutions. For agencies and organizations looking to colocate, the Chicago area is prime real estate away from hurricanes and other large-scale natural disasters.

With the opening of QTS' mega data center in Chicago's central business district, we are now bringing our world-class IT solutions to the heart of Chicago. More than 290,000 businesses operate in Chicago, and our data center is poised to provide convenience and world-class performance. Located in the iconic Chicago Sun-Time building, QTS is the only fully-integrated data center that relies on people first to provide advice, technology and infrastructure for IT decision makers in complex, high pressure environments who need help managing and protecting critical data during a time of unprecedented change.

QTS is known for world-class data centers and innovative self-service digital platform that helps our customers optimize their colocation environment with ease. But when you ask our customers about QTS, they don't talk about our facilities. They talk about our people, our company culture, and the investment that QTS has made in supplying a people-powered level of attentive, consultative service unmatched in the data center industry. Our Chicago engineers and technical staff continuously cross-train to be familiar with all technology and infrastructure that supports customer environments.

For more information on currently available data center space, visit https://www.qtsdatacenters.com/data-centers/chicago.

ABOUT QTS

QTS Data Centers is a leading provider of data center solutions across a diverse footprint spanning more than 7 million square feet of owned mega scale data center space within North America and Europe. Through its software-defined technology platform, QTS is able to deliver secure, compliant infrastructure solutions, robust connectivity and premium customer service to leading hyperscale technology companies, enterprises, and government entities. Visit QTS at www.qtsdatacenters.com, call toll-free 877.QTS.DATA or follow on Twitter @DataCenters_QTS.

WHY QTS CHICAGO

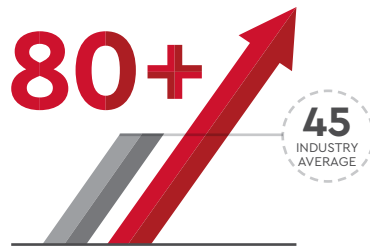## A robust carrier-neutral interconnection facility

Free Parking 🚗 🚙 🚗

+ Low Latency

+ Redundancy

+ High Connectivity

QTS Net Promoter Score

80+

45 INDUSTRY AVERAGE

30-acre campus allows for continued expansion of downtown Chicago data center foot print, with **125MW** of critical power capacity.

Building 1

467,000
total sq. ft.

40MW
critical power capacity

FUTURE SCALABILITY Building 2

Additional 213,000
sq. ft. of raised floor

32MW
of power

QTS Chicago uses **a water free cooling design** along with **indirect air-side economizer cooling** to harness free cooling for an economical and efficient solution.

On-Net Carriers & Partners

SDNs

Megaport

PacketFabric

Telia Carrier

Cloud On-Ramps

AWS Direct Connect

Network Carriers

AT&T

CenturyLink

Cogent Communications

Comcast

Crown Castle

DE-CIX

Hurricane Electric

Telia Carrier

Verizon Business

Windstream

Zayo

Internet/Peering Exchanges

DE-CIX Chicago

United ChIX

Experts at all levels: QTS people are team-oriented, resourceful professionals who have the proper background and training to get the job done.

Always training: Our engineers and technical staff continuously cross-train to be familiar with all technology and infrastructure that supports customer environments.

Ready to assist: Our sales engineers and implementation team understand the importance of a well-designed migration or implementation that fits your timeline.

Never Outsourced: Our Data Center Operations and Operations Service Center teams are seasoned professionals who are ready to serve your needs around the clock.