

CASE STUDY

How NatWest Boxed uses Datadog to manage cloud costs across enterprise teams

ABOUT NATWEST BOXED

NatWest Boxed is a Banking-as-a-Service (BaaS) provider that provides financial solutions, such as savings accounts and personal loans, to business-to-consumer companies without the requirement of becoming a bank themselves.

**Banking****600 Employees****United Kingdom**

“By understanding exactly where our cloud costs come from, we’ve optimized spending, improved accountability, and empowered our teams to make smarter business decisions.”

Antoine Dao
Engineering Manager
NatWest Boxed

WHY DATADOG?

- Cloud Cost Management (CCM), which enables teams to build a cost management framework, is providing them with capabilities to track, allocate, and distribute costs across different teams.
- Simple-to-deploy integration for Kubernetes monitoring.
- Tagging capabilities for precise and granular tracking of resource consumption and expenses.
- Cost alerting and budgeting tools that give budget owners and engineering teams real-time feedback about costs going over or under budget, in their existing Slack channels and workflows.

CHALLENGE

NatWest Boxed runs in a complex, multi-cloud environment built on a Kubernetes-first, multi-federated infrastructure. While this setup gave teams flexibility and quick speed to build and get products to market faster, it created challenges around resource consumption, cost visibility, and allocation.

USE CASE**Infrastructure monitoring****Cloud Cost Management****KEY RESULTS****45%**

In cost savings

90%

Cost allocation

Managing costs in a multi-cloud, multi-stakeholder environment

[NatWest Boxed](#) is a Banking-as-a-Service (BaaS) provider founded in 2022 through a joint venture between NatWest Group, a leading retail and commercial bank in the UK, and Vodeno, a European BaaS company. NatWest Boxed provides financial solutions, such as savings accounts, personal loans, point of sale finance and merchant wallets, to other business-to-consumer companies so they can enhance their customer offerings by providing frictionless financial experiences within their existing services.

Like most fintech companies, NatWest Boxed operates in a complex, multi-cloud environment. The platform was designed as a Kubernetes-first, multi-federated infrastructure, which offered teams autonomy to build, manage and deploy their own applications using shared resources and a shared budget. While this design made operations faster and more flexible, it also made costs more difficult to manage and allocate appropriately.

NatWest Boxed wanted a solution that empowered teams to manage and track their own costs without needing approval from a central authority but would also provide full transparency to other internal stakeholders. Ideally, this solution would allow teams to have a unified view of costs across cloud service providers, AWS and Google Cloud; accurately allocate shared costs to teams or services; understand cost-per-product or cost-per-account; and provide data-driven budget accountability for engineering teams.

The team tested some third-party Financial DevOps (FinOps) tools during application builds, but found them to be manual, lacking in important metrics, and ineffective at reporting accurate resource allocation. As cloud spend grew and teams required more ownership, NatWest Boxed needed a better solution to bring clarity, accountability, and control to their cloud costs.



Enhancing cloud cost visibility with Datadog's Cloud Cost Management

NatWest Boxed implemented Datadog's CCM product, which proved to be a natural fit with its Kubernetes infrastructure. The integration allowed the budget owner to build a cost management framework, giving teams access to a suite of FinOps tools where they could disperse and manage costs, all within their existing platform.

Key features include:

- **Multicloud & Kubernetes Support:** The CCM product's support for Kubernetes (specifically Amazon Elastic Kubernetes Service and Google Kubernetes Engine) and multiple cloud environments was crucial, allowing NatWest Boxed to consolidate cost views across cloud providers and other vendor services.
- **Container Cost Attribution:** NatWest Boxed deployed the Datadog agent and leveraged their existing tagging strategy to understand idle costs in Kubernetes by services and applications. These capabilities enabled the NatWest Boxed team to attribute accurate, service-level costs for shared container resources and cloud host expenses. This unlocked the ability to give engineering teams visibility into how much of the shared Kubernetes platform they were using, and where they could optimize waste.
- **Complete Cost Attribution:** The team created a system to sync ownership data from a developer portal platform to CCM's tag pipelines, enabling dynamic tagging and eliminating the issue of outdated team, system and service tags. It was also able to introduce custom rules to assign "untaggable" applications that aren't affiliated with a product or service for more precise tracking. This laid the foundation for NatWest Boxed to give upper management a clearer, more comprehensive view of costs—extending beyond individual engineering teams.
- **Cost Alerting & Visibility:** Thanks to Datadog's dynamic platform, alerts were pushed via messaging and collaboration channels to budget owners informing them of costs that were going over or under budget, fostering real-time accountability, transparency and action.

Improving cost allocation accuracy from 50% to 90%

Through the collaboration with Datadog, NatWest Boxed significantly improved its cloud cost visibility, governance, and efficiency.

Key outcomes included:

- Over 90% cost allocation of cloud and service spending, up from approximately 50% at the start of the journey.
- Estimated 45% cost savings driven by improved forecasting, which enabled more effective use of discounts offered by cloud providers.
- Improved budget governance through real-time monitoring and team-level accountability.
- Stronger collaboration across engineering and finance teams by aligning technical resource usage with business outcomes.

Datadog Cloud Cost Management not only addressed NatWest Boxed's immediate pain points but also empowered them to build a scalable, repeatable FinOps practice that aligned with their Kubernetes-first and multi-tenant architecture. This foundation paved the way for deeper operational insights across their entire stack. NatWest Boxed achieves full lifecycle observability—from pre-production pipelines to real user interactions—by connecting frontend, backend, infrastructure, and CI/CD intelligence in Datadog's unified platform.

[GET STARTED WITH A FREE TRIAL TODAY >](#)