Benefits of Application Migration to Azure

Business ecosystems in every industry and geography are now experiencing unprecedented change due to the rapid digitization of products and services, operations and fulfillment, and customer experience.

New disruptive business models enabled by next-generation technologies Cloud, Analytics, Digital, and Security (CADS) – are helping thriving upstarts such as Uber, Slack, and TransferWise continuously deploy innovative products and services embraced by "born digital" consumers. Not surprisingly, incumbents' competitive advantage and customer loyalty are at risk. To survive and thrive, market leaders across industries are reconstructing digitally relevant business strategies.

At the foundation of upstarts' business success are flexible and scalable cloud application platforms, such as Microsoft Azure, that foster rapid innovation, collaboration, and customer intimacy. Additionally, cloud platforms enable data analytics and intelligence that help digital leaders such as Under Armour learn fast, move quickly, and correct missteps. Given these advantages, it is no longer good enough to be cloud friendly. Now is the time to be cloud-first.

Within a cloud-first model, new applications are deployed in hybrid cloud environments and, importantly, many existing applications must be migrated. In fact, McKinsey states the average cloud migration rate for x86 workloads is still less than 20 percent. To embrace this transition and realize the benefits, it's critical for business and IT leaders to fully understand the priorities and optimal execution for application migration to the cloud.

With the most data center regions worldwide, consistent hybrid offerings, and broad AI functionality, Microsoft Azure is a market leading platform for application migration. Azure has comprehensive services, tools, and marketplace solutions to deploy and manage critical applications. Furthermore, Azure's security, compliance, and big data solutions, such as cognitive APIs and machine learning, help companies drive strong business advantage.

This Point of View paper presents Trianz' perspective on the benefits of application migration to the Microsoft Azure cloud.

The Benefits of Application Migration to Azure

According to a January 2016 IDC client study[3], only 22 percent of respondents have moved "more than one or two small applications" to external public clouds, still up sharply from the previous year. However, only five percent of respondents believe they have an "optimized" cloud strategy. To stay competitive, therefore, business and IT leaders must continuously seek greater advantages from accelerated application migration and improved cloud strategies.

Migrating existing .NET, Windows, and other applications to Microsoft Azure, combined with a larger digital strategy, delivers important advantages in two areas – IT infrastructure and business digitization.

Better IT Infrastructure

Versus legacy application platforms, Azure cloud infrastructure provides numerous technology benefits including cost, speed, scalability, and flexibility.

Reduced Cost

Due to the efficiency of Azure's scalable platform, running applications in the cloud costs less than on legacy platforms. Not only is cloud hardware and software cheaper, but resource utilization is higher, bursting is more economical, and community driven tools allow for application management with less resources.

Increased Speed

Within cloud environments, it's both faster to deploy infrastructure resources as well as application releases. Azure based workflows can be provisioned in minutes with support from Azure DevTest Labs versus weeks for legacy platforms, and partitioned into micro-services that are faster to deploy, and independent of larger, cumbersome release cycles.

Scalability & Performance

Because of its foundational architecture of shared and unified resources, Azure is inherently built to scale fast and handle varied workloads at high performance. Furthermore, its recognized and mature orchestration tools, as well as open source solutions like Kubernetes, Jenkins, and Chet can help automatically scale cloud infrastructure to handle changes in application demand.

Deployment Flexibility

Azure-based applications are well suited for businesses with growing or fluctuating needs. Elastic cloud platforms are regularly used for massive data analysis as well as spiking applications that require compute bursts during cyclical or unpredictable demand.

Rapid Business Digitization

Precisely because of these IT infrastructure advantages versus those of legacy platforms, migrating existing applications to Azure, in proximity to native cloud applications, expedites the digitization of business -- into products, services, operations, customer experience, and the employee workplace. This leads to increased customer reach, business agility, and time-to-market.

Customer Reach & Intimacy

Moving applications like SharePoint and Exchange to the cloud opens opportunities to integrate with mobile and social platforms that reach more customers, through new channels, and build intimacy at lower costs. Mobile banking, eHealth, and eGovernment solutions all show the strong gains possible from this benefit.

