

IWG keeps people working with Azure migration



Client profile

International Workplace Group (IWG) is a world leader in providing flexible workplace solutions. With centers in 110 countries, they provide services to 2.5 million users in over 3,300 locations.

Identifying the need to move their applications to a reliable and flexible platform, IWG decided to leverage the power of Microsoft Azure for all their business-critical applications.

Working with NTT DATA, IWG adopted a best-practice migration approach to ensure that their applications were seamlessly migrated to Azure and disaster-recovery systems implemented to ensure their applications are always available.

This provides them with the agile and secure platform they need to drive business innovation and modernize their application estate.

Their IT and development teams are now free to focus on delivering additional business and customer value, leveraging the scale and flexibility of the Azure platform.

“

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Andre Sharpe
Chief Information Officer, IWG

Business need

Building a vision for reliable, flexible IT

With the demand for flexible workspaces growing exponentially, global flexible workplace provider, IWG was positioned to benefit from this growth. However, with a global solution, they needed their key applications to be available 24x7.

As part of their continuing evaluation of all their operations, they identified their current application hosting environment as a key risk to the organization.

“One of our main competitive advantages is the world-class technology platform we offer our clients around the world. With our growing number of large corporate customers and new franchise partners, this was the right time to invest in improving our services even further. Our customers want a choice of workspaces and communities to match their needs and require enterprise-grade service, security and reliability. We want to remain the first choice for flexible workspace provisioning in the sector,” comments Andre Sharpe, IWG Chief Information Officer.

To address the identified issues, they decided to standardize on Microsoft Azure to create greater agility, application availability and resilience for their critical applications. This would provide them with the platform they needed to drive their application modernization strategy.

IWG needed a reliable, scalable data center they could trust to support them with the kind of creative work solutions that they'd built their business on.

Solution

Delivering a best-practice migration

Following an initial engagement with another service provider, IWG engaged NTT DATA as a result of our extensive capabilities in Azure and managed services.

To ensure that IWG achieved their desired outcomes, we leveraged Microsoft's Discover-Migrate-Optimize Azure cloud migration methodology.

During the Discover phase, we went through a Cloud Readiness Assessment to inventory and benchmark IWG's on-premises servers and application workloads.

This was followed by the Migrate phase, where we leveraged the Microsoft Azure Migrate tool to deploy application workloads to platform as a service (PaaS) where possible.

To reduce their operating expenses and increase the scalability and reliability of their data center, they migrated their 176 servers and application workloads from on-premises to Azure.

We then monitored the virtual machines and workloads and, as part of the Optimize phase, fine-tuned the environment, found cost efficiencies and increased availability and scale.

To ensure that we met their application availability requirements, and reduced their risk profile, a full disaster-recovery failover configuration was implemented to a Azure data center in a separate geography.

Outcomes

A reliable platform for business growth

With their applications now running on Azure, IWG can focus on delivering innovation to the business and ensuring that their customers receive the service they expect. The move to Azure has allowed them to reduce operational risk and the resources required to manage their data center. The availability of their applications has increased and the environment is more secure with all security alerts monitored through our global security operations center (SOC). "By migrating to Microsoft Azure, we know that our people and our customers can benefit fully from the cloud. The cloud is now part of everyday life, and it's easier than ever for people to plug in and work from anywhere," says Sharpe.

Innovation

The IWG development team is now able to focus on the planned digital transformation initiatives such as IoT at the centers to enable remote access control, environmental regulation, utility savings and customer consumption tracking as well as real-time intelligent pricing models.

Reduced risk

Leveraging Azure Active Directory has reduced identity management and identity theft increasing client trust. Their business has significantly reduced their risk by applying fully managed fail-over procedures, data replication, fully automated disaster-recovery failover for non-HA applications and automated pipelines for PaaS applications.

Reduced downtime

With increased availability and reduced service interruptions, IWG can now scale their services on demand, unlocking seasonal and long-term client opportunities. Their web development team is now released from operational support duties, allowing them to focus on creating a new customer portal.

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