

CLOUD TRANSFORMATION: APPLICATION SUITABILITY ASSESSMENT AND MIGRATION

Driving business agility through
data center consolidation and
cloud transformation.

COMPANIES UNDERSTAND THE POTENTIAL ADVANTAGES INVOLVED IN MIGRATING A DATA CENTER INFRASTRUCTURE TO A CLOUD-BASED MODEL - NOT ONLY IN TERMS OF LOWERING OPERATING COSTS BUT, MORE IMPORTANTLY, IN DRIVING MORE FLEXIBILITY AND AGILITY ACROSS THE BUSINESS.

THE TRANSFORMATION TO CLOUD BRINGS WITH IT EFFICIENCIES AND STANDARDS - FOR EXAMPLE, IN THE USE OF AUTOMATED TOOLS TO ANALYSE WORKLOADS, TO SPEED UP PROVISIONING AND TO HELP DELIVER NEW PRODUCTS FASTER TO MARKET - THAT ALL ADD UP TO MAKING A BUSINESS MORE CAPABLE OF RESPONDING QUICKLY AND EFFICIENTLY TO MARKET OPPORTUNITIES AND CUSTOMERS' NEEDS.

The challenge

Looking to consolidate data center locations for 19 business units across North America and the United Kingdom, this global mass media, publishing and entertainment industry client commissioned Cognizant to produce a comprehensive assessment of the feasibility of moving to cloud-based solutions, as well as to drive "as-a-service" (XaaS) models to their distribution and client base.

The project needed to identify not only potential cost savings and performance improvements in the data center operation, but also to consider the aspects of improving flexibility and agility that would support a company actively looking to diversify its business interests, and in markets where time-to-market and security are key considerations in product and service delivery.

The solution

An initial cloud suitability analysis and migration feasibility was commissioned for 500+ applications hosted on 1300+ servers, spread across 19 business units and 9 locations in the US, Canada and the UK.

The result was a recommendation for the migration of approximately 40% of the current data center workloads to a combination of co-location and public Infrastructure as a Service (IaaS) cloud facilities. Cognizant is now engaged in the execution of a phased migration approach.

The benefits of moving to the cloud-based infrastructure have been most noticeable in the speed at which products and services are now delivered, although productivity savings are also significant.

KEY BENEFITS

Significant increases in time-to-market delivery of products and services through automation, standardization and rationalization of current infrastructure and delivery mechanisms

Dramatically reduced in house data center footprint through migration of over 30% of in-house and co-location applications to public cloud

Scalable/flexible architecture to satisfy fluctuating business demand, with in-built security, backup and disaster recovery mechanisms

Our approach

Utilising its Cloud Steps Transformation Framework, Cognizant assessed the suitability and conducted a migration feasibility analysis for the 500+ global applications hosted across 1300+ servers. Cognizant then produced a set of target state recommendations and developed a phased migration plan. The plan involved transitioning more than 40% of the data center workloads, covering 19 business units across 9 global locations.

Cognizant recognised that standardization and automation would be key to delivering what the customer needed - a flexible, agile infrastructure and delivery mechanism that would reduce costs, react swiftly to fluctuations in business and capacity demand and significantly improve its ability to deliver products and services quickly. Given the client's fundamental requirements around time-to-market, security and global delivery, a migration path based on Amazon Web Services' (AWS) cloud-based infrastructure was chosen to support the infrastructure transformation project.

IMPROVING BUSINESS AGILITY THROUGH STANDARDIZATION AND AUTOMATION

Phase 1 implementation began with the migration of 125 applications, hosted across 340+ servers, transitioning them to a combination of 'landing zones' based on Amazon Web Services' (AWS) public cloud service as well as VMWare-based private cloud services hosted across a number of co-location data centers.

This migration allows the client to leverage XaaS ("As a Service"), private and public cloud solutions to reduce IT and data center facilities costs, improve productivity, implement a comprehensive Security and Compliance framework, and provide additional levels of disaster recovery and backup provision.

Automation was key to the project success: introducing automation toolsets allowed standards to be enforced across the delivery process and infrastructure, ensuring PCI compliance and allowing standalone or redundant systems, processes and workloads to be eliminated. Automation and standardization also ensured repeatability of processes and workloads, dramatically improving time-to-market in areas such as new product delivery and allowing further efficiencies to be gained by introducing automated measurement systems that provide detailed analysis across workloads, provisioning processes and application delivery mechanisms.

The first phase, which was delivered in a dramatically improved time, yielded significant results by reducing the data center footprint by over 30% and eliminating costs, in some areas by over 50%. Employing a flexible, scalable architecture based around a public cloud/laaS offering where resources can be switched in - or out - as needed had the additional benefits of enhanced security and disaster recovery capabilities and the ability to rapidly increase/decrease the infrastructure utilization 'capacity' to match the fluctuating demand curve for resources.

To find out more about how businesses are benefiting from Cognizant Cloud Transformation, visit www.cognizant.com/cloud

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