Business Agility & Innovation

Cloud platforms give developers more agility to innovate in smaller groups and trial disruptive ideas without reliance on the infrastructure team and legacy systems, and with less risk and cost. Within the Azure DevTest Lab, developers can quickly provision resources, build code, integrate technologies via standards-based APIs, and scale their testing as needed, even failing numerous times before achieving results that advance business outcomes.

Time-to-Market

Faster application release cycles translate to rapid delivery of new services. While legacy platforms can limit application releases to a few times a year, Azure's integrated tools, from mobile DevOps to serverless computing, allow for updates a few times a day. This speed can be the difference between gaining or losing market share and competitive advantage.

In summary, vast technical and business benefits are achieved by migrating existing applications to Microsoft Azure. Importantly, this places IT leaders and their strategies in the critical path to reinventing business, and presents new and considerable challenges. Thus, it's essential to have a multi-disciplined team to critically analyze the factors impacting migration success. IDC calls this a holistic approach without which your migration may result "in a majority of strategic initiatives either failing or underdelivering... business results, even while meeting traditional project metrics."

The Microsoft Azure Advantage

Azure offers more than 100 cloud services to build, deploy, and manage a breath of workloads, from simple micro-services to internet-scale applications. Adding 120,000 subscriptions per month, Azure now spans 42 global datacenter regions, more than any other cloud provider.

Azure drives productivity and speeds time-to-market. Integrated tools provide developer flexibility from .NET to open source. It supports a variety of operating systems, languages, and databases, and its DevTest Labs offer rapid provisioning of development and QA environments.

Common Azure workloads include .Net applications, SQL Server databases, DevOps and DevTest environments, SharePoint collaboration, Office and Exchange productivity, and big data analytics.

Azure uniquely enables data-driven, intelligent applications, from image recognition to bot services. Azure's artificial intelligence services support deep learning and real-time analytics. And its market leading security includes 50 compliance offerings, exceeding all other providers.

For these reasons, Azure is recognized as a trusted cloud platform for U.S. government institutions. And 90 percent of the *Fortune* 500 companies run their business on the Microsoft cloud.

How Trianz Can Help

Trianz is a Managed Services Provider for Azure. Our experienced professionals maintain numerous Azure Certifications across all critical aspects of Microsoft cloud services.

As a strategic managed services partner, Trianz offers a customized Azure migration roadmap to achieve service-oriented infrastructure and service catalogs.

Our Certified consultants use proprietary tools and templates to discover, assess, analyze, and recommend execution plans for the cloud journey. Our experts enable reference architectures for Azure IaaS, PaaS, and SaaS platforms with a focus on execution success.

We deploy Azure-based hybrid environments by incorporating automation at every possible opportunity and seamless orchestration of workloads across on premise and cloud platforms. Trianz collaborates with clients to monitor Azure performance and align infrastructure to meet ongoing business needs.

A key Azure advantage is agility and innovation. Trianz helps open the possibility for business leaders to test new ideas on Azure, accessing the secure infrastructure without the need for large upfront capital investment.

ANALYTICS · BUSINESS APPS · CLOUD · INFRASTRUCTURE · SECURITY

Based on Trianz' research and experience with Azure, the following expert guidance helps clients better manage their migration to Azure.

- **Define governance framework**
  enables oversight of adopted cloud systems and ensures highest post-migration value.

- **Migrate well-suited workloads**
  avoids unnecessary complexity of apps with poor Azure compatibility.

- **Automate testing and bug fix**
  Saves cost and time to complete integration evaluation.

- **IP and solution driven approach**
  Adopt Trianz' proven domain templates, tools, and capabilities that help clients smoothly migrate to Azure services.

ABOUT TRIANZ

Trianz simplifies digital evolutions through effective strategies and excellence in execution. Collaborating with business and technology leaders, we help formulate and execute operational strategies to achieve intended outcomes by bringing the best of consulting, technology experiences, and execution models. Powered by knowledge, research and perspectives, we serve Fortune 1000 and emerging organizations across industries and geographies to transform their business ecosystems and achieve superior performance by leveraging Cloud, Analytics, Digital, Infrastructure and Security paradigms.

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