Cloudtransformation

HIGHBERG

Cloud transformation

In recent years, cloud transformation has evolved from an emerging trend to a fundamental building block for modern IT strategies. Many organizations just struggle with maintaining control during and after transformation to the cloud. How do you maintain this control on the cloud during and after a transformation so that the intended benefits are actually achieved? And what do you need to take into account? In this white paper we describe the tools for a successful cloud transformation.

Keeping control on the various facets that a cloud transformation entails proves to be a major challenge for many organizations. Issues such as security, costs, performance and 'vendor lock-in' can cause major problems if the transformation is not kept under proper control. Realizing the intended benefits is then a challenge, leaving organizations struggling to achieve the expected efficiency and innovation gains.

To keep control on the transformation, an organization must make trade-offs in the desired cloud-based ICT services. Besides knowledge of the IT organization and cloud services, the business processes, management, applications, people and infrastructure also must be ready. After all, a cloud transformation is not just about technology, but about various organizational changes. When an organization has finally made the decision to move certain functionalities to the cloud, the considerations are not yet complete.

An organization still has to make choices between different cloud deployment models (Public-, Private-, Hybrid- and/or Multi-cloud) and different cloud providers (E.g. AWS, Azure, GCP etc.).

We speak of a transformation here because migrating functionalities 1-to-1, is often not the best solution in the cloud. This applies technically, but also in terms of efficiency and cost. The cloud (regardless of which provider) is characterized by the ability to use resources smartly, which makes it possible to keeps costs under control. If you do not fully transform the current environment when migrating to the cloud, the environment may not work optimally and is often significantly more expensive. In addition, cloud transformation also offers the opportunity to use newer techniques and technologies that large providers offer only, or first, in the cloud. This leads to new insights, capabilities and higher availability while creating flexibility and scalability.

Choice of cloud provider

Choosing a cloud provider is one of the most strategic decisions during a cloud transformation. This choice seems easy; we see that organizations often choose the provider they are most familiar with. But there are significant differences between providers, both in offerings, price and specialty (to the extent you can speak of specialty). For example, you could say high-over that Microsoft focuses more on the IT infrastructure of office automation, AWS on developer, App and web environments, IBM Cloud has a strong physical server offering, and the Google Cloud is a niche player in the data analysis area, among others.

Incidentally, we note that all providers have the basic services in good order and for standard functionalities such as virtual machines, containers and storage you can go to any provider just fine. Of course there is a price difference between the providers, and it will turn out that even per workload it can be different which one is the most favorable. In that case, architectural principles are ultimately decisive. Smaller or local cloud providers can also be a good option in some scenarios. But which party do you choose? Why? And which way do you go, looking to the future?

Know the current landscape

A successful cloud transformation begins with a thorough check of the existing IT and application landscape. This step maps all IT components and business applications, including their interdependencies and functional value. The goal is to determine which components are ready for migration, can be transformed to SaaS, what needs to be modified, and which components you can phase out. In doing so, it is also crucial to assess current, and future, performance, security, and compliance requirements.

By conducting this check carefully, organizations can set realistic goals, minimize risk, and strategically plan for cloud transformation. In addition, this also provides insight into current partnerships with external vendors and any contractual obligations that may affect the transformation. Thus, make sure know your landscape and with this you have a solid foundation for an efficient and secure transition to the cloud.

Migration

A successful cloud migration requires thorough preparation through data classification and a thoughtful approach that begins with choosing the right migration strategy. Strategies such as lift-and-shift or Amazon's seven r's strategy depend on the needs of the organization and functionalities offered by application vendors. The process usually begins with migrating less critical applications to gain experience and reduce risk.

During the migration, it is crucial to closely monitor and test performance, data integrity, and security. Automation tools can speed migration and minimize errors, while a rollback plan is needed for in case of unforeseen problems.

Change management is additionally essential to get employees to work effectively with the new cloud environments and to adapt processes. Thus, continuous optimization is required to efficiently manage performance, security and cost. Cloud migration is thus an ongoing process that requires ongoing attention and adaptation. Our experience shows that organizations still tend to forget the latter and therefore use the cloud less efficiently.

Education

Education is essential to the success of a cloud transformation, as well-trained employees can make the most of the new cloud environments. The start of any education journey begins with identifying knowledge and skill challenges within the organization, followed by providing targeted training for different roles, from technical teams to end users. Combining practical training with theoretical knowledge ensures an effective learning experience.

Education remains a continuous necessity as cloud environments are constantly evolving. Internal knowledge sharing, such as through central platforms and mentorship programs, promotes rapid knowledge building. Measuring and evaluating education programs helps to continuously improve them. Making education central can accelerate the adoption of new technologies and increase the efficiency of cloud strategies. By doing so, you not only train employees but also motivate them to contribute to the success of the cloud transformation.

How can Highberg help

Highberg helps organizations step by step through their cloud transformation, addressing all the aforementioned issues: from making a detailed inventory of the IT and application landscape to advising on the actual migration. We help choose the right migration strategy, tailored to specific business needs, and ensure flawless technical implementation. We also offer strategic advice when choosing between different cloud providers, taking into account all important factors such as cost, security, and flexibility. With our in-depth expertise and hands-on approach, we ensure that your organization not only successfully migrates to the cloud, but also gets the maximum value out of it.

In addition to regular advice, Highberg also offers advice in the form of a second opinion. Our experts will come to the organization and give advice on the market conformity or maturity of a design and/or implementation. This is always followed by advice on the steps you can take to move your organization forward. Topics we can give a second opinion on include cloud maturity, network design or benchmarking of the cloud provider.

If you would like to learn more about how cloud transformation can make a difference for your organization, please feel free to contact loran.vandendungen@highberg.com or mathijs.dubbe@highberg.com.

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