



# Softcat AWS support ensures straight A's for Cirrus on exam results day

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## Cirrus has built a reputation for vast experience in the contact centre as-a-service (CCaaS) market.

It consistently attracts the best talent, many of whom have spent their careers in the operational contact centre environment and therefore understand its challenges first-hand.

A prime example is their expertise in the higher education industry- providing a quality year-round experience for

students and universities, but especially during the critical annual Clearing period where the volume of calls can be 10x normal levels.

With a contact centre platform built on AWS, ensuring technical support during the Clearing period is critical for Cirrus, so it entrusted Softcat to provide this.

### Key Facts



## The Challenge

Each year, the UK Higher Education sector experiences several peaks in demand concentrated around exam times. One such peak is Clearing which occurs when A-Level results are released.

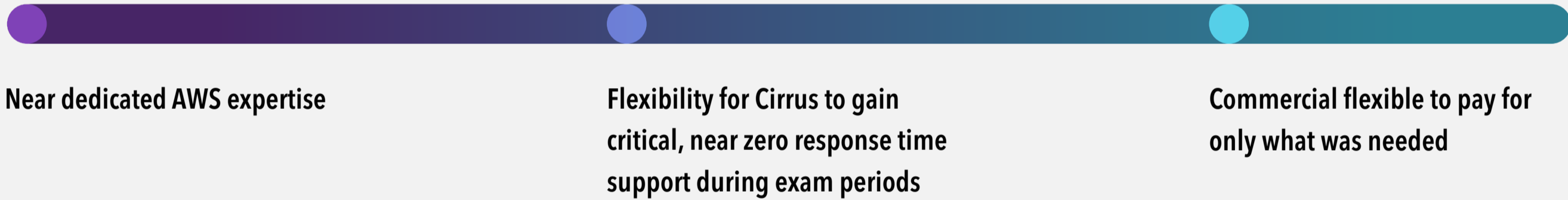
During this time, university and college admission services provide students with the opportunity, outside of the normal application window, to apply for university places which haven't yet been filled, or when students require last minute admissions as a result of unexpected grades.

When this happens, thousands of students seek to get in touch with universities and colleges and it is not uncommon for some to receive up to 7,500 calls per day. However, most are not equipped for this volume. This is

where Cirrus specialises with a Contact Centre solution which augments the university with critical resource capacity to manage incoming call requests, and ensure a smooth and cost-efficient process for the university and students.

But like many digital businesses, the Cirrus Contact Centre service is underpinned by Cloud, specifically Amazon Web Services (AWS), which requires expert support to ensure it remains reliable during this critical window. However, traditional support mechanisms were too costly for Cirrus which simply required immediate and on-demand access to AWS engineers to assist with any real-time technical issues.

### Critical Success Factors



## The Solution

Our engagement started with a simple conversation to understand Cirrus' unique business requirements and its need for dedicated AWS expertise to support its Amazon Connect solution. This is not something that could be fulfilled by the commercial and reactive limitations of AWS business support.

From here, and with its customer centric culture, Softcat quickly presented an option to provide a managed service including near zero response times for critical event coverage at an efficient cost to ensure it provided the right value to Cirrus.

On this basis, the critical elements of this engagement included:

- Dedicated AWS engineering resource to support the Cirrus Amazon Connect Solution
- Agile engagement to ensure 24x7x365 support through channels which work the most efficiently for the customer

- A longstanding relationship with focussed Account Management that understands the customer's challenge while identifying how Softcat can support with engaging the right specialist teams to find a solution efficiently, and cost effectively.

"Although we didn't have a pre-packed offering for critical event support, we do have the AWS expertise and willingness to ensure we support our customers at times when they need it. As such, when presented with the challenge, the solution felt simple - aligning our AWS engineers to support Cirrus through its critical phase with commercials that provided the right value. Such an approach we feel is pivotal to ensure we don't get hung up on the finer detail but instead focus on delivery excellent customer service." - Matt Larder, Head of Cloud at Softcat.

### Solution Highlights



## The Benefits

“Our Softcat Account Manager worked efficiently to engage their AWS specialist team, followed by working within very short timeframes to ensure we received cost effective AWS support during our critical phase. We had immediate dialogue with the engineers to ensure the right technical expertise would be at our disposal which alleviated our concerns around working with AWS support directly.”

Spokesperson,  
At Cirrus