



Perform Partners Case Study

Cloud Migration

The challenge

The customer wanted to move their technical services and applications from legacy servers hosted in four data centres around the UK and Europe to a fully hosted public cloud system.

This would reduce annual costs, improve business agility and enable them to better respond to customer demand.

A programme of works was underway with another consultancy and judged to be failing; after six months of delays it was falling further behind schedule and key delivery milestones were being missed, costing the customer time and money. Having worked with Perform Partners previously, the customer approached us to help them get the programme back on track and delivering results.

Our solution

Our approach to the programme was a three-stage process:

Understand, Stabilise, Deliver.

Understand

We held an initial evaluation session with the customer to ensure full understanding of their key stakeholders' expectations and what good would look like to them. We uncovered the reasons the programme was failing and identified what we could do to resolve this as quickly and effectively as possible.

One of the first correction points was to perform a detailed data capture and analysis to determine whether the original business case for moving to cloud storage was still sound, and to inform our proposed strategy for successful programme delivery.

The analysis, along with in-depth discussions held with staff across the business, confirmed that the programme could still deliver the projected results. Based on a timeline of up to two years and delivery costs of £7/8 million, it would result in an eventual reduction in costs of £7.5m per year, an approximate saving of £37.5m over a five-year period.

A large piece of our research was focused around the regulatory considerations of the geographically disparate estate, to ensure our proposed solution would be fully compliant across every country while providing the customer with the performance, scalability and resilience they needed.

Stabilise

Key issues identified by our research included a lack of trust in an existing technical supplier, and poor communication across geographically separated teams, with senior stakeholders cascading different messages.

While our in-depth data analysis continued, we identified and implemented a number of immediate stabilising actions to provide quick wins and improve internal attitudes to the programme, including:

- Fact-finding site visits to European teams to increase face-to-face communication.
- Introduction of a financial tracking tool to monitor efficiencies, saving £30k per month.
- Decommissioning redundant virtual services (approximately 10% of the existing on-premise estate) for an immediate £190k saving.
- Prioritising software migration where renewal dates were approaching to save £750k.
- Running multiple workstreams concurrently to bring the projected programme delivery date back on track.

The customer was already using Amazon Web Services (AWS) for some technical services. Based on our existing relationship with AWS and knowledge of their capabilities, our recommendation was to expand this partnership and transform the AWS cloud platforms into the backbone of the programme's technical delivery. However, our technological analysis identified that much of the technical estate could not be migrated directly onto AWS due to unresolved technical debt. The solution was to migrate first to VMC, giving the customer a critical pivot point to exit expensive contracts as planned and remove time pressure from AWS refactoring.

Deliver

Having completed enough quantified analysis to move forward and set out the delivery roadmap, we supported the overall business and programme objectives by facilitating the relationship between the customer's in-house teams and our strategic partners professional services with AWS and VMWare.

We established three main, concurrent delivery workstreams:

Operations and training - effecting a companywide operating change model, creating opportunities, and providing training to allow the earliest possible transition to in-house ownership.

Cross-functional team - collaborative working to allow Perform Partners and AWS Professional Services to upskill internal staff and progress from isolated teams towards a cross-functional capability, enabling us to drive core technology changes centrally and facilitating our handover and exit from the programme.

Technical - VMC and AWS migration workstreams running in tandem, with Perform Partners facilitating the relationship between operations and technical delivery. Based on contractual analysis, we re-aligned migration priorities to ensure the data centres with highest ROI were exited first.

At programme peak, 15 Perform Partners consultants were working with the customer, including business analysts, hands-on technical experts and delivery managers. We coordinated all external delivery resource to align shared goals and success. During the delivery lifecycle, over 100 full-time staff were working across the business, including specialists from AWS professional services, VMWare professional services, New Relic and Oracle, as well as offshore third party specialist engineers.

We provided regular, focused reporting to all stakeholders via the collaborative cross-functional team and ensured clear communication across the whole company through direct channels using Slack, more traditional executive updates through presentations, and innovative use of video demonstrations and interviews.

Successes

Our delivery management expertise and drive enabled us to get the programme back on track and help the customer successfully progress one of the largest cloud migrations in Europe.

The rationalisation of their data centre estate, coupled with the other optimisations and cost savings we identified and implemented, has already saved the customer approximately £500k pa.

Moving to AWS has also provided improved performance and scalability options - in one technical environment alone, build time has been reduced by 80% - which has enabled the customer to meet increasing demand in a challenging, fast-paced and competitive market.

By applying the correct technologies and collaborating at the right levels we have helped the customer achieve ongoing substantial business transformation, successfully influencing a company-wide culture shift from siloed departments to collaborative cloud-working and creating alignment in their business to meet common goals and provide shared benefits.

As a result of the success of the programme, and the trust built between our organisations, the customer also asked us to support two further programmes in other key areas of the business in support of their international expansion.

Savings

Before

- £17.5m annual costs
- 800+ applications
- 4 data centres (2 x UK, 2 x EU)

After

- 2 year programme
- £7.5m reduction in annual costs
- £37.5m savings over 5 years



Customer:

William Hill

Customer Contact:

Sarah Lucas, Head of Platforms & Infrastructure

T: (+44) 113 397 4865

E: slucas@williamhill.co.uk

Contract Start Date:

February 2019

Contract Value:

£1.2M

Perform Partners

Platform,
New Station St,
Leeds LS1 4JB

T: (+44) 113 4266810

E: info@perform-partners.com

W: <https://perform-partners.com